

City Council Work Session Transcript – 1/21/2020

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[9:17:36 AM]

>> Garza: Good morning. I'm mayor pro tem Garza calling our work session to order at 9:17. We have a quorum. The mayor will not be with us today and he won't be with us on Thursday as well. And I believe councilmember alter is -- will be joining us a little later. Is we're going to start with the land development code revision discussion. So I have those folks -- go ahead and come up.

>> Rodney Gonzalez, I'm the assistant city manager for economic opportunity and affordability. Today's presentation is a very quick update with regard to the land development code where they are and the plan to move forward, and with me is annick Beaudet, who is the

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assistant director for the Austin transportation department and one of the code leads for the land development code revision project.

>> Thank you, Rodney. Can you hand me that clicker? So we in starting the new ar, we wanted to come back and brief you all on what's ahead in the next several weeks with regards to continued work on the code. So December 9th through 11th first reading was completed and we have a detailed amendment summary for you all. I know we emailed it out to you all shortly after first reading, but it is on the website for public viewing as well. Details on all the amendments are there. And staff is working on a response to all those amendments as we speak, and we will have a supplemental staff report number three out in the next couple of weeks so you all can see the

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response to all those amendments. And then this Friday we will be working towards completing the new map and we have you all scheduled to come look at a preview of that map on Friday. If you have not scheduled a 45 minute viewing, please do so. We have about five or six folks signed up. January 28th we'll be presenting an overview of the staff report supplemental number three to the housing and planning committee. And that's from 10:00 to 12:00 A.M. And from February fourth and fifth we'll have special called work sessions at 1:00 P.M. On the fourth and 9:00 A.M. On the fifth and the ex-officio that we plan to deep dive in are there on the screen, but the fourth will have our consultants from eco northwest and cascadia, who are helping us with the calculations. And assumptions will be

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here. And we'll also talk in-depth about the new map, which is going to look significantly different after the amendments made a first reading. And then on the fifth we have additional models and renderings for you all that you asked for in first reading and leading up to first reading of the other Zones, not just the residential house scale. We'll talk a lot about the zoning regulations and the amendments made related to those regulations at first reading. Specific to the preservation incentive and the house scale Zones, floor area ratio and impervious cover and other non-zoning regulations will have watershed here for that as well. This is the current second reading schedule over three days, the 11th, 12th and 13th. Starting at 11th at three

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A.M. App P.M., nine A.M. On the 12th and 9 on the 13th. That's all I have for what's coming next.

>> As a follow-up, councilmember alter did ask for maximal end times for these dates. With the exceptions of the 11th we didn't get a specific maximum end time from the council. And with regard to agenda posting we typically won't post a investigated end time for council and leave that up to council's discretion. Councilmember alter, on the 11th or for the 11th did indicate that she did have a conflict after 3:00 P.M. On that date.

>> Garza: Councilmember kitchen.

>> Kitchen: I have said that there's a conflict on the 13th for the mobility committee. It's an hour and a half meeting that's important to project connect and transit. So we've indicated that so I had been planning that to

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ldc if we need to use the 13th that we would break for the mobility committee.

>> Thank you, councilmember. And if it's council's desire to do so we could take a break from 11:00 A.M. To 2:00 P.M. To I think accommodate that mobility committee meeting.

>> Kitchen: The mobility committee meeting is scheduled right now from 1:00 to 2:30. If -- it would be best if we could keep it as scheduled, unless there is some reason that it needs to be 11:00 2:00 is the break.

>> Once again, we defer to council. If it's council's desire to of course take that break for the mobility committee, we could certainly work it into that day.

>> It's scheduled right now. So I think that indicates that it's the council's intention. So that's the third day of the ldc, so hopefully it won't cause much of a disruption at all. If you'd like, what we could do is send an email to council noting that conflict with regard to the mobility

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committee, which is currently scheduled to your point from 1:00 P.M. To 2:30 P.M.

>> Kitchen: We tried to reschedule it but it doesn't work with some deadlines that we have related to project connect. So we need to keep that meeting.

>> Garza: Do we want to do that now or say on the 13th it would be 9:00 to noon, the ldc meeting 9:00 to noon and then that gives folks an hour lunch and then the mobility would be 1:00 to 2h30 and then resume the ldc at 2:30? If if

>> We will send an email to follow up.

>> Thanks. Councilmember Renteria.

>> Renteria: Also, I don't see Greg Casar here, but he's the chair of the housing and planning committee. We do have meetings scheduled from 10:00 to 1:00. Most likely to 12.

[9:24:44 AM]

On the 11th. Here he is.

>> Casar: We'll move housing and planning around.

>> Renteria: We'll just move it.

>> I think we have a judicial committee on the 11th, but do we need to have that meeting?

>> We definitely need to have that meeting.

>> And that is --

>> That's currently 2:00 P.M. On the 11th.

>> Can we start the 11th earlier?

>> Flannigan: That's when alter has to leave.

>> Garza: Can we start the 11th at 9:00? No?

[9:25:44 AM]

>> The reason we indicated 10:30 is because there were some conflicts that were identified starting before 10:30, so the start times that we sent coincided with the dates that council had provided us, the dates and times that there were no conflicts.

>> Garza: So it looks like the judicial committee starts at 2:00. 10:30 to 2:00 at least and break for the judicial committee?

>> Tovo: It looks as if on each of those days there's a committee meeting that conflicts, the judicial committee on the 11th, visit Austin on the 12th, and the 13th a mobility committee. So if those were our lunch breaks that would probably work out reasonably well. If possible. I mean, visit Austin is at

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lunchtime. The mayor and I can probably slip out and go to that for a bit. The mobility committee I think -- councilmember kitchen you said it's at 1:00.

>> Kitchen: I think we're shortening it to an hour and a half. So 1:00 to 2:30.

>> Tovo: Sue that's lunchish time. And I don't know if it's possible to move the judicial committee up earlier, but that could serve on our lunch break too. Those of you on the committee would have to eat on the dais or rotate on and off the dais, but if it's scheduled for a lunchtime we would still have the bulk of the afternoon since we'll typically break for a lunch hour anyway.

>> Flannigan: That would work for judicial because I believe it's going to be in executive session. So we would definitely do that.

>> Tovo: I would like to then suggest that we schedule our lunch breaks for the times that those -- that those committees land on the 11th, 12th and 13th.

[9:27:53 AM]

>> Garza: The 12th doesn't start until 3:00.

>> Tovo: Okay. It's not a conflict then.

>> Tovo: For some reason I have the 12th for 9:00 A.M. At some point was it scheduled for -- in any case if it's starting at three --

>> Garza: I think there were blocks put in our calendar because everybody didn't know -- we didn't know exactly what the time -- where there would be the most conflicts because it's the same on my calendar too.

>> Tovo: So I would request that on the 12th if we could try to schedule -- I assume we're taking a dinner break and if we are, if we could try to pit to hit that for 5:30, which is when the sobering center is.

>> Garza: I'm fine with that recommendation. Was there -- were there conflicts on the 14th.

>> There was a conflict on the 14th.

[9:28:53 AM]

>> Garza: Okay.

>> Tovo: Yeah, mange other things, I think I pointed out to the staff that today where a quite a few of the other aisd campuses are closed. It's a day of innovation, so it's not every campus, but a lot of them, and I think some other school districts will be closed as well because that's a three-day weekend and a lot of them have Friday off as well. So it would be a challenging day for our staff and the public I think to be part of this. And I think there were some other conflicts.

>> Garza: All right. So do you have all those issues noted and may be able to provide an email with a revision too as well as working with the different committees that are scheduled at the same time.

>> Absolutely, mayor pro tem. Following this discussion we will provide an email to mayor and council with the suggested break times. And thank you, councilmember tovo for that suggestion that suggested break times for lunch and the suggested

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break time for the sobering center on the 12th.

>> Garza: Thank you. Does anybody else have any questions. Thank you for that information.

>> Thank you.

>> Garza: The next presentation is the civil rights enforcement update. Just while those folks are coming up, as of now there have been no items pulled for discussion. I think there are some for executive session. I want to make sure does anybody want to pull any items?

>> Tovo: I did want to talk briefly about one of the items on the addendum. 108, please.

>> Pool: And I had asked for an executive session on item 59 to get some answers from law. I have a board meeting that I will need to leave at 1:00

[9:30:56 AM]

so hopefully we can get through all our briefings and everything and then the executive session before I have to go.

>> Garza: Sounds good. I think we should be able to. All right. Go ahead, thank you.

>> Good morning, mayor pro tem, councilmembers. I am the deputy city manager. I am pleased to be here and provide a council update and introduce my colleague, Candace cooper. For background I'll say in June city council passed a resolution really directing the city manager to take a look at how do we as a city enforce civil rights across the entire city of Austin and called for resolution to look at possible structures. Subsequently the city engaged the garment alliance for race and equity to take a look at across the nation to see how other cities have constructed their civil rights offices and look at best practices. Those results were shared

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with you in August of last year. And following that we have hired a wonderful project manager that you will here from shortly, Candace cooper, who took the national gare best practices work and started to to internalize where the civil rights touch point are in the city and gave us a framework on how do we move this work forward in Austin next. So without further adieu I will pass it on to Candace.

>> Okay. Good morning and happy Tuesday to everyone. Thank you for that introduction. To mayor pro tem Garza, to also all the other councilmembers and city manager, it has been my pleasure to serve as project manager on this initiative. As a native austinite, civil rights has truly been my passion and so with that I'd like to go ahead and start with the presentation. And if you could please join

[9:32:57 AM]

me with slide 3. And what -- okay, thank you. All righty, there we go. With that we did, as Ms. Noriy mentioned, we were able to look at and do more of a deep dive. Gare report. And the report looked at

over 60 jurisdictions from Seattle all the way to New York. And what it did is it was able to provide -- document rather how best to enforce civil rights and what national best practices suggests is that civil rights should be utilized within a center entity. This should have leadership support, meaning support of the mayor, the council, as well as city management and executives. Also it discussed the proper authority, how the structure of civil rights should fall within the authority of a high level city executive,

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if you will. In addition, it spoke to the commissions and that the authority -- we have here the human rights commission and some other commissions at the city of Austin and how those commissions should have the authority in order to enforce those civil rights initiatives. It spoke to community accountability. As a civil rights centralized entity, we are accountable to those members of protected classes. And so it's critical that when structuring and enforcing civil rights initiative that we must be accountable to those most impacted by systematic discrimination. It also spoke to being able to collaborate with the community, have efficient and effective ways to make sure we are including the community in how we enforce civil rights. And in addition to that, it was also solution oriented. It spoke to ensuring that we focus on a proactive approach to civil rights

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initiatives, and by that educating, training and making sure that we have the proper services in terms of referral services that are needed. We also -- the report focused on national trends. It looked at on our nation what is looked at from what trends do we have. And from a national trend standpoint, immigration and issues of disability seemed to be on the rise. We also noticed that in 2016 there was of course a change in national leadership and this did call for some of the complainants, the number of complainants to go down, but there was also more emphasis that was put on proactive communication. So instead of just focusing on enforcements from the level of complainants, there was more of an emphasis on education and training. One emerging trend, and it

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has not been talked about nationwide, but however there are several jurisdiction that are practicing co-enforcement. Co-enforcement is that idea of collaborating with the community, developing partnerships with the community, identifying key stakeholders in the community in order to address potential civil rights violations. Currently what the reports -- and part of my research has been what are we doing here at the city of Austin. Where are our non-discriminatory ordinances that we currently have, how are we enforcing them, where are they located? Are we providing the education and the resources necessary? And what the research found is that we have multiple non-discriminatory ordinances throughout the

city. And as you can see this slide depicts that from our equal employment office to fair housing to our fair chance and immigration types

[9:37:01 AM]

of ordinances, they are now within different departments. Those divisions that are responsible for -- responsible for enforcing civil rights violation are now throughout the city within different departments. What we're proposing is that we centralize these -- the civil rights ordinances so that we can provide the most effective way to educate and collaborate and to enforce our ordinances within the city. The idea is in keeping with the vision of imagine Austin and also the strategic outcomes of strategic direction 2023. These proposed structure -- the proposed structure that you see here on this slide embodies the commitment of Austin residents by creating a structure that set forth the protections within title four and title five. And then you may ask what

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benefit? What benefit would we have as a city to centralize these enforcement efforts in addition to what types of outcomes would we anticipate for our Austin residents? Well, this centralized entity would create synergy, it would enhance public engagement opportunities, it would shift to a more proactive approach for civil rights enforcement and in addition it would better align our existing resources that we have for these measures. With that being said, what we would like to do next as far as next steps is we would like to go out into the community and we've created stakeholder teams. The slide here talks about the four different stakeholder teams that we've identified. The decision maker stakeholder team consists of mayor and council and of course the city manager's office in addition to other executive leadership throughout the city. We have identified a project team, a project team will be

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those individuals throughout internal and external that are in key roles, for example, the law department if you will and human resources department and those with subject matter expertise to assist us in how best to align the resources that we currently have within the city. In addition to that we've identified an influencers team. Now, the influencers are those boards and commissions members, the civil rights organizations and community advocacy groups. Our goal is to go out to these stakeholder teams and to ask what types of services would they like to see within a centralized entity. In addition to that, we do have Austin residents that have utilized the city for information related to civil rights currently and we would like to go out and speak to those customers. Specifically we would be asking the question how was your experience with -- dealing with the civil

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rights enforcement process. In addition to that, accessibility, making sure how can we best or is there a better opportunity for us to provide additional educational opportunities and some of those customers would consist of individuals with active and closed cases and also the Texas workforce commission and some of our chambers of commerce. We would of course from a communication standpoint we would solicit project champion. Now, who are project champions? Those in favor please raise your they are knows this the grassroots community leaders. They are members of council, those who were a sponsor for this resolution to be passed. But we would ask that we conduct project champions to assist us in gaining this information. In addition, we would like to ask for one on one interviews. One on one interviews with members of our council, in addition to executive leadership to ask the

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question as to how best should this centralized entity be structured? We would also hold community when will this happen? We anticipate this occurring in February. We would begin the stakeholder input next month, and then moving forward within March we will compile all the stakeholder input into a final report that will be issued to council in April. The report will consist not only of the stakeholder feedback that we have received throughout February, but in addition to that it will make a recommendation based on how best that we structure the office. It will speak toward the accountability, who we're accountable for, and also recommendations for the authority. And with that, I'd like to thank you for this opportunity and open it up for any questions that you may have.

>> Garza: Councilmember Casar.

>> Casar: I just want to

[9:42:08 AM]

thank you both deputy city manager and Ms. Cooper, for your work on this. I think that it shows really important progress and I'm really thankful for everybody at hr and eeo and fair housing and everybody that has been doing this in so many different places and parts. I appreciate that here in the report you mentioned sort of national trends. As we see more and more retreat at the federal level from educating and enforcing protections for working people and on civil rights and all these important issues, I think we find more and more places where the city has to step in and fill the gaps, but here's a place where I think we've actually been doing that, but I think sometimes in potentially too many different places and finding a way to central eyes that and put a lot of folks on it makes good sense to me and I appreciate that y'all are coming up with a deliberate way to figure out how to do it so that owe sew that it works

better without us necessarily having to dedicate a lot more resources. I think that all sounds on the right track. I was hoping when we were in the budget session that we might be making that

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decision now, but of course everything always takes a little bit more time. I've gotten used to that and that's okay. And so with just my urging would be I really appreciate that you have a timeline with the final report coming to us in fall. Of course we should do it right more than do it fast, but I just hope and urge that we do our best to really stay on this clip and however -- whatever help you might need from council to make sure that the stakeholders know it's important and that this really is on a timeline and that happens and that people just know that we may be making decisions in April. I would be thankful for that because we just can't keep -- cannot keep losing time and it seems like we're on a deliberate clip so thank you for this update.

>> Yes, thank you.

>> Garza: Did you have a a -- councilmember harper-madison.

>> Harper-madison: Somewhere between the course of the communications method and the stakeholder teams you made mention of the ability to sort of take into account how people's

[9:44:10 AM]

experience went with the process.

>> Yes, ma'am.

>> Harper-madison: So in my mind's eye I see a sort of yelp review. I see often times from accountability, what hinders people accountability is the public-facing nature of a yelp review. People get to see what went well, what went poorly and offering those entities the opportunity to improve. I'm curious about what does that look like? Do generally stakeholders get to see what other individuals' experience was like? Is that a public record, public-facing or for the purposes of refining systems internally?

>> So as of right now there is no opportunity for a public-facing comment and for what their experiences were as far as working with the office. That is something that of course we can take into consideration moving forward, but the idea is that we start now with creating a survey.

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And the purpose of the survey would go to customers so we have compiled email addresses and contact information for individuals who have utilized the equal employment and fair housing office and we plan on reaching out to those individuals in February. And using that information to hopefully help create a platform in terms of how we should best structure the centralized entity moving forward. I hope that answers your question. Thank you.

>> Garza: As part of the public outreach, would part of that be suggesting or is it just -- we just have some good organizations here that are doing some good civil rights work, like the Texas civil rights project. So when we -- when the council decided that we wanted to invest more in immigration law, helping

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people through that process when there was, you know, horrible deportations, et cetera, happening, we were able to fund I think American gateways. We gave them some funding. So is that -- that's part of this process too is maybe it's not a city office? Because I feel like that sounds good, but there's a lot of distrust unfortunately. And so I guess I would be concerned -- like for us to be able to take advantage of the organizations that have that trust, but need extra resources to be able to help more people. So is that part of the discussion as well?

>> Absolutely. Thank you for that question actually. During the research it talked a lot about trust. And ensuring that the structure is set up in a way that the community trust -- and when I speak of the community I'm talking about members of color, those that are the protected classes,

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those that are most impacted by civil rights violation. You are correct, we have some amazing organizations that have been and continue to do work as it relates to civil rights. The idea is that we would be going out and reaching those organizations. We have a list, an ongoing list of organizations that we've already identified that we plan on bringing in on the stakeholder engagement process. And the thought would be that we would gain there as a subject matter expertise, we would gain their knowledge and best see how the structure should be set up. And in addition to that, as of right now as you saw in one of the slides that depicted how most of our non-discriminatory ordinances are throughout the city of Austin, by centralizing them we believe that we could better, looking at existing services we can better align and also create more of a co-enforcement. And this may be an

[9:48:13 AM]

opportunity where we can venture into the co-enforcement area and I know deputy city manager nouria has experience in that and it has shown to be effective when you have a municipality working with individuals who are already doing the work.

>> Garza: Great. Did you have something?

>> Flannigan: Did you mission the human rights commission's role in all of this?

>> Yes, the human rights commission as of now, we would be looking at the authority. I did have an authority to meet, to attend one of the human rights commission sessions. In addition meeting internally to determine what is their role now. And this is opportunity here to certainly expand their role and to make sure that they have the proper authority in order to enforce.

>> Flannigan: I know that commission for a time was really focused on lbgtq issues because we didn't have an lbgtq commission

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since we created that in my first year now I think there's more capacity in that commission to do this broader civil rights work.

>> Absolutely. I agree.

>> Garza: Thank you so much for your work. And presentation. I'm sorry.

>> Renteria: One more question. There is a lot of restrictions when it comes to the fair housing act. Are you going to be looking into that? The real big struggle here in Austin is the right to return law and we have been having a lot of problems because they say it's in violation of the fair housing act and I was just wondering would y'all be looking into some of these laws and the restrictions and maybe make some recommendation on how we should handle some of these type of issues?

>> Yes, sir. I think -- the project, although the April report will be due then, we will continue to look at best practices and ways that we can best enforce all of our

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civil rights in accordances to include the fair housing and looking at how we do it now versus how there's a better way that we can enforce those laws.

>> Garza: Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: So our housing department is starting a pilot program with the right to return within our units. And I think the intent is to continue to expand in response to the resolution that I and others -- I know councilmember Renteria was a co-sponsor on that. So it looks to me as if our staff have crafted a very

solid program that is going to allow for the right to return without violating fair housing policies. So I think it would be welcome for those working on this to continue to monitor that, but I feel really good about one both launching that long time community priority, but also that we're doing it with solid recognition of how to do it and not run afoul of fair housing.

>> Great. With that being said I can

[9:51:14 AM]

reach out and look at some of the work that they're doing now.

>> Tovo: Super. I think it just started. Thank you very much. I think this is another long time community priority and so I'm excited about the direction that you've crafted here.

>> Thank you.

>> Garza: Thank you. The next presentation will be the update regarding homelessness issues. And while those folks are coming up, does anybody have any requests for time certain for Thursday?

>> Casar: I think if we could take the

[indiscernible] Item up after dinner and ask for there be a tight number of speakers.

>> Flannigan: This doesn't seem like the kind of meeting that necessarily doesn't have to go after dinner.

>> Casar: Then we should huddle and figure it out, but we may not go until dinner.

>> Flannigan: I'd rather not decide now whether to go after dinner.

>> Garza: No time certain.

[9:52:16 AM]

>> Casar: We were talking about doing it after dinner if we do it after dinner. But now that there are no items pulled, let's sort out how we handle it.

>> Mayor and council, assistant city manager Rodney Gonzalez and with me is assistant city manager Chris shorter. We're going to provide a briefing on the homelessness initiatives. The outline of the topics for today are to go over the January 17th policemen ran dumb that was sent to down -- memorandum that was sent to council, has an update on homelessness initiatives. At that point we will bring up certain priority area leads to provide an update specific to their areas in homelessness service delivery, cleanups and storage and then communications. And with us today are leadership from salvation Army who will provide a presentation on the overview of homeless services provided by the salvation Army, a flow chart of those services, as well as performance highlights, program outputs and program goals. With regard to the January 17th memo that was provided to council .

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Indicated in memo 2899, the homeless officer strategy position was created. We filled that position in an interim and permanent basis in 2019. Also what we did as staff was we developed priority area leads in five different areas of homeless services delivery, public safety, cleanup and storage and communications and how longing. And those eyliads have really helped us to coordinate all of our efforts across the city and with our partner agencies. We've been meeting on a routine basis so that way we can make sure that the work that we do is not in isolation, but it is as a coordinated effort. That period of work stabilization allowed us to review the past year of what worked well, what could have been improved, what's better approach to service delivery? So the memo outlined some changes we have made with regard to our homeless approach service delivery. First and foremost we have formed an executive

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leadership team of both -- of the deputy city manager, myself, assistant city manager Chris shorter and the Austin public health director Stephanie Hayden, our goal is to of course provide that strategic overview of homeless services delivery for the city of Austin and our partner agencies. We have created a homeless services division. It's important to note that there was never actually the creation of a homeless services office, but rather the officer position. We have now created a division that will be within the Austin public health division, which is of course under assistant city manager Chris shorter's purview. We have assigned three full-time equivalent positions and plan to hire additional staff to support the homeless services division, and assistant city manager Chris shorter will go over the scope of work for the homeless services division. And council may recall on December 5th you authorized the approval of a contract for an external consultant to assist us with reviewing

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the performance measures that we have in various contracts that we use for homeless services delivery. And it is our intention to of course continue utilizing external consultants who have some national expertise in this area. So from time to time you may see us bring up a consultant contract for consideration from council. With that, I will turn it over to assistant city manager Chris shorter who will also go over some other elements in the memo.

>> Thank you, Rodney. Chris shorter, assistant city manager. As Rodney mentioned, the creation of the homeless services division within Austin public health is underway. We hope to see that the division will serve essentially as a single point of contact for all efforts, operational efforts associated with homeless

and homelessness activities. We are also in the process of making sure that the priorities associated with the management direction and

[9:56:19 AM]

policy direction that council has given are aligned. The division will serve as essentially the citywide operational coordinator for all homelessness services -- homeless services and the creation of priority leads, what we found is in a creating a division within public health to help coordinate and make sure that those leads have the support that they need and the staff within the division has the support it needs we believe that this is a about path forward and a great way for us to support homeless services citywide. I'd also say that in terms of -- and this is reflected in the memo that was sent on the 17th convening internal and external partners. It will also be a very primary component of the work done by this division. This division will also continue to evaluate the effectiveness of contracts really citywide for homelessness and homeless

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services, as well as enhancing the divergent system supports. There are a host of activities listed in the memo for your awareness and information and wanted to provide an opportunity obviously to answer any questions that you may have based on what was covered in the memo. As Rodney alluded to, we have based on the approval on December 5th begun to work with Barbara poppy and associates to help with the review of all contracts and grants associated with homeless services citywide. That contract is now in place based on your approval approval, and we will begin the process in February of working with the -- with Barbara and her team to make sure that they have the information they need to provide the review. As Rodney mentioned, we are also continuing to assess national experts in and receive the support we need in Austin to make sure we're on the cutting edge, we're

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working with federal partners and with national organizations where there is funding opportunity. We want to make sure that we tap into it. Tap into it. In terms of guided path, also what was reflected in the memo sent on the 17th, the guided path program -- and for context the program began in October of 2019. Really as an effort to make sure that we were supporting those clients that were outside of the arch area in those living in encampments around the city, so the guided path program is now at a point where we believe we want to add additional investments to make sure that program really is an encampment strategy city-wide. What you will see reflected in the council agenda are amendments to the budget associated with guided path to really make sure that we

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continue to advance the program and make it as effective as possible city-wide. So, again, available for any questions that you might have.

>> Also within the memo, mayor and council, you may recall that staff had proffered the microtel hotel as a potential acquisition. Staff is no longer pursuing that property for various zoning and site-related issues. With regard to the roadway inn we continue due diligence on that property so we're working towards closing that property of course. We of course continue to research and identify other potential properties in accordance with the process that we had provided to council on November 26. There are a number of other updates that were within the memo and at this point we'll bring up the various priority area leads. Unless council has specific questions related to the topics that both assistant city manager shorter and I have covered.

>> Garza: Councilmember kitchen and councilmember alter have questions.

[10:00:21 AM]

Councilmember Casar.

>> Kitchen: Okay. I did have a question about the guided path and the homeless encampment strategy. I just want to make sure that I heard that correctly. So the agenda items that we have coming to us that provide additional resources for some of our partners, is that -- did I hear you right that that's in order to extend the homeless encampment strategy, the guided path approach beyond the area around the arch to other parts of the city?

>> It is. And I'll let the director speak to it. We are essentially adding capacity for the program and want to make sure that we raise it to council for approval. Director Hayden, I don't know if you want to --

>> Good morning, Stephanie Hayden, director of Austin public health. As you may recall, when the guided path started, it was a pilot. And we asked the agencies to

[10:01:21 AM]

use their existing resources to be able to go ahead and get the pilot up and running. And so as you know, the system is quite full so that was a sacrifice for the agencies to be able to do that. So what this allows is, is this allows for the expansion -- at least for a couple of years, for them to add additional capacity and have those positions and being able to provide that. Currently, we are still focusing on the

individuals that they are working on. We are going to kind of revamp and look at hotspots within the city so we can expand that and make some additional changes to that program.

>> Kitchen: What is the time line for looking at additional hotspots?

>> We're doing that right now.

>> Kitchen: And you may not know the answer to this yet, but do you have an anticipated time line for actually addressing other

[10:02:22 AM]

areas or working with individuals that are in other areas?

>> So currently, once this funding is approved, we have to amend those contracts.

>> Kitchen: Right.

>> Then they have to hire staff. So we have to allow them time to hire staff and then as they're doing that process, then we are -- we're still convening -- that group is still convening weekly. Just staff cases. So we're looking at kind of where those expansions will be. So at least over the next probably month we will be at that point, depending on how long it takes them to hire folks.

>> Kitchen: At some point as you complete that process I assume you'll let us know what the hotspots are?

>> Absolutely.

>> Kitchen: Thank you.

>> Alter: Thank you. I also wanted to clarify some information about the items that were on our agenda. So you mentioned that it was for multiple years.

[10:03:23 AM]

I thought that was onetime funding it was based off of. So have we extended the contract for multiple years or just for this amount of money?

>> It is for this amount of money. But the agencies have provided a budget to us, and we will be able to encumber the funds and it will be able to stretch across this fiscal year to next fiscal year.

>> Alter: Okay. Does that mean that we're taking our 1.5 million and stretching it across a couple years, or is there additional funding that we are appropriating for this need moving forward by taking this action?

>> We have -- we're not taking it from the 1.5 million. We are taking it from some other line items of onetime dollars.

>> Alter: Okay. I'll probably want to just talk with someone to make sure that I'm understanding the details of it.

>> Okay.

>> Alter: I saw the five or six items of 100,000.

[10:04:25 AM]

I understand we are adding resources and I appreciate that, but I want to have some greater clarity on the source of funding and how we are doing that over time and the -- as I'm understanding it, we had a onetime pot of money for something that has morphed into guided path, which was just a broad category that we had set aside in the budget, and we're now taking that money and putting additional resources into our providers that have been working on the guided path to make that successful. Is that a correct understanding?

>> Yes.

>> Alter: I'll wait to understand a little bit better some of those fiscal details and we can take that off-line. Thank you.

>> Okay.

>> Garza: Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: Thank you. Thanks very much for the update and for the memo. I had a couple quick questions about the memo -- about specific things in the

[10:05:27 AM]

memo. First of all, I want to say I think this structure, as I understand it -- and I probably -- so as I understood the presentation in the memo, there will be a assistant city manager leadership team level leadership team and then the homeless strategy office will live within public health. Is that -- and I just wanted to say I think that structure, city manager is really wise. I think it utilizes the very significant expertise we have within our public health department and the staff who have been working on these issues and really have the confidence and trust of our social service providers and our housing providers so I really like that direction a lot. And then just to dig into a few of the details. The guided path pilot results that are on page 3 of 5 in our memo, the 18 individuals, it says 18 individuals have been housed, one was reunited with family. Is that one of the 18 or is that a total of 19 housed?

[10:06:29 AM]

>> That is within the 18.

>> Tovo: And then could you give us some examples of the appropriate program, so 60 individuals who are enrolled or pending enrollment into appropriate programs. I assume they're waiting for -- could you give us some examples of the programs and kind of what the wait is about just for those who are following this conversation. I assume they're waiting for units to open up in some of those programs but if you could give us just a few examples of what some of those are.

>> So, yes, so the 60 individuals are currently working with agencies. Caritas and -- caritas, integral care. So basically they've been assigned a case manager. The case manager is working with them on an individualized treatment plan, which has housing-specific goals as well as other social service goals. And so if the individual needs a driver's license, if they are applying for social

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security/disability, they're helping them with that, if they have any addictions, any kind of criminal background, so really needing to be able to match them up with a unit. In addition to that we really, really want the case managers to put them in a -- house them in a safe and stable place where they're not paying more than 30% of their income. And then some folks may not have income, so that's why we're working with them to get the social security disability. You know, some of the folks also have been connected to the other ones, to be a part of that work program. And so it's really a holistic approach that really, really looks at each individual for the needs that they present with.

>> Tovo: Since you mentioned the other ones program, almost every time we have this conversation I run into people in the community or get emails afterward, asking

[10:08:34 AM]

about creating a work program. So if you could just say a few words about the existing work program, I think that would be helpful.

>> Absolutely.

>> Tovo: I think people are very excited in that kind of initiative and aren't always aware that we have one and are continuing to expand it.

>> The other ones program is a program, an employment program, which the goal is, is that we don't want people to be on the corner panhandling. So it's an alternative to panhandling. What it does is, is that it provides gainful employment and employment skills. They have a job coach, as well as a case

manager. Some individuals, you know, are just wanting to come and do the work and be paid, and so we are partnering with our parks system, as well as watershed protection to be able to do those clean-ups. And they also do the clean-up encampments as well.

[10:09:35 AM]

They have also -- even though that's not part of their contract and they're doing more workforce development-type work, they have also been able to house individuals as well in their program. So it's really been a very successful program. We were able to add some additional funding this year in the budget process, and so it's been working very well.

>> Tovo: Thank you very much. So there are already 14 individuals who are not yet matched with programs for enrollment? What's the challenge -- are the challenges there the capacity of the organizations, the amount of resources?

>> Well, it's actually a combination of both. You know, most agencies, in order to really provide the type of case management, you really don't want to have a caseload over about 23, 25 max to be able to provide the very intensive case management because when

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you're working with folks that have intensive needs, the likelihood that you will be talking with them everyday and doing some type of interaction with them everyday, so you want to keep that caseload small. So we are at this point -- you know, we want to go ahead and add this additional capacity and kind of take a gauge of where we are. The department is having additional conversations with the agencies to see how much additional capacity they can -- you know, that they may be able to add, but right now we just -- we want to hold off. And then as people are housed and that supportive housing case manager can follow them, then we'll be able to pick up the other 14 that are on the list.

>> Tovo: Okay. Thank you. Are we talking about storage separately or if we have questions about that --

>> We are.

>> Tovo: Okay. Thank you very much.

[10:11:39 AM]

>> Garza: Councilmember Flannigan.

>> Flannigan: In reading through the memo, there's only one mention of echo, like, in the middle of a list of bullet points. I like the idea of our homeless efforts being -- or living in the public health department. That makes sense to me. But it is sounding like we are taking on, in this new division, echo's job. And so I want to understand the role of the lead agency fortin -- continuum of care, the one that can match funds the way we can't match them. I had this before I saw the split of the contracts because it seems like the right way systems should do this is you contract with echo with a guided path project and then they work with the individual vendors. I worry about duplication of work and who is actually in

[10:12:39 AM]

charge. Can you speak to the role of echo in all of this, please?

>> So I'll start, and obviously director Hayden will talk primarily about this sort of role of the lead agency and serving the continuum. In terms of within our government organization okay, there is a great deal of work that is done not just at public health but really across the enterprise. And so the goal here is not to do what echo should be doing in terms of the provision of services, but instead to make sure that there's a coordinator on the government side who is making sure that all of the contracts associated with services, all of the work that our public safety agencies, housing agencies, housing programs, et cetera, that there is a place where that is being coordinated and is being coordinated from a government perspective. It doesn't necessarily speak to all of the various contracts and liaisoning that will be done by public

[10:13:41 AM]

health with a group like echo. So I completely understand the question, and it doesn't -- our reorganizing to make sure that we are coordinating operations doesn't necessarily put us in conflict with the role that the lead agency plays in terms of the provision of services. I don't know, director Hayden, if you want to add.

>> So I think one of the things that echo does, as you mentioned with the continuum of care, echo does convene all of the housing providers because they submit the federal application on behalf of Travis county for the continuum of care. That role that they play will continue. They will continue to convene. They will continue to be the author of the action plan.

[10:14:41 AM]

Austin public health has always partnered with echo in various roles, and so that entire continuum of care process through H.U.D., they will continue to do that. So basically this is just really more of a seamless of change. Austin public health has been in the business of doing this work even before echo

had been created. Sometime back, the reason why echo was created was because the director at the time wanted to make sure an outside entity had that contact with H.U.D. And was able to move forward with the continuum of care, do all of that solicitation and work with the partners in order for that project to be outside of the city. And so those things will continue, and we will continue to support echo and

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partner with them. There's things that we do together jointly and that continuum of care is one of them. Our staff sit on that membership council, as well as neighborhood housing staff sit on it. And so but there are other things that the department moves forward and echo has a staff person part of it. So there's not really things that we don't do together collaboratively, but there are efforts that they, you know, lead holistically, and there are efforts that we continue to lead based upon our financial investment in this, you know, in homelessness.

>> I'll also add, so one of the benefits of having national experts like Barbera poppy and associates come in and really take a look at -- and make sure that we are sort of operating based on best practice, and this is one of the areas that they'll be

[10:16:43 AM]

looking at, so making sure that we are appropriately working based on national best practice with our lead, that that lead is appropriately engaging the community of service providers, and so there certainly is more to come and if there are recommendations that we need to incorporate within our operation, we certainly are prepared to do that in a couple of months once Barbera poppy and her team are here and provide recommendations.

>> Flannigan: I'm really very interested in this case and the interplay with echo. I wouldn't necessarily want to point to things we've done in the past as evidence of what we should do in the future. Obviously we didn't do it right in the future as a city or region. I'm much more interested in seeing echo as the entity in charge solving this problem, not us. And what I worry about is that echo is being perceived as a vendor to the city and that we're in charge and my understanding that is not a national best practice, that the national best practice is that the lead agency is

[10:17:45 AM]

the one in charge of outcomes. We obviously become a primary funder to those outcomes but I don't want a situation where a housing provider goes to echo with an idea, echo says no and they turn around and come to a councilmember who then works the politics to get yes, which we have now where

providers are getting money from one hand or the other hand and in some cases they get it from one place and then they just contract back through the system and another place to get it done. It's not an efficient system. As I talk to -- when can we say Travis county we're also talking about the Williamson county portion included in echo's work but there's a separate continuum of care, the statewide balance, Texas homelessness network which has responsibility for Williamson county, we are getting some of our clients being sent to our salvation Army in Austin because the Salvation Army in Round Rock doesn't have as many resources and so we need to be collaborating in a way between our two agencies, echo and thn, in a way that

[10:18:47 AM]

I don't know that government agencies are set up to do. So I have a lot more conversations about how that's going to go. I also think it's important because when we ask about job programs, the other ones is not the only one in this community. Caritas has a program with white lodging to take folks experiencing homelessness to get them work in the hospitality industry. We're not contracting to do that but when we talk to the public about this we need to make sure all of these programs are included. That's why echo as a lead agency I think is important to run everything through. We're naturally going to talk about what the city is doing but that's not what the community is asking for. Please engage with my office on this conversation because I'm going to keep bringing it up. The other question I have is, we have the guided path results so far. What do we expect the results to be with this next round of contracts? What are our goals we should expect to see the next time y'all come back to us with a

[10:19:48 AM]

report?

>> The ultimate goal is, is that we do want to get the existing people that we are working with housed. And so that is the primary goal, is to go ahead and get all of the people housed and stably housed. So even once they are housed, we want to make sure that they're receiving that case management support so they maintain the housing. So that's the first goal. Then the next goal is, is as we are looking at the hotspots and being able to ramp up our org -- the process and being able to provide additional support and services to folks that are -- this was just the folks that were outside of the arch so we're looking to expand and be in more areas. So the goal will be is, get another subset of folks and work with them and get them stably housed and then continue to work as we work throughout the city to get people housed.

>> Flannigan: Are there nuke

--numerical goals?

[10:20:53 AM]

>> Currently we have not set numerical goals but what we use as our north star is, is we use the strategic direction performance measures that are there that says a percentage of folks will be stably housed. So of all the people that we're working with, we have a formula that is a performance measure that measures how many people are remaining stably housed and a percentage of those. So that's our north star.

>> Flannigan: If it's possible, as you go through more detail, to have expectations put out to the community that would be helpful. We can get a sense of did the pilot project had a lot of setup time we don't have to do in the second round so maybe that 18 number gets up to 25 because we're faster and we already have the connections in place or maybe the easy ones went first and the next round is gonna be harder because once you take care of the faster ones -- I mean, just a sense of our trajectory as we go down this road.

[10:21:54 AM]

Thanks.

>> Mm-hmm.

>> Garza: I don't think what your concerns are and what you're expecting is that far from what our staff has explained their role in the overall thing. It sounds like the lead people will still continue to be the lead social service part of it, but we're just trying to get a better handle on being responsive to the community when they're asking us questions about what are you doing and so we have a -- that's what it sounds like to me, is we're trying to just get a better understanding of what's out there. Then in addition to, you know, what echo hears, you know, all kinds of concerns from, you know, trash pickup and that kind of thing and then it sounds to me that -- and please correct me if I'm wrong, that this provides an opportunity for you to then go talk to Austin resource recovery and we have channels that we can work through to help address echo and vice versa and it's just

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trying to get I get more transparency and coordination is what I heard.

>> Exactly right. So ultimately as you've explained, there are very specific provisions of service that echo and the community of providers are responsible for that is critical. But when it comes to making sure that encampments are clean, that we are focused on housing, communications associated with the work that's being done, essentially all of the priority area lead -- leads in the reports that they have been providing and updates that they have been providing, that echo needs to be able to liaison with the city

to get that work done. And so I think what this will do is allow for us to more seamlessly operate within our enterprise and get information to you as councilmembers and get information to the community.

[10:23:55 AM]

So that's absolutely right.

>> Garza: Councilmember Casar.

>> Kitchen: Yes. Thank you. So, councilmember Flannigan, I really appreciate your focus on results because that's what we need to be doing. And I appreciate that. And so I agree with -- I agree with everything that you said. I want to add a bit of a -- my perspective in relation to time line and echo's role. I don't see echo as a lead agency perhaps yet, and the reason for that is they're not set up as a lead -- as what I would see a lead agency in terms of public oversight or any of those kinds of things that we have in place for folks that operate as agencies. So I think that that can happen and can get there, and they are also doing quite a bit right now to coordinate, which is their role in the community. But I would not -- I don't think that we're in a position yet as a community

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where the city can forgo -- and I'm not saying you were suggesting this, but I don't think the city can forgo our oversight role in regards to the use of our public llars. And because we don't -- I don't think echo is set up and our relationship with echo is set up in a way that we really have that oversight, and I look forward to future conversations because I do agree with you that we need to be coordinated, and that's one of the things that makes it difficult to really get results, to really get results. So I don't know that you were saying all that. I'm just saying that my perspective, when I think about the role of echo, is I think it's really important that echo play a central role in the community, and I know they're doing that, and I'm really appreciative of them stepping up to the plate with regard to the shelters at motels. But it's new for them, and

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it's unproven, and I want to see how they do, and I want to continue to work with them, and I am not ready to just hand things off to them and, again, I'm not suggesting that you said that. I'm just giving my perspective >> Kitchen:.

>> Casar: , Did you have your light on?

>> Tovo: I did.

>> Casar: I'm going to let councilmember Flannigan respond briefly to wrap that and then hand it over to you.

>> Flannigan: So there's a capacity-building element I think missing in the conversation but it is for better oversight, not less oversight. Quick example in a different topic area. In workforce development, for example, we have a similar system where there's an agency workforce solutions that has access to grants and matching funding and otherwise that if our workforce development processes went through them they would be tapping into more -- we're leaving dollars on the table. We are with echo and with workforce solutions. I'm hearing from workforce solutions in some cases there are vendors contracting with the city directly and with workforce solutions directly and

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counting the same clients for both money. So it's actually worse oversight if multiple agencies are doing the contracting because you don't actually get to know where the crossover is. If we can get echo to the place they've got the capacity to do it it's better oversight because only one place is counting the one client for the dollars they're getting for it. This is just an example?

>> Casar: Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: Thank you, councilmember Flannigan, for pointing out that there are other work programs that are being utilized to employ individuals experiencing homelessness, the downtown Austin community court also does it so thanks for pointing that out. We have several, and I think it's important for the public to know that these exist and that -- because many people, you know, are interested in seeing those go forward. And I just want to say that I'm really glad that our city is continuing, city manager, that you are shepherding an increased coordination among the different departments within the city that are working on

[10:28:00 AM]

these efforts. I think that's very necessary and very needed, and echo has certainly done that within the community and within the network of social service -- many, not all of the social service providers and housing providers that participate in that continuum of care. I see it as an ecosystem and we need all of those parts, and so the city is going to need to continue to be one. I just want to -- I don't really want to embark on another argument along the lines of the one that we had last fall, but I think it's really critical, given the conversations and some of the really misguided comments that I hear out in the public. I think it's absolutely important to say that I just disagree with the comment that the city hasn't always done this well or right. We have a tremendous lack of necessary resources, but this city and our really talented staff in public works and other areas across

[10:29:00 AM]

our city have been working on providing resources and housing to individuals experiencing homelessness, as have our social service providers and our housing providers. You know, I think Ann Howard of echo said it well, that we as a community know what we need to do and are very successful as housing individuals and keeping them housed. Our rates of keeping individuals who are experiencing - have previously experienced homelessness, keeping them housed are very high, and Austin is recognized as a leader for some of the initiatives that are going forward between the veterans homelessness, effort to end homelessness among veterans and now youth, the homelessness outreach street team, pay for success model, these are national best practices so I would hate for our staff or for those working day in and day out and have for years to go away thinking that your council, you know, believes that we haven't done those things well.

[10:30:01 AM]

We have. We just never have allocated enough resources as a community, not just as a city, but really as a community to really get us to that goal of ending homelessness. I'm glad to see more attention in the public about this because I hope that leads to increased resources which is what we need. We have very talented staff, talented social services providers. They just all lack the resources they need to meet the needs of the number of individuals who are experiencing homelessness.

>> Garza: I think those are all -- are there more presentations?

>> Thank you, director Hayden, for providing that update on homeless services. Next I'll call up Austin resource recovery director, who will provide an update on clean-up and storage.

[10:31:02 AM]

Good morning, mayor pro tem, manager, councilmembers, my name is Ken, director of Austin resource recovery. Here to give you an update on what we've been doing with the homelessness clean-up efforts and also storage. Not a lot to update on -- since we last talked about the clean-up activities, but there are some differences that I want to talk about related to storage. But with the encampment clean-up, I would say that the main thing that we've done is complete a draft for a policy and procedure update. It is currently under review and we should know more about that by the end of the week. The bag program has a couple of changes. The number of sites serviced by the bag program has expanded. Initially the pilot serviced 183 encampment road, 183 and olden road, 71 and pack

[10:32:02 AM]

saddle and also interstate 35 and Cesar Chavez. The program has now expanded to 183 and burnet road, and also pleasant valley and Cesar Chavez. The location at 183 and Olin was removed as the campers have left the site. We will continue to keep eyes on this site but we no longer have the buy the bag program operating there. Let's see. Over the holiday period we did not conduct encampment clean-ups. In effect you would have seen a two-week period where there were no clean-ups that took place during that time frame. Then right after the first of the year, the clean-ups started again. The activities are ongoing, and we continue to operate with a joint effort with

[10:33:05 AM]

also txdot and various city departments as well. Storage. So what are we doing with storage? One of the things that we have noticed is that storage is a beneficial service for those experiencing homelessness. A few of the benefits include protecting people's assets from either theft or loss. What we have explored is what is a best practice model nationwide, which is using a large warehouse-type storage facility. We did some work to explore usage of the healthsouth parking garage. It looks like initially that the facility will be useful in that effort. We are currently working through a fire code compliance issue, but other than that we think we can move forward with setting that site up for storage. The model that we will use is a model that has been

[10:34:06 AM]

used quite successfully in San Diego, and we're currently speaking with them and several other cities that are managing storage programs right now to see how best we'd be able to provide that service here in the city of Austin. Currently, we have provided support for the arch. We've provided 60 carts that they're currently using for storage on a smaller scale in their facility. And the parks department has also purchased several shipping containers that they will use to store belongings of homeless people as they encounter them as they perform their clean-ups and they've also made that available to other city departments as well, so that we can provide them support. Any questions?

>> Garza: Anybody have any questions? Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: I do, thank you. Thanks for that update and I know this is a real need and

[10:35:07 AM]

so I appreciate your working on it. And I hope that we're soon going to get one of those alternatives on the ground. So I had a question about some of the language in the memo. It talked about citywide

lockers, which sound like a good idea. Some individuals experiencing homelessness cannot mobilize for storage. Can you help me understand what that means? Is it because the larger structures are hard to use? I'm not sure. I just don't understand the language of cannot mobilize for storage, what that means exactly.

>> I think the intent is to highlight the fact that in some cases, some people are not going to go to a certain site, you know, in a certain portion of the city. The idea is that we wanted to create a program that would be easy to use for whomever, and so the lockers would give a means of flexibility for those in need of storage. They would be dispersed throughout the city and may

[10:36:07 AM]

be positioned at various locations. One of the locations we've talked about is a couple of the pard facilities where they experience larger populations of homelessness. So we would have the ability there to put those lockers in a place where people wouldn't have to transition to the health force site.

>> Tovo: Got it. It wasn't clear to me whether -- it sounds like it's about travel and kind of location versus the structure being challenging to work with for some of the individuals.

>> That is correct.

>> Tovo: Okay, thank you. Just back to healthsouth as an option, would that be -- I know that we have a parking arrangement right now where the parking in the parking garage is being rented. Is the storage -- can the storage happen alongside that parking arrangement or would we need to wait for that lease to end? I think it's in March -- for the storage to be deployed?

>> No. It's our understanding that we do not have to wait for the lease to end but we also

[10:37:08 AM]

don't think we'll need the entire structure so there's an opportunity to use it for both purposes.

>> Tovo: Great. How many storage containers do you think you could house at healthsouth?

>> We're looking to start with 300, and we do know that we have space for 300 at that location.

>> Tovo: At healthsouth along with the parking?

>> Correct.

>> Tovo: Wow, okay. More than I would have guessed. Then speaking of healthsouth, we've been trying for some time to get a full accounting of what the -- what repairs would be critical for that to be use the as housing in the interim while we're waiting for the rfps to come in and also for that -- hopefully for the design -- the design and the initial work to create housing on that site, permanent housing on that site,

market rate, as well as a significant component of affordable housing in alignment with that council resolution. But in the interim that

[10:38:12 AM]

building is vacant, so it would be really useful -- I know we've had conversations in this setting before about the challenges of using that in the interim because of the repairs, but I don't really have a solid accounting of what those -- what the most critical repairs would be and how much those would cost. Is there -- is that something that's been -- works -- that has been completed? I know that we've been talking with real estate and with others since about June on that, but it would be really helpful I think for the public and for the council to just know what our -- what are the actual repairs that would need to be done for that building to be occupied?

>> Councilmember, I understand the request and I'll check with staff and get back to you on where we're at with that process.

>> Tovo: Thank you.

>> Garza: Councilmember kitchen.

>> Kitchen: Thank you all very much. And thank you for the report on the storage and the bag

[10:39:13 AM]

program and all those things. I have just a few questions about that. Can you remind us about how often -- the clean-ups are occurring? I was understanding that was once a week. Is that correct or not?

>> The clean-ups are taking place twice a week, councilmember, and the bag and litter clean-ups are taking place twice a week and the encampment clean-ups are taking place twice a month.

>> Kitchen: Okay. So the -- cleaning up the bags and the garbage cans and that is twice a week.

>> Correct.

>> Kitchen: Okay. Then I wanted to ask about the areas that are on the sides of freeways. We've started to see some areas where there's quite a bit of trash, and I know other parts of the city may have already been seeing that, but along the Ben white area in particular, there's quite a bit of trash along the side of the freeway, not inspector the overpasses. So are those areas that are included in the clean-ups?

[10:40:14 AM]

>> They had not been but we're just now exploring that as we've seen the same issue.

>> Kitchen: Okay.

>> As now more and more have moved out from underneath the actual overhead structure, and so we're going to be engaging with txdot to get a better sense of how we should proceed, we being them or us, in terms of cleaning those areas along the side stretches.

>> Kitchen: When would we have an answer to that? Because that's been a problem for a while now.

>> I would say for sure by the end of the month. We meet with them on a regular basis to talk about the overpass clean-ups and we could start to put the sides on the table as a topic as well.

>> Kitchen: So you think by the end of January, which is the end of this week, you would have an answer to that?

>> Yes.

>> Kitchen: Okay. Thank you.

>> As to an approach, you're expect?

>> Kitchen: Yes, I'd like to understand what the answer to the approach is and would also like to understand when

[10:41:14 AM]

that answer will be implemented, and I think it's something we need to respond to as quickly as possible. And then finally I would just echo councilmember tovo's request with regard to healthsouth that's something I think we have ted about for a while, about the use of that building and during the interim because it's just sitting empty right now in the face of really some very critical needs. So as soon as you all can respond to that, that would be helpful. Then the council can make a decision about whether we want to use that and whether we want to put the resources towards what it takes to be able to use it. As it is right now, it's just -- it's just in limbo, and, you know, while time passes and, you know, we have great needs. So. . .

>> Just to close out, councilmember, for clarity, I just wanted to say that currently the scope for the clean-ups are the underpassed areas so you're asking about the sides. I can get an answer on that

[10:42:14 AM]

pretty quickly, but as far as working out an agreement on who is going to do what along those stretches that's currently not in the scope but I'll work in that as well.

>> Kitchen: I understand we're working with txdot and we have to. I just don't want the back and forth to take a long time, for this to get stuck in -- you know, in the processes that occur on our side and txdot's side. I think we need to cut through all that and move quickly.

>> Garza: When you say you're -- you said you're working with txdot. So they are helping clean the -- can you explain what that relationship is with txdot?

>> Yes. So what they did is they -- you remember they published a list of sites that they would be cleaning? So what we did was coordinate with them just to make sure that we're not cleaning the same sites, so we're not going to the same locations and duplicating work at those specific sites so we've kind of been working through those

[10:43:14 AM]

relationships to tie up when we're doing what versus when they're doing it. So, for example, the overpasses, the clean-ups have happening twice a month and there's some sites where one of those is being done by us and then one is being done by txdot.

>> Garza: Okay.

>> Then there are other sites that are solely being cleaned up by us, where we do the clean-ups both times ourselves.

>> Okay. Councilmember harper-madison.

>> Harper-madison: Yes. I just wanted to address councilmember tovo and councilmember kitchen's concerns around the utilization of the space that is healthsouth and say to staff who has worked on it already, my office has been told numerous times, countless times that it's not a viable option in the interim to use that space in that way. As a matter of professional courtesy, healthsouth is in district 1. If you have questions about what will happen with healthsouth moving forward I'd like very much for the conversation to start with

[10:44:16 AM]

your colleague as we move forward talking to the various departments about what will happen there.

>> Could I add one last comment?

>> Garza: Sure.

>> The storage option is not in the building proper. It's the parking garage, right? So it's -- the two are separate.

>> Garza: Councilmember Ellis.

>> Ellis: Quickly, while you're having conversations about, you know, who is going to take care of which aspects of those clean-ups along right-of-way, I know that on 290 proper, like, underneath txdot bridges, I believe they're txdot right-of-way to the underpass of 290, which is definitely their right-of-way, there's stuff that's kind of fallen through that I know there's going to be a lot of overlapping jurisdictions and trying to figure out where sources of trash are coming from. But that could be part of the big picture that I think could be helpful for motorists coming through that way just as a larger scope of what could be a similar problem, overlapping

[10:45:16 AM]

problem or maybe they're just not related and it's just kind of on the 290 right-of-way.

>> Garza: Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: Yeah, thank you, councilmember harper-madison. I appreciate your comment and will certainly continue to try to include you in those conversations. I think one of our very first -- during your very first month on council my office pulled together all of the information that we had as a cosponsor and very active participant in the work that came through council on healthsouth, we wanted to make sure you had all that information and make that available to you and have tried to communicate with you about that. That is absolutely in your district and look forward to working with you in that conversation. It's just over the line, and I am super interested in making sure that our council resolutions on that topic continue to go forward. You know, one of the things that happened last fall is that we did start a

[10:46:18 AM]

conversation about healthsouth and its interim use but it was within the context of the ordinances, and so councilmember kitchen and I and alter and pool had a section asking for those costs in the resolution that didn't move forward, and as we were in a different quorum we couldn't talk directly about that again. So I do welcome and would look forward to collaborating with you about that conversation outside of here. But we have gotten some information from economic development about the costs, but we have never been able to get those final costs, despite repeated requests about it, and all of us are accountable to the public, many of whom have asked me if you're looking at purchasing a hotel, why wouldn't you consider the use of healthsouth in an interim and I'd like to be able to really answer with clarity what the actual repairs would cost to have that be habitable.

[10:47:19 AM]

>> Garza: All right. Do you have a next presenter?

>> Yes. Thank you, director snipes. Next I'll call up the communications and public information office team who will provide the communications update.

>> Good morning, mayor pro tem, councilmembers, city manager. My name is Laura Foss, communications and public information office. This is Sarah Rodriguez from the office of design and delivery and I'm going to give a short update on communications progress that we've made recently. Our partner collaborations with our partner -- external partners continue. As many of you know, we had a press conference the week before last on the pit event estimate. We're continuing to collaborate on videos, social media, and press events with echo on that. We are also collaborating with life works on their exciting opening this afternoon. As a matter of fact as soon

[10:48:19 AM]

as this meeting is over I'll be heading over to that event. And we have some videos that we're working with integral care and life works that I'll talk about in just a second. And then our internal collaborations continue with nhcd. We're working on some housing -- press release on permanent supportive housing targets. We're working on a February press conference just to keep the drum beat of information going out of the city. We continue collaborating on social media and press requests, most recently with Austin public health and the downtown Austin community court. Then atxn is super busy. To air on January 27 we'll have a homeless advisory council city works, and then we're working on something called chalkboard stories, which is about those experiencing homeless -- stories about those experiencing homelessness here in our community, and arch updates. Then in preproduction we

[10:49:20 AM]

have -- we're working on something about the pickup resource clinic and as I mentioned before, life works and integral care were working on an educational piece about housing first, and then success stories on youth who have experienced homelessness. We're also working on a dashboard, and we're making . Progress on that and I'll just say ahead of time that we'll be making appointments with each of your offices after this meeting to walk you through the dashboard in more detail, but we just kind of want to give you a very high-level picture. So some of the things that you should keep in mind as we go through this, what makes a good dashboard, it tells a captivating story, and it gives a glimpse or a snapshot of the current environment, and it communicates and tracks goals. Now, for the prototype that we've been working on, we think we have a really good handle on one and two, and we are making -- working on number 3 and making that more robust. To go through the dashboard,

[10:50:23 AM]

just some screenshots of things that we're working on, I will kick it over to Sarah.

>> Thanks, Laura. So I'm just gonna run through the dashboard and through information about homelessness data. As you all know, as you've of departments touch homelessness, whether they're directly serving or indirectly serving the homeless population, whether or not it's something that their work is impacted by. And so some departments don't collect data. Some departments have started to collect data. They're having that conversation about data standardization and then other departments collects a wealth of data, and so we have to have a conversation about how we show that data, what information, you know, is valuable, how we work in the bounds and in the absence of regulation around data sharing, additionally, how we keep things up to date and that's one of the reasons I think a dashboard is so important, because it keeps the information up to

[10:51:24 AM]

date. So for the prototype which is currently interfacing and we will share with your offices when did we meet, it's broken up into three sections, homelessness in Austin, homelessness and the impact on city services and providing services to people experiencing homelessness. So we start the first section with stories of people who have experienced homelessness, talk about sort of the roots of homelessness, what kind of led to it. So trauma and loss, housing instability, injury, job loss. To really humanize all of the data that we're going to get into because these are their individual stories. So it's beginning -- giving a snapshot of the environment through data, and then additionally how services are being impacted through data and then, finally, the services that we're providing. And I'll turn it back over to Laura to talk about next steps.

>> Thank you. And so next steps, we will -- as I mentioned, be meeting with each of your individual offices to walk

[10:52:25 AM]

through the dashboard in more detail. We'll own that housing -- some housing data is missing from just this presentation. We do have some, but we're working with echo to build that out more robustly. We'll also be convening at meetings with focus groups, including ahac, for usability and accessibility testing and we'll be collaborating with the office of -- the office of performance management to discuss -- to define and refine key performance metrics and a governance structure since there are many, many departments who are involved both internally and we have our external partners involved also. So we'll continue that collaboration with echo, integral care, central health, et cetera. And then we will come back and report to you on our progress after we do that usability testing and some of those -- building those governance structures. With that I'm happy to take

[10:53:25 AM]

any questions.

>> Garza: Councilmember kitchen.

>> Kitchen: Thank you very much. This is really good work.

>> Thank you.

>> Kitchen: So I'm looking forward to the dashboard in particular. I have a quick question about the -- I think the homeless hotline I think we may have been calling it. Would you be the right person to ask about that?

>> Yeah, 311 is doing the training for that -- for that service request.

>> Kitchen: Okay.

>> So we've built out a homelessness service request, so that is still in process. Then there will be a training for all of the 311 ambassadors and I think that's taking place at the beginning of February. The training.

>> Kitchen: Okay. Then will there be some kind of public communications so that people know --

>> Yes. We will have -- once the training is done and then we'll have a short pilot.

>> Kitchen: Okay.

>> To see if the resource --

[10:54:26 AM]

the service request needs to be refined. So once that is -- we know that it's in solid shape, we'll have a launch and there will be communications around that.

>> Kitchen: Okay. So is the goal then to -- so that people have an easily rememberable number?

>> We have a number. I'm not going to say it right now, but we do have a very easy number.

>> Kitchen: Okay. I understand it feeds into the 311 system.

>> It does.

>> Kitchen: Something that can be viewed -- for the public to view as the number to call if they have questions.

>> Correct.

>> Kitchen: So then the last part of it would be -- we talked about this before and I don't believe where y'all are on this, and that's the feedback loop afterwards, in other words if someone calls and reports

something or asks a question or that sort of thing, how do we get back to them? Is that in the works, too, or --

>> It is. It needs work.

>> Kitchen: Okay. Okay. I just request as y'all work through that process, I think that's gonna be real important so people don't feel like they're just

[10:55:28 AM]

calling into, you know, a black hole.

>> Sure.

>> Kitchen: Thank you. Oh, last thing. Do you have any idea what the time line is? I mean, I know you're working through it as you explained, but --

>> I believe the 311 requested a three-month pilot, so then after that three-month pilot we'll report back to you.

>> Kitchen: Okay. Thank you.

>> Garza: All right. I think we're -- oh, councilmember Renteria.

>> Renteria: As I was looking through the dashboard here, I was looking at the ems incidents, and it's sounding like are the ems incidents are an ambulance actually goes out there and address that?

>> Yes. So there are two different types of measures. Usually it's the phone calls, which is the larger number, and the incidences, which is a smaller number.

>> Renteria: Is there any financial -- I mean, any kind of money attached to these calls that you can put

[10:56:29 AM]

together how much it's costing the city or the --

>> That would not be a me question. I think that would be best directed to the ems data analyst, but we can find out.

>> Renteria: Okay. Thank you.

>> Garza: All right. I think we're ready for the next presentation.

>> Thank you, Laura and Sarah. Mayor and council, as you may recall, we brought several service provider agencies to provide an overview of the work they do. Previously we've had echo, life works and we've had integral care. With us today are the leadership from salvation Army, we've got rob who is the

chair of Salvation Army, major Lewis, as well as the director of social services. I will call each of them up today so that way they can provide you an overview of their service delivery.

[10:57:38 AM]

>> Thank you, mayor pro tem, councilmembers and city staff and city manager. For the opportunity to present to you today. We certainly appreciate the partnership that we enjoy with the city of Austin and we want you to know that we certainly want to be a part of the homelessness issue that just seems to be -- gets bigger and bigger everyday. And we want you to know that it's our goal to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring in most of our vulnerable citizens and that this is our central mission as a faith-based organization in Texas. We did modify some of these slides that you were originally given to avoid some redundancy and maybe some overload, but you have everything so some we will

[10:58:39 AM]

right over. What you see here is an overview. What is important about the valuation army is we consider ourselves to be a critical part of the safety net to help with homelessness. We're tasked with basic survival needs of our most vulnerable citizens that are on the street 24/7 and rapidly rehousing them. We're the largest provider of shelter in central Texas. , With the opening of the rathgeberer center, we will house 535 men, women and children experiencing homelessness.

>> This slide addresses the Austin shelter for women and children, which is one of our three shelter sites. This of course is a city funded program just for women and children where we serve as the operator. This slide shows the outcomes for the last fiscal

[10:59:42 AM]

year. That was the first fiscal year following the renovation where we ramped up services going through a long period of being partially shut down. So we measure safe exits to housing, that's subsidized housing, rental housing with no subsidy, single room occupancy, shared housing with family and friends. And we also try to assist families to increase their income and become employed or increase their employment income if they're able to do so. Women and children's shelter is has Japan around services that are designed to help women in crisis become rapidly rehoused. We're very pleased to have a brand new day care center there thanks to the recent renovation and we provide a lot of outsourced childcare

[11:00:44 AM]

also to our residents there, most of whom are children.

>> Our center downtown not too far from here houses -- has 252 beds. One of the things we do want to kind of talk a little bit about is our safe sleep program, which is a -- part of the facility we have for the most vulnerable females in homelessness. And this is a place where they can come and they can -- it's just for them. No one else is going to be a part ever that. It helps them. Now, I can tell you it's been overloaded as you can imagine that we've had some old mattresses and what it takes to be able to bring these ladies in. But to provide a safe environment for them as you can imagine is huge for us.

[11:01:49 AM]

219, 376 households, we did 78% and 75% who receive employment services will improve their employment income as we have talked about the people being able to manage their rents. This was constructed in '87. It was renovated in 2018 and most of the operating dollars for this are privately raised. This is the largest multipopulation shelter in the area. Recent additions of operating funds from the city of Austin will allow up to 80% of the rose dents to be -- residents to be case managed. The percentage now is 30 to 45%. Other plans taking place, of course, as we move into the rathgeberer center, will be to repurpose that center to bring in the families in downtown shelter now, they will be moving over into the Rathgeber center and our facility downtown is scheduled to be single occupancy only.

[11:02:51 AM]

Some of the performance measures that we put on ourselves for the Rathgeber services is 100% housing and case management, full service; rapid rehousing programs on-site to assist residents, employment assistance and skills training, outsource childcare, child and family therapists, teachers and tutors. We'll have 40 emergency shelter rooms at 120 beds and average stay of 90 days and an extended stay 90 days and an extended stay will be 92 beds in the second part of the facility for most who have been in there. So those we are actually working towards a February open for Rathgeber at this point.

>> The social service center downtown has currently five case managers for men, women and families. Employment services coordinator.

[11:03:53 AM]

We have a computer lab with learning center teachers there who work with folks during the day on job related issues, and in the good evening they are there for the kids to help them with their homework,

keep them on track in school. Thanks to about the additional money that you all have provided for us on a one time basis, we are in the process of hiring three additional case managers, an intake case worker and a case management supervisor. We really think that increasing the percentage of individuals downtown who are in a case management program will have a very positive effect on the number of people who return to homelessness and also who go back and forth from Salvation Army to the arch. So we think that is a really good investment of money and we're working very hard on

[11:04:57 AM]

it. The outputs that you see here are for if the social service center and I think it's important to find out that efficiency and shelter is directly related to how fast you can move people through. We don't need more shelter. If we can use our shelters efficiently and move people through as quickly as possible. So getting people rapidly rehoused is our goal. And trying to find ways to directly link housing resources resources to our shelters is a big goal for us. Most of the residents on our enrollment lists here are currently waiting for housing through the coordinated entry process. And we do have opportunity for them to sign up on-site and do coordinated assessment.

>> There you see the Rathgeber center that as we

[11:05:58 AM]

talked about moved families from downtown. When we reach full capacity there will be a lot of people in there, mostly kids as you can imagine, so that will help a number of families. What we have concerns about is our long waitlist and how to address that. And that seems to be something we just internally talk about and can't come up with a solution simply because of our limited facilities and limited resources. And so once we open that we're just excited about the possibility that brings to the families. I think mainly of the young people and I've said it to a number of you who have probably walked through there with me. Can you imagine often times how scary it is downtown for these young people to have to be in the environment downtown in our facility or sleeping in a car or somewhere else in a city, but then can you imagine

[11:07:00 AM]

taking them to the Rathgeber that very first night and mom and dad and whomever can shut the door and lock the door and they don't have to worry about somebody asking them to leave, to move. I can envision some child just -- a little scared probably, but holding mom, dad or whomever and feeling safe for the first time in a very long time. That to me is something that will be worth every picture that we're going to be able to take down there. So this slide I believe shows the projected goals of persons served

for the Rathgeber center at full capacity, which would be 664 people. As we have the money to open, we will start at least 80 beds in the

[11:08:01 AM]

emergency shelter and the extended stay portion which is 92 beds consists of suites that are kitchenette living/dining space with two bedrooms. This is a unique way of sheltering folks that we haven't tried before. We're looking forward to it. This is for people who have higher barriers and are going to need a longer time in shelter to become self-sufficient.

>> One of the reasons that won't be open right away is because we'll be moving folks from phase I to phase II as they qualify for that part of the program. As can you see these are our funding sources. I do have to say I'm a little worried about the foundation part of it. I think it's a little higher. I don't think we've done ourselves justice by putting in our financial books the way that we have, but I will

[11:09:01 AM]

tell you that we are starting to go out more and get into more foundation families and go in that direction. But you see where we're coming from. Then when we do have Rathgeber at 100% that will add another five million dollars to the type of funds that we need to raise.

>> We want to share with you our Salvation Army equal access policy. And just reassure everybody how dedicated we are to the provision of services is without discrimination. This equal access policy pertains to all client services, including shelter and housing. We have in this past year also reached out to a consultant Shane Whaley who does training with staff and

[11:10:04 AM]

have been able to provide extensive training in this area, all the way down to the folks who work on the desk in the facilities because it is very important to us. The Salvation Army has followed the HUD guidance on this issue to the letter, particularly in shelter we go to a lot of -- we spend a lot of time working on how to make sure that folks that do not experience discrimination and that they are able to select, they self-select the dormitory that they want to access and then we just provide services according to that. So I don't know if you have any questions about that. Feel free to ask.

>> Garza: I have a question about does national origin include immigration status, that you house

[11:11:05 AM]

people regardless --

>> I don't know if the Salvation Army has faced that yet. We would have to get guidance from the corporate office if something like that were to occur.

>> Garza: Do you ask about that?

>> No, we do not.

>> Typically when something occurs is when we see guidance.

>> And there are people in shelter who are not citizens, women and children shelter too.

>> That's it for us. Do you have any questions? Thank you for this time.

>> Garza: I think there's some questions. Councilmember alter.

>> Alter: Thank you. First of all, thank you for your work. It's very important for our community in talking with my constituents who through the important conversations we've been having who have been asking about concrete ways to get involved I often point to the Rathgeber center and that o&m and trying to fund that gap with

[11:12:06 AM]

the shelter being ready to go forward. I just wanted to ask for some clarity on the numbers of the gap. At one point you said 500 million and I'm thinking that you meant 500,000 gap. I just wanted to get clarity on what the actual numbers numbers are. I think you misspoke and said 500 million.

>> No, we need you to give us 500 million.

[Laughter].

>> Alter: I wanted to make sure we had some clarity on that gap and what's needed to make it fully functional both for this year and then moving forward because I believe our funding was a one time funding.

>> Correct, the way it will work out here because we're halfway through the fiscal year, we're very comfortable with where we are now and then we'll start moving towards funds for next year. So at R at one point had we opened up at full capacity

[11:13:06 AM]

we would have had probably a million dollars in a funding gap. And so through different initiatives that we have, with what we're opening right now we're very satisfied with where we are in terms of that part of our financial commitment to that program.

>> Alter: So for next fiscal year what is the gap --

>> Five million dollars.

>> Alter: Five million dollars is the gap for the o&m funding that needs to be filled so we can house -- what was the total?

>> At Rathgeber it's 212 beds.

>> Alter: If somebody wanted to get involved and contribute philanthropically, how can they get involved? I've heard of people not getting calls back and I want to be sure it's very clear about where they need to contact and who they need to contact if they want to

[11:14:06 AM]

help us address this gap.

>> They can obviously contact us at Salvation Army austin.org or go to our office on manor and ask for me.

>> Alter: Thank you very much.

>> Garza: Councilmember Flannigan.

>> Flannigan: I want to thank you for the non-discrimination policies. I know there are some parts of the community that there's a meme about the Salvation Army and it's going to take a lot of work about that and for transgendered people and I want to commend you for that work and I know that you're continuing to do trainings and work in the community to overcome that. So I want to thank you for that. But also acknowledge that that belief exists in our community and elsewhere. It's something that we will continue to take effort. On councilmember alter's

[11:15:10 AM]

question did I say earlier in the presentation that you had hired staff based off of the additional funding the city had provided?

>> Correct.

>> Flannigan: So there have been long-term obligations created based off of long-term funding. You're making some assumptions off the future fund-raising.

>> Correct.

>> Flannigan: Which I would assume that organizations do. Do you also receive funding through the echo continuum of care process?

>> Yes, we do. We have a continuum of care grant that's about \$696,000, the passages program, that we share those funds with safe alliance.

>> Flannigan: So I think just to my colleagues, it's another example where we're putting the burden on the organizations to reach out in multiple places to get funding. We're putting multiple burdens of oversight on echo and on us. I think there's a better way to manage this system and if that takes a little time to get capacity at the echo stage then I think we should be talking about that. Thank you.

[11:16:14 AM]

>> Tovo: Thanks very much for your work as well as your presentation. I want to be sure I'm understanding the numbers downtown. I think you had a slide on that. Could we see the slide for the downtown social services center is in terms of housing capacity? So those are the annual -- so these are -

>> That's the Rathgeber center. Maybe there wasn't a slide for the downtown --

>> She has a slide that isn't in the powerpoints, I think.

>> Tovo: Thank you. That was the one I was looking for and I couldn't take a good shot of it. So this is the capacity downtown. So within those 55 beds for families, how many would you

[11:17:16 AM]

estimate are children of that 55 number?

>> At any give intime we have at least 30 or more children.

>> Tovo: And I think the major referred to the environment downtown, that's a very challenging environment for kids. They need to take the bus back and forth and then walk from the bus in our downtown area. So how soon -- so when this is able to convert to single occupancy, will all of those 55 -- so that will increase the number of beds that are available for single men and single women to fit an additional 55. And how soon do you believe that you would be able to move the families? I think you referred to this in your presentation, but I missed the timeline on that.

>> Well, as soon as the

[11:18:17 AM]

Rathgeber center opens we will begin transitioning families from downtown. These are individual case plans because there are children enrolled in school and, you know, people who can easily move and people who can't easily move, but we're also always housing people out. So the best goal is to house people out of downtown and move -- and move people over. So that's what while be doing. And then we're also going to address the weight list.

>> Tovo: So that can happen as soon as the Rathgeber center opens, but some families may remain downtown because of --

>> We'll phase out, move people over and then repurpose that space for single adults.

>> Tovo: Thank you. And when will the extended stay be opening? Is that a later phase or is that something that we'll begin opening as well in February?

>> Well, we wouldn't begin with that open because folks

[11:19:18 AM]

are going to transition from emergency shelter over there anyway. I think because it's extra money to operate it, it will be a delayed start on the extended stay. As soon as we have a group of peims families that can move over there and we can afford to put them over there, we will start utilizing, but the first and most important, immediate step, is to have that emergency shelter space at Rathgeber. And with a private bathroom for every single family. That's a big deal in shelters.

>> Tovo: Thank you for that. And so in answer to councilmember alter's question, you named the five five-million-dollar figure. So is that the total cost of operating, maintaining and operating the Rathgeber center for one year?

>> Yes.

>> Tovo: Thank you. And of the last time I checked it was donors have the ability -- they can go to your website and donate

[11:20:19 AM]

directly to the Rathgeber center if they want to target their gift in that direction.

>> That is correct.

>> Tovo: So when they do that that will help fill that gap.

>> Right.

>> Tovo: Thank you very much.

>> And families will be admitted to the Rathgeber center without regard to the gender of the adults.

>> Garza: Has the county contributed to this center?

>> No, not yet.

>> But there's been discussions of different ways. They want to be involved, but we haven't really --

>> There's been some conversations. We just can't get to a point where both sides are comfortable with all the aspects of it.

>> Garza: Okay. Does anybody else have any questions? Thank you. Thank you for all that you do for our community.

>> Mayor pro tem, council, that concludes our -- mayor pro tem, council, that concludes our update on homelessness initiatives. Thank you very much for your time.

>> Garza: Thank you.

[11:21:25 AM]

The last presentation is the presentation regarding economic development entity.

>> All right. Mayor pro tem, council, Rodney Gonzalez, assistant city manager for economic opportunity and affordability. With me are the economic development director, our consultant from key partners, here to talk about the economic development corporation work that has been done. And with that I will turn it over to Veronica to introduce the team. Thank you.

>> Good morning, council. We're glad to be here with you today. We're here to talk about an economic development entity, or potential one, for our city and possibly beyond. Matt is our consultant on the project and as you know this is a conversation that we as a city have had for a few years back. Most recently there was a resolution passed in August that gave staff direction to pursue this idea so we're coming back to you as a part of that at a midpoint in our

[11:22:25 AM]

press. With that I'll turn it over to Matt and David and myself are here to answer any questions you may have.

>> Thank you very much, Veronica. Organic, mayor pro tem, councilmembers and city manager. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present on the work so far. I just want to give a little bit of context to what this presentation is. This is just a report out on some research that . We have done to date. It has not quolly been reviewed by the city law department. We are still in a brainstorming phase of what

opportunities there might be and we wanted to take this opportunity since this is a rather compressed process to give you an idea of the kinds of things we're talking about and then we will have one discussion at the end about some of the governance questions that we would love to have your feedback on. Our plan will then be to come back with you later, which I will review in the presentation. And just for the purposes of the record, I'll state briefly, although I said in many of the meetings with

[11:23:26 AM]

you, my background here for the last five years I've been working for the new York City economic development corporation. Before that I helped start an economic development non-profit in Augusta, Georgia and before that I was a freelance consultant doing work in public-private partnerships around the country, which was led to by fighting gentrification on behalf of artists and cultural groups in Seattle. What seems like several life times ago, but actually was only about 15 years ago. So I've had the pleasure of working with your city on various contracts since 2010 and I'm very pleased to be invited back and hope that I can be helpful. So with that I'll go through the presentation, which hopefully should take a little bit less than 10 minutes, and then we can open into conversation about governance structure. So the presentation itself, I'll talk a little bit about the timeline and what the scope that was given to us is. A summary of findings from the first task, which was really just interviews of stakeholders. And then a little discussion of national benchmarks and

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case studies and then of course a specific discussion of some Texas case studies. In both of those cases I'm just going to show you summary charts. We have more materials available for your offices we'll send via email and we're happy to get together and discuss any specifics. And then we'll have a discussion of strategic options as it relates to structure and governance. So in the timeline I believe this was said well already by Veronica, but I want to highlight that one of the things that I heard in the conversations I had is when we say the words economic development, here in Austin a lot of people hear expansion of the economy only. And in particular attraction and retention of businesses. I use that word a little bit more broadly and I want to make sure you understand that we heard the direction that what we're being asked to do is a little more broad. The term I will use for the activities is something I call inclusive growth. Inclusive growth is the concept to that.

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Yes, we want the opportunity to grow because that gives us money, especially when we're capped off in terms of how much tax we can charge. But we don't want it to grow at the expense of the population. And so that could mean discussions such as the one you were just having, as well as discussions about

how affordability for individuals as well as businesses, cultural and beyond. Then also taking the opportunity when we make big investments to look at what investments we can do at the same time that will sell us up for 20, 30 years in the future because very often if we wait until after the affordability problem has happened, it's a little bit late to try to deal with it in the sense that it costs a lot more money. The scope itself is divided into four tasks. Task one is almost complete. We'll be submitted just a memo on that for the final piece. That was really engagement kickoff and interviews. And then we currently are reporting out on task two in this meeting right here. There also will be a lengthy

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deck and memo to follow with that. That as you can see is all in the first two months of the engagement. We'll take the feedback that we get here and come up with some initial proposes and then -- proposals and repeat what we did in task one. Meeting one on one with all of the stakeholders as well as all of your offices to get feedback on that and we'll do go rounds or three rounds before coming up with the presentation and recommendations for March. Briefly in task one we about over 40 view interviews. Here's a list of the interests that we interviewed with. They spanned elected officials in the city, department staff, intergovernmental organizations and stakeholders and anchors that already are pursuing work in these areas or might be considered as the logical groups to pursue this kind of work. The interviews were fascinating and compressed into a rather short time.

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We did a lot of them when you were doing the land development code conversations here in Austin and we followed up over the last several weeks with certain stakeholders that we really wanted to be sure to speak with. I'm going to summarize based on these topics of discussion what we heard and I want to be really cautious about what this summary represents. These are the topics of discussion that we brought up, structure, governance, funding, powers, projects. Examples in other cities that we should look at and learn from on either because they're going well or going poorly. In the next couple of slides I'll talk about items in which a number of interviewees suggested to council to explore. They are not my recommendations of what we should do and it's also not clear that they're totally feasible, but this gives you a sense of the body of the people that we spoke to about where their thoughts come into play, which I think is important. So in terms of places of

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agreement on structure and governance, what we found is that there was broad support for the idea of onoutside entity, which is good since that's what we were directed to explore, and that there was a large degree of important set to council having control of that entity in a real way. And then attention

between that accountability and the ability for this organization to do something different than is already happening. You can logically state that if the new organization is just represented by all of you oned board, and that's the board, it kind of doesn't pass the smell test that you will be able to have a different dynamic than that you have currently. It's not to say that it's bad, but people have focused on something more nimble than the current process so there needs to be some separation without having so much separation that you lose trust in it and don't want to do projects. So that's really the tension that we're trying to find and that's the discussion in a couple of minutes.

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In terms of funding, a lot of the funding sources are tapped out and indeed the reason I think you were motivated to ask for this investigation is a cap on the sales tax, specifically as used very often in Texas to support these kind of activities. It is worth noting that no city of size in the state uses sales tax. I point that out because they all have the same problem. We do have to get creative. In general we see these types of items being brought up. Usual general fund dollars are shied away from because again if it is an outside entity and taking money just like an inside entity it's unclear that it has any separate ability to act so in terms of things like contract for specific services is that is something it could take, but generally operations money from the general fund most people agreed would be probably a mistake. And then in addition, the

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idea of accepting philanthropic donations, using real estate to generate money, potentially having some fees in some of these areas of management were also stated as thing to explore. I know other entities are doing some of these things. These are just the topics that people awe brought up as worth exploring. In general in the powers section, something that was brought up that also is probably quite controversial and also as an existing chapter 380 program around it is the idea of being able to do property tax abatement for certain types of uses. Again, that is highly governed by the local government code. You already have a chapter 380 program. It was just something that was raise specifically for commercial affordability and those rises out pacing people's ability to afford it. And real estate powers were brought up in the sense of what people see happening in other cities or in the sense of particular projects that are pain points for you now.

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In terms of the projects, and again we're still in the places of agreement of what people generally said were important to look at, these are the main areas that surfaced again and again. Some lead agency that could help existing agencies on inclusive growth policies and also bring new funding into inclusive

growth policies, where will you come up with the the money for all of these things? Second a cultural trust was brought up as a specific example of both something that is about inclusive growth and something that is unique to Austin and something that has had a lot of folks very interested in seeing a solution. In international investment fund, it was brought up in the management of that. Specifically because there have been several approaches to the city that it's been unclear that we have a satisfactory response to those so we might be leaving money on the table. Coordinating transit oriented development. Acting a a developer and other priority projects as directed by council, who knows? Hopefully we are setting

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this up for a 20, 30, 40 year future. There's no way we can predict what all the issues are. So you want to make sure it's broad enough, but under your control. So just going into the national benchmarks, I want to highlight here, I put Austin on the bottom just for the population comparison for those who didn't have it on the tips of their fingers, but as several people pointed out to me because I didn't fill in the rest of the chart for Austin it appears that I don't -- that we don't know that any of those things are the case. Please don't take that as the conclusion here. We know there's a family of organizations here in Austin doing these things already, we are just looking at these other entities. I'm just going to bottom line this chart for the interest of time. There are two entities on this chart that really focus the lead agency and outside entity, that's New York and Philadelphia, and those entities still are using a family of organizations to achieve a purpose. I think we're using the word

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family because there's no silver bullet. There has to be a partnership for the different goals in order to make this happen. Both of those entities accept fees for contract services to the city. An important part of their funding stream and did get fees from a public development role and have a partner entity that issues bonds. That entity is almost always controlled by the government, meaning almost entirely government officials on the board or a vast majority of government officials. And then they all have inclusive growth programs as well. Deep diving a little bit, we added another entity to compare on the national level at the suggestion of several interviewees, invest Atlanta. It turned out invest Atlanta, also called the Atlanta development corporation, is very similar to these other two entities. You can just see and read across the greens and the reds on this if you have a color copy. If you don't you can see those bold no's are the

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place where they are really different. I think the point of this slide is to say they have a remarkably similar structure that is somewhat different because of the laws in the three states, but all rely on the state for funding and all have inclusive growth policies targeting affordability both commercial and for individuals. Then in Texas this is a very long discussion but for purposes of this presentation I highlighted some of the main areas that the state indicates as areas for potential economic development options. Just for the purposes of letting you all know that we started looking at these deeply and not at all signed off by the city legal department, but we have started conversations with legal. And I would say from the interviews most of these are not that feasible to pursue for the purposes that you've described.

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Primarily because the funds are being used for another entity where there's a legal prohibition against using those funds for this kind of purpose. So the ones that are in green here, the two types of corporations, the potential for local property tax incentives, using real property, interlocal agreements and issuing debt are really the ones that arose as needing further investigation. In Texas we also did some benchmarks based on suggestions from interviewees. We looked really at these four cities and we did not look at every entity in-depth in these four cities. We looked at the ones that people told us to look at. So what we found is varying degrees of understanding about what was happening in all these cities and really very different kinds of entities. For instance, Houston first is not really an economic development entity of the type that we are looking at, but it was raised so many times by interviewees and by the state that we thought we should profile it as something to look at.

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Dallas and Fort Worth are really focusing their efforts inside a department, although Fort Worth has a legacy that they actually use as the sports authority and they now are considering starting a new outside entity to do economic development. San Antonio has a host of entities. And also most of the economic development work there, traditional economic development is led by the foundation and also has some inclusive growth policies, but they also have an edc and they use it to take in outside investment and philanthropic dollars and leverage that in ways that the entities couldn't. So there's a lot of projects that can inform us that all show compliance with Texas law and when you combine them altogether they have all of the capabilities that we see in any of the other entities nationally. They might look a little different and they might have certain different structures on how they transact, but it is perfectly feasible to pursue this kind of model I think

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is what this shows us. So segueing into this discussion, you are initial conclusions, and these now are my conclusions. Feel free to criticize me and not others. First is that a family of organizations is most likely to fulfill all of the purposes which you've put down. Probably at least two entities, plus the department. The reason that we show that is number one, any way you look we're using a family of organizations. And in particular trying to separate the more controversial function is such as issuing financing from a board that is further away from control of council. So we have here already the industrial development corporation, that might be a vehicle where there could be another vehicle that is a financing entity. I think in all those cases we would recommend that there be at least a super majority of council. And then separate from that, the new entity which we're call the edo entity is what we're going to focus on

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here. Critical governance decision should definitely be city controlled. I just mentioned that. Does anyone know in terms of the financing entity, very often that's done through an annual budget and annual project approval and annual project with the council that says specifically what the goals are and that can change as the goals change or as councilmembers change. And then in order to achieve scale it really seems that some kind of real estate powers on behalf of the city are going to be necessary and potentially other entities if that's possible. In interviews we certainly heard from cap metro, the school district, the community college that they are interested in some type of arrangement in which there could be a partnership to use the real estate because they don't necessarily have the ability to utilize the real estate ability either and they have their specific purposes that their interested in, but other real estate that could be useful for other things, both in terms of generating dollars and in terms of

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inclusive growth in their place in the community. And then a broad agreement in general in these discussions as I said at the beginning to pursue inclusive growth priorities. So I think that leads us to three kind of broad ways we could think about governance, the first topic. I've given them names. These names don't mean anything at all and they certainty aren't references to any legal structure. They're just for the purposes of this discussion. One of them is Austin economic development corporation. One is a community development corporation and the other is a regional economic development authority. I recognize these words have lots of different meanings in other places and maybe even here, but I'm just using them as place holders for talking about -- we coulder easily call them type a, B, C, let's not get caught up in that, but it's how much this is a city entity versus a regional entity and how much governance you want to be invested in the city versus community versus other local

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governments. I don't think that there is a right answer other than the one that pleases you for ur policies. But I think it's very important because there's certainly no agreement among all the interviewees about how they should be done. And so I think we're looking for your direction on how R. To hour sue one or more of these -- pursue one or more of these possibilities.

>> Garza: Is that the presentation?

>> Yes, ma'am.

>> Garza: Councilmember alter.

>> Alter: I had a point of clarification. I wanted to understand better when you talk about having the opportunity to get fees for contracting for service or when you talk about real estate, I would like to know a little bit more what you mean. So maybe start with the contract for services and then if you could elaborate more on the real estate powers. We have talked a lot about leveraging and using our own

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real estate. I believe part of what you're suggesting is that we have help with the governmental entities that lie within our territory to develop their properties, but leveraging our expertise for a fee that we would then charge them, but then we would have some more control over the course of those developments.

>> Thank you, councilmember. Yes, that's exactly correct. Let me state it back to you for the purposes of everyone understanding it. In general we find that there's a distinction between local government just giving money to an outside entity for operations and contracting to achieve a specific purpose that the government would do anyway. And there's different restrictions on who can receive that money and what restrictions are on them afterwards. So contract of restrictions is specifically referring to if you have a specific purpose as the local government that you want this entity to pursue, whether it's managing a particular building or serving a population about something or something that

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can be narrowed into a very specific scope, then you potentially could hire this entity to do that. So an example of that is in invest Atlanta right now, Atlanta has hired invest Atlanta to create an economic mobility strategy, which is similar to an inclusive growth strategy. In order to support that they contracted with them and paid them some money to do it. That's different if they just gave -- than if they just gave them an annual allocation of money. There's just different restrictions that happen if they do that. So that's on the contract for services side.

>> Alter: That's us contracting with the agency. So when you say it's a contract for service model model it would be like the city council saying we want to contract with you to do something.

>> That's correct. But also it could contract with cap metro or any other entities. On the real estate side a lot of these other groups that we look at in order to

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generate money beyond tax act as a public developer, a developer on behalf of the local government. The local government in all states in the entire country is very limited on both the resources and the purpose of managing real estate. So for example, I could be talking about almost any state, but I'll talk about New York, for instance, and say that there are two separate entities that manage real estate for New York. One of them is the internal city department that handles all the city used real estate and the other one is the economic development corporation that handles the other stuff. Very often they partner together to help one another and sometimes you can even have a city facility inside a larger project, but in general the city is using the economic development corporation to both achieve policy and generate more money to go back into the general fund as well as to support whatever operations are happening for the edc.

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In order for that to happen, there needs to be some special arrangement, a contract, an ability to dispose of real estate to them, direction, an agreement to utilize some of the real estate, and that's what I'm -- those are the things I'm trying to highlight were spoken of as potentials with this entity.

>> Alter: I think it would be helpful if you could share some more specific examples so that I can get my head around this a little bit more.

>> Okay. We can follow up with you and send you a few -- I think also when we share the longer presentation with all the case studies, it will become more clear. And I wish I had a much longer time to talk about it, but I am happy to sit down with anybody who wants to sit down and go through them in detail and what the differences are. I think the takeaway is just that these are two workarounds that we see across the country and in Texas of ways to create funding that is not taxed.

>> Thank you.

>> And under the control of the council throughout.

>> Mayor pro tem and

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council, at this point we certainly want to get council feedback on the options that have been presented to you. Looking at the first one, you can see that that one really is restricted kind of to the city by itself where the board is appointed by accountant. Some of the board members may be yourselves as elected officials. And then the next two options kind of broaden that authority and bring in other governmental partners or even regional agencies. So say for instance, the second one, the Austin community development corporation, to Matt's point again these are only titles, they're not set in stone. You could look at a majority that are appointed by the city, but that other governmental agencies may actually have payments of their own to the -- have appointments of their own to the board. You take that a step further, you look at a regional development organization where you still have a majority appointed by city council, but you may have ex-officio from other agencies. We wanted to take this opportunity to get your feedback because they are other approaches on how

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narrow an economic development corporation you would like to see or how broad and what span of control you see this city having in those regards as well.

>> Garza: Well, I guess for me, I guess a similar question to what Alison just asked, not understanding it's hard to give direction. That being said, how does this intertwine with like the revamping of our chapter 380. Would this entity be now the entity that takes the lead on bringing those to council?

>> I was going to refer back to slide 18 where we talked about I think some of those items were struck based on the feedback we had gotten. Okay. You will see chapter 380 is listed on there.

>> Garza: So it is not something that would be?

>> I think our assumption has been, and council is of course welcome to change

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that assumption, but our assumption had been that the economic development department continues as is and we're looking to fill capacity that is not currently being pursued. So in some of the cases where you have acute issues for, say, a large development or a negotiation, something like that might currently be housed inside the department and you might want to outsource it, but I don't think we're looking at replacing any normal functions as they exist, although anyone feel free to correct me.

>> I think that's accurate. I think in addition to -- not only an assumption, but I think it was part of the guidance in the resolution that we're following through on.

>> Garza: Councilmember tovo, was this your resolution?

>> Tovo: It was, but I have to -- it was actually the third of three. And so I just want to credit mayor pro tem Cole actually brought forward a resolution when I served alongside her to create an economic development corporation and then it didn't happen.

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And then I brought forward another resolution and then followed it up with this one in August. So it's taken three resolutions, but I'm absolutely thrilled that it's moving forward. At the appropriate time I do want to talk about the relationship between the edc and the local government corporation because when -- is now the appropriate time? I know -- we all had an opportunity to talk about that. On the last time the council passed the resolution to create the edc we also passed one to create a local government corporation that would be focused on raising and accepting funds for homelessness. And so as I understood our conversation that we had during the stakeholder process, this could be -- that could be a function under the economic development corporation either as kind of subcommittees or whatnot. I just wanted to ask you to speak to that and then I have some other questions.

>> Thank you. Yes. I think it is at your discretion what things you want to put into this entity. And going back to the things

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that we -- that I referred to as what we heard, I think if you would like an entity that focuses on inclusive growth more broadly, it makes sense to house it into one organization. Now, whether that means an lgc or an edc type thing or something else, I would encourage you not to get too hung up on that because once you decide what you want to accomplish or we decide together or however it works, it will become apparent what structures are most advantageous. And I think that very often we can utilize multiple structures to accomplish multiple goals. Both the tools are rather broad.

>> Tovo: So it's not clear to me right now whether that is sort of all housed in one corporation or a couple. I think for me as I look at the questions that you've posed to us, we have multiple committees now that are partnerships between the city and our regional

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partners, campo, cap metro, the joint subcommittee of the city, county and aid, the regional affordability committee, C.A.N., community advancement network. They've changed a few times. So what's really critical to me in advancing this work and my staff had an opportunity to travel to new York to see their economic development corporation and so we've spent some time and energy looking at the different models, I'm really -- I'm at this point leaning towards that first model that is really a city

entity that's looking at the disposition of our -- the disposition and management and investment of our real estate, the investment back in our cultural institutions and potentially also that additional piece of serving as the ldc that is allowing us to accept funds for -- lgc allowing us to accept funds for homelessness.

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What we were trying to achieve with the edc, and I don't mean just our council, but the previous council work, it really would be focused at this point within the city's assets. Now, I think that there's great opportunity to expand it, but I would be concerned about undertaking this with a regional focus and lots of different partners and then trying to come to agreement. We know we have some immediate things we want to achieve here at the city from the south central waterfront plan to some of the work that councilmember kitchen has brought forward with regard to investing in our cultural assets to the work that we've talked about wanting to do with the ability to accept. So that first one is the one that at this point would be most appealing, I think is most reflective of the intent. It's not clear to me that we need to sort out that piece today because as the stakeholders start to refine the mission and potential of an edc that may point to

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particular structures. And at some point, and since I've Teed that question up maybe some others want to talk about that. I want to get back to 18 because there are some sources of funding that I want to continue to be in consideration. Thank you. This is really exciting. We'll be enormously exciting for our community. And I really like that you acknowledged at the outset that there are other entities doing work that an edc could encompass, but since they are doing that work and doing it successfully, those are not functions that our edc would need to take on. I think that alleviates some of the concerns we heard from the public about the edc for the homeless or generally so those would be an after active corporation and not something that's overlapping.

>> Thank you, councilmember. And I would just state if you go back and also look at the stakeholders interviewed, I would say the outside entities pretty much unanimously wanted to see the creation of this and

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many of them had said they had proposed that in various forms and would look forward to working together. So we don't think that it would be a conflict at this stage.

>> Garza: I have a question based on -- I guess now kind of understanding what this would be. I understand why the first one would be a good one to get -- how are we going to dispose of properties or what are we going to do. We continue to have these discussions -- and all the committees that you mentioned, like at the regional affordability, for example, we have a lot of good discussion, but it feels like we can never get to a decision because it's so siloed so there's a lot of talking about those things. So I'm wondering if one that was more regionally based that was concentrated on that, because aid is about to be disposing of

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properties, the whole health south palm school thing, I wonder if this is an opportunity to make that a more formal discussion and relationship as opposed to the one that I feel like we're having now exchanging memos to each other. I don't know. That's just an idea. But anyway, councilmember pool.

>> Pool: Thanks and thanks for the good work that you guys have been doing on this over a number of years. I wanted to make sure that -- I just made a couple of points. The model that I would be looking for and preferring would be the one that has the most enforceable accountability and transparency, and would you want to suggest which on these would be that? Do you think the first one would be the most transparent or all of them equally?

>> I think they all can be equally transparent, but in the second and third one, the transparency is to a broader range of both individuals and governance. So I would say the first one is most under your control

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and most transparent to the city folks.

>> Pool: If we do pursue or proceed with looking at more than just the very first one, I would want that piece about accountability and transparency to be upper most in everybody's mind so when we talk with other entities that that would be a requirement from our perspective.

>> And we completely agree. We've been moving forward in that regard with that in mind knowing it's a priority for us as a city.

>> Pool: That's great. And then let's see... We're looking at some pretty innovative streams like including the hotel occupancy tax revenue. I notice that some of the other cities use the hot revenues, which is good to see. Pid's and park districts also. I guess I would need to look at our pid policies that are being rewritten right now to make sure that something like this could be integrated in there or if we see friction erupt that we address that. Is that something you guys are looking at?

>> Yes, we're looking at that. And in general that goes back to the structuring

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question about which types of entities you're allowed to assign to manage bids and we'll deliver that in the next iteration. I think any of these would be equally capable of doing that.

>> Pool: Great. I notice from the notes from the call that we had with you that you acknowledged the in district 7 are to retain what we love about Austin, retain small businesses, our local small businesses are important. Maintain affordability. Focus on workforce development, that would be local workforce development specifically. And also inclusive development. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Flannigan: Mayor pro tem?

>> Garza: Councilmember Flannigan.

>> Flannigan: Thank you. There is already a regional economic development entity. I chair that regional economic development entity at capcog. We are right now going through the first set of

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meetings for the four or five-year planning process that the federal government requires, and so there are sources of funds, grant funds from the federal government that rely on that plan. I'd love a separate conversation about that process to make sure we're fully advantaging our region. But I am watching some of the other entities and edcs that I get to work with on that board. It seems pretty clear to me that we should have an edc or edo in your language here that is just the city of Austin, that then is the partner with the edcs, using their parlance, and then that the edcs collaborate together in ways they can collaborate together, that we can't really do with them effectively since we don't have that type of entity. I would argue the capcog entity is probably the right place for that since it already exists and there's staff support through capcog in order to manage that board. If I'm not mistaken it's formed as a 501c so that may

[11:59:10 AM]

create additional opportunities. I also actually chair cann, and the a right now, councilmember tovo, is advancement. I just became chair of that board too. That part seems very clear to me. I'm also really excited about this. I think I was probably two weeks away from writing my own resolution towards it so it's a nice thing to see the council pretty unified on getting this through finally and the amount of

opportunities that will become available to us through this process, mostly that we can move at the speed of the market which I think we've all experienced challenges with that in other decisions we've try to make, but at least for my part it seems pretty clear you do the city-level edo and that can partner with the other edcs that exist across the region.

>> Garza: Councilmember kitchen?

>> Kitchen: Yes. I agree. I think that we need to focus on, you know, the first option, which is the city economic development

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corporation. I like what you are suggesting, councilmember Flannigan, in a way that that entity can coordinate with others. It makes more sense. But I think it's absolutely necessary for us to have one we control ourselves. So and then the bottom line for me, the reason that I think this is important and useful is that we need to move quicker. We need to be more responsive to the market. And that's what I see this type of entity allowing us to do. Then as councilmember tovo said, part of my focus has been on the cultural sector, particularly the crisis that our creatives were experiencing in terms of places to perform or new art or display or those kinds of things. And we are so very quickly losing those places. So we absolutely have to have a way to be more nimble and move quicker, and I see

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this as being able to do that. So if it's not able to do that, then we haven't accomplished anything. And so that's my focus, and I would say I agree with my colleagues that it's that first option is the way that we should proceed.

>> Garza: Anybody else? Councilmember Ellis.

>> Ellis: I'll quickly echo. I like councilmember Flannigan's vision for this. I think regional coordination is incredibly important, especially in central Texas. But to see we could have our own voice and own direction and be able to decide things together as a council or a corporation, whoever works on it, to be able to go to that regional capacity and figure out who can be responsible for what funding source regulations do we have I think could be a really good way to move through this so I just wanted to pult my 2 cents in there to support that idea.

>> Councilmember alter.

>> Alter: Thank you. I apologize I missed your comments, Mr. Flannigan, so I apologize if this doesn't

[12:02:13 PM]

capture that. So I'm intrigued by this process and the idea of it. But I think we have to start from a recognition that our current capacity to do what we need to do for opportunities that are before us is limited within what we can do in the economic development department. There's just -- we've asked them to do so many things, and we have not allocated enough resources for them to do even what they've already been tasked with, let alone the other stuff. The second thing that is animating me is none of this matters if we don't find a funding source because all we've done is create a new bureaucracy over what we're already trying to do. For me the governance structure reflects what the fund source is and I'm still not convinced we have a funding source that's going to give us additional money within the confines of the revenue cap and within the confines of what the state

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limits us to doing. I agree that the regional cooperation is really good, but I think that if we just look at entities that are within the city limits that we could figure out a way to help all of us navigate using our public property and using certain opportunities better. We could probably provide a lot of value. I don't know that aid for instance has the expertise in-house to figure out what they should be doing with their property and how to maximize it and do that stuff. Same thing for capital metro. If we're going to decide to do these transit-oriented developments and capital metro is going to own the right-of-way, do they have the expertise? We may not have the expertise for our own properties. And then the counties. And then there's ACC. All of those could be just within the city. Is there a way for us to get some sort ever -- of

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collective funding source and group of people that have really sharp knowledge about how to do these that would allow all of these bodies to up their game in what we're doing and help us as a city help them to develop projects that don't just maximize the financial return but that are helping all of us get to our collective goals. That is something that is something that I'm -- this conversation this morning is prompting me to think about. I don't think that that is necessarily something that is addressed through capcog and some of these other regional bodies, but we will spread ourselves way too thin if we start bringing in other cities and other entities and we may need to bring in Williamson county because it's within the city and I think probably hays, but I just would like to -- we need to have a funding source and if we have no funding source it doesn't matter what this organization does and I just

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need more convincing that we have funding.

>> Garza: Councilmember harper-madison.

>> Harper-madison: I was just curious about a couple things in terms of the stakeholder process. How did you go about selecting which elected officials to have conversations with? Was there a process there? These are just the ones you happened to talk to?

>> We reached out to all offices maybe on two different occasions at least. The first was to be able to arrange meetings, which happened to coincide with the land development code discussions so a lot of those had to be moved so we reached out to council offices again to see if we could set another time to speak.

>> Harper-madison: And then the other thing I'm curious about, just in terms of the stakeholder process, I'm looking over the original resolution and there's a whereas clause, whereas the south central waterfront vision framework plan called for. I didn't hear anybody mention having met with the south central waterfront.

[12:06:16 PM]

>> We did. We actually met with staff currently working as well as a board member who also represents downtown Austin. We have also committed to going back to the south central water front advisory board. Once we've had this discussion with council, direction meeting again tonight, so we will be meeting with them I think during their next regular meeting.

>> Harper-madison: So as stakeholders are you -- you do intend to involve them in the process moving forward?

>> Absolutely.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you.

>> Councilmember, if I may, we certainly are not closing the door to any of the conversations with council, and so we certainly would be open to meeting with your offices and any other council offices that we haven't met with. Obviously, there are things in your district that are very important to us that we want to engage with you on, as well as talk to you about any other folks that we should be talking with as well. So by not listing everyone here wasn't by any means an attempt to close the door. We are certainly -- that door is still open to have those conversations. Thank you.

[12:07:20 PM]

>> Garza: Councilmember Casar.

>> Casar: I would say the governance form should follow the function so kind of hard to tell you how we can know exactly what it's doing but if the path we're headed on is a smaller board that can work quickly, you know, on corridors, acquire real estate, utilize city real estate, develop affordable housing, do the -- have inclusive mixed-income communities that are within the city of Austin's control issuing revenue bonds backed up in some part by the city, that sounds like city, city, city, that sounds like if we did it like that I would imagine it would be a board appointed by us, but if it had some other function or sets of functions I would change my answer but if that's the way we're headed I think that makes sense.

>> Garza: Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: Thanks. I wanted to circle back around to the point that you raised, mayor pro tem Garza, we have several of those regional committees have been trying to move forward. I know the joint

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subcommittee I serve on has had a goal of trying to collaborate on affordable housing on one of our parcels of land and had made really good progress and then aisd decided to do an rfp for those tracts so I think we absolutely have all -- and we have multiple resolutions that this council has passed trying to aim for that more formal collaboration so we need to figure out how we do that better, and I like the idea of the economic development corporation servicing as kind of our entity that would bridge to those other groups and try to move forward because I think we have great possibilities and haven't really figured out what that mechanism is. But I'm hopeful that our work with the county on the expo center will serve as a good model moving forward. I do have questions on 18 and I wanted to just mention in our conversations, Ashley Richardson on my staff had been doing great research on child care and economic development corporations and their ability to foster

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child care solutions. And so that's something that I hope will continue to be part of the mix. I think that - I remember from that conversation that New York City's economic development corporation does have that as a component.

>> Yes, that's correct.

>> So I hope that they will continue to be a focus of our thinking about our edc and its -- and its focus. I think there was a comment made the other day about transportation being the second highest cost for individuals, and I always feel compelled to mention and didn't in that setting but for families with school-aged kids often child care is their second highest cost next to housing, not transportation. So it is a real need for this city, I think, to have better and more quality early child care options, and I think our edc can be a partner in that. On page 18 I see some things scratched out I wanted to talk about for a sec. Grants and loans, were those

[12:10:21 PM]

specific to chapter 380 or grants and loans more generally?

>> I apologize. That was specific to chapter 380 and understood that the EdD was already taking that on. That doesn't prohibit the entity from looking at other granting or loan programs and certainly especially in the K of affordable commercial and cultural, that would be something we'd look at.

>> Tovo: Good, thanks. I do think that's an area of opportunity. I'll just point out, we don't need to talk about it, I had raised hotel occupancy taxes as a potential source for some of the work that an edc might tackle and I continue to believe that there are possibilities within that and actually my office has been working on bringing forward something to look at, a few of those lines within the hotel occupancy tax and explore some of the flexibility that I believe exists so I'm going to continue to keep that unstruck in my own brain as we move forward, but probably the work that my office is doing will tee up that conversation at council and hopefully inform how we think about its use. But did you want to add to --

>> The only thing I would

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add, we heard from a couple of sources inside the city that there wasn't enough funding there, and that it was already pledged to other uses, but we'd be happy to continue exploring with your office.

>> Tovo: There certainly are lots of needs and I think we've begun to use the hotel occupancy tax in different ways and would have to have a different conversation about where to move it. I don't see it as a primary source of funding. I do see it as a supplemental one and just by way of context that was the -- we had that conversation for multiple years before we finally, as this council, agreed to spend some of that money differently and invest it in historic preservation, and I think we're all seeing the result in projects around the city that are now funded through that hotel occupancy tax. It's always a hard discussion when we're looking at those sources of funding that are always allocated in the same way, but I think that it can and should be done. But thanks for that context.

>> Just trying to reflect what we have heard.

>> Tovo: Yeah, no. That's good to know.

[12:12:24 PM]

I think that's important. So thanks. As I said before I think this is great work, super happy to have you on board.

>> Thank you.

>> Tovo: And appreciate the as far as who are working hard on this issue too.

>> Thank you. I just want to add one thing to the discussion because I feel like we had a little bit for a detailed discussion about the child care that I just want to share with other folks. I think sometimes there's an inclusive growth policy and certainly this is how we do it in New York and I think increasingly how Atlanta is looking at it, to kind of look at all the things that are in the basket of goods that a family wants to purchase and then look at which things are beyond them. Obviously we heard earlier and know at a certain point affordable housing is critical because otherwise folks are rent burned. The same thing can happen with transportation, child care, food, all of those things. And so in our conversation I talked about how at least under the administration in New York that's the primary

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focus of the economic development corporation and the only reason it is managing land is to generate funds to accomplish that goal or to use the land in order to make that happen. And in that, that's a little bit why we're a little bit hazy about what the purposes are because ultimately you will decide what the purposes are, not me. And there's no rule about what they should be. It's more about what you want them to be so in the question of the governs around whether or not to include other entities, I think we heard from aid and capital metro and ACC that they would love to have some help sharpening their skills and managing their real estate and he we're willing to look at inclusive growth policies. Out in question becomes if we have an entity and you charge it to do that kind of work, should that work be done with contract for services with those people? Or do we think it would be more effective to put them in some ex officio role informal that's an example of how to think about it.

[12:14:25 PM]

You can do it either way. There's nothing that says it has to be one way or the other way but we need to fix some points in order to be able to advance some proposals for you so you chose to start with the governance one because it's the least squishy, to use a technical term.

[Laughter]

>> Garza: Councilmember pool has to leave soon and she wants to go in executive session. So can we wrap this up?

>> Sure.

>> Garza: There was only one pulled item. Are your questions quick, councilmember tovo?

>> Tovo: You know, I think that we can resolve them. Councilmember Ellis has added me as a cosponsor so I look forward to working with you as that -- in that capacity and can answer my questions that way.

We did have a conversation at the mobility committee about scooters and creeks, and I think we have some information back from staff about that issue so hopefully we can talk about how that works into the resolution.

>> Kitchen: Mayor pro tem, I have one very short thing.

>> Garza: Go ahead.

>> Kitchen: Okay. I wanted to let everyone

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know that item 79, which --

>> Garza: Sorry. Thank you.

>> Thank you very much. We appreciate it.

>> Kitchen: Do you want me to go ahead with this.

>> Garza: Yes, go ahead.

>> Kitchen: Item 79, which is a zoning case around the messenger track, that the staff is asking for a postponement. So it's expected to be postponed to the February 6. So I just wanted to let people know that and go ahead and announce that we've been working with the staff on that. It's consented to by all parties. It's a consent postponement.

>> Garza: Sounds good, thank you. Go ahead councilmember alter.

>> Alter: 109, the fee waivers for the ems needs for the women's March. We are still short about 400 something dollars. I'll be asking on Thursday for folks who want to contribute, so if you could think about that, please let me know. Thank you.

>> Garza: Does that include me or no?

>> Alter: It does not include you.

>> Garza: I do do the

[12:16:27 PM]

balance.

>> Alter: Great, thank you. Can staff just take care of that? Thank you.

>> Garza: City council will now go into closed session to take up one item pursuant to 551.071 of the government code the city council will discuss legal matters related to item 59, item e1 has been

withdrawn. Do I need to read item 59? Resolution relating to enforcement of low level marijuana and cannabis related sources and thc concentration testing. Is there any objection to going into executive session on the items announced? Hearing none, the council will now go into executive session at 12:16.

[Executive session]

[01:19:45 PM]

>> Garza: We are out of closed session. In closed session we discussed legal matters related to item 59.

Because we have no further items we are adjourned at 1:20 p.m. Thank you.