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To: Austin City Council
Re: Sept 17, 2020, City Council Agenda item 89, C14-2020-0067 3504 South First

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,
For many years the Zilker and other neighborhood associations have been working to improve Austin's use of Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA). Requiring a TIA earlier in the planning process and making recent traffic data available to inform rezoning decisions are among the most recent requests from neighborhood and transportation advocates. I'm writing today to ask the Council to apply that principle to the rezoning case at 3504 South First Street (aka Mercury Hall), item 89 on next week's Council agenda.
At the core of the rezoning is a request to remove a 2,000-trip limit on a property in a gentrifying area with multifamily housing, congested traffic, and inadequate streets. In recommending removal of the trip limit, staff has offered no traffic data or forecast, and unlike South Lamar and South Congress, South First is not included in the Corridor planning program. As usual, the staff report notes only that a TIA may or may not be required if and when a site plan is submitted. The City Council should not be asked to make this decision in such a data vacuum.
Please vote to deny the requested rezoning on Thursday, and at the same time alert the staff that the City Council—as well as the community at large--needs to be provided with relevant transportation planning information in connection with rezoning cases such as this.
Thank you for your service to the community throughout these trying times.
Lorraine Atherton
District 5 resident