

City Council Work Session Transcript – 01/25/2021

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[9:04:22 AM]

>> Mayor Adler: Today is Monday, January 25th, 2021. It's 9:04. This is the city of Austin city council work session. It's set on Monday, Wednesday of this week in order to be able to accommodate the clerk's national meeting as well as the U.S. Conference of mayors meeting that was last week. I appreciate the accommodation. Colleagues, let's take a look at the agenda that we have in front of us, recognizing that at noon today I need to leave to do the weekly covid call that happens at Monday at noon. We also have three members of the council that need to leave to go to the capital metro meeting. My meeting is over at 1:00. I could come back then.

[9:05:23 AM]

I don't think that the cap metro people will be coming back. I think their meeting extends into the afternoon. So we're going to lose people basically at noon. So the question is how do we work through the agenda that we have we have three scheduled briefings, legislative, the chamber and update on homelessness. We have two items of council discussion, intergovernmental and mayor pro tem. And then we have executive session items related to the potential may 21st election as well as motel legal issues. And then we have pulled items and we have a fair number of pulled items today. And it looks as if one of them, health south, could be a significant conversation.

[9:06:29 AM]

If history holds. It looks as if we look at this, the election of the mayor pro tem is something that we should push until Thursday, there's been some request for that. So we'll push that one until Thursday. There is the briefing on the ethic chamber issue that's not on the agenda until next week. I would suggest that we push that until later in the day or Thursday or at least not start on that. That we begin real fast to see -- I want to touch base on the committee assignments and the intergovernmental and see if we can resolve that because we're supposed to report that to the clerk. And then go into the legislative update and then its homelessness update. And I do that assuming it's not going to be a long conversation on the appointments. If it is, then we'll pull that back for the briefings. Yes, Kathie. >> Tovo: Just wondering about the executive session

[9:07:29 AM]

items. I know that -- >> Mayor Adler: Can you get a little closer to your microphone? >> Tovo: I was going to suggest I was wondering if it makes sense to have the executive session related to the agenda item earlier in the day. We have a schedule before us today that usually takes us all day, three briefings and a bunch of pulled items and some meaty congestions. So I think the idea that we may end by noon - and had homelessness briefing, with one of the briefings being homelessness. I think it's going to be a challenge to wrap up by noon. And executive session since it usually happens over lunchtime, but is setting us up for the conversation that we're having Thursday, I wonder if we could have that executive session about the hotel-motel strategy this morning so that we can knock that out and then maybe move on to the -- some of the pulled items. I pulled health south, but I have asked lots and lots of questions in the past. I don't really have any

[9:08:29 AM]

today. I -- I mean, it might be prompted by discussion of my colleagues, but I really just want to pull it to see if anyone had questions about the message board post that I put forward in December and just -- I will have some updates to that that I can run through really super quickly. From my perspective I don't have -- I don't have a lot to talk about with that. >> Mayor Adler: I agree with you, I think that the executive session on motel questions, legal issues related to that, needs to come up before noon. >> Tovo: I was going to suggest could we just do that now and knock it out and come back then then we know how much time we have for the rest of the morning? >> Mayor Adler: We could do that. I thought that we would also have time to really knock out those briefings and go into executive session, but we could certainly reverse that order if that was the desire of council. Mackenzie.

[9:09:35 AM]

>> Sorry about that. I wanted to say that most of the items I pulled I just have one or two questions for each so we should be able to get through them pretty quickly. >> Mayor Adler: That would be good. Alison? >> Alter: I want to suggest that perhaps we could have the homeless briefing, but not have our questions, but go in. Because they may answer some of our questions that we want answered in executive session and then we could return at a later point to ask questions of them? I just think it would be -- if we're going to talk about the motels having a better sense of where we're at with the strategy before we go into executive session I think would be useful. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Let's do that. Let's do that. Let's make sure that we watch the clock and Kathie, I'll make sure that we have time to get into executive session before noon. All right. With respect to the intergovernmental stuff and committees, I've handed that out to put on the message board, recommendations for chair and vice-chair and for

[9:10:40 AM]

intergovernmental issues. And then suggestions with respect to committees and the like. >> Kitchen: Mayor, sorry to interrupt you. I think Paige is waiting to come over. >> Mayor Adler: Paige is waiting what? >> Kitchen: She's in, but she's waiting to be moved over. There she is. She's with us now. >> Mayor Adler: Cool. Does anybody have any comments with respect to that message board post that they want to discuss or raise? Kathie? >> Tovo: I need to check one thing. >> Mayor Adler: You were the only one to raise your hand.

[9:11:42 AM]

>> Tovo: I did want to point out [inaudible]. Last time we did the psychiatricky stakeholder committee meeting,. >> Kitchen: Is our designated representative. I had informally served on it in the past and at one of our meetings because I try to attend when I can, they informed me that they thought I was also a part of it. So just by way of letting my colleagues know, I kind of -- I go to that one too. I don't know whether I am a second designated representative or I just attend. It's been on hold -- I mean, they haven't been meeting for a long time. >> Mayor Adler: This was item number 26. Are we allowed to identify -- I guess if they're just approved. I have no problem at all, Kathie, adding you to a list with Ann if we're allowed to have more than one designee. I don't know if we are or not. Ann? >> Kitchen: Yes. I think that the way they

[9:12:43 AM]

operate -- I know that councilmember harper-madison was interested in it too. So you might just add all three of us. It's a pretty informal meeting. I think that amongst the three of us we can all participate. And assuming that councilmember harper-madison is interested. She may be too busy this term. I don't

know, I haven't talked to history about it. >> Mayor Adler: Let's do this. Let's go ahead and add, councilmember harper-madison, let's add me and that way each one of us would have the [indiscernible] Of council approval on for when we're able to attend. >> Kitchen: So we'll have four people is what you're saying. >> Mayor Adler: Correct. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> Mayor Adler: Any other thoughts or questions on the list? Alison? >> Alter: I had a quick question on the criminal justice coordinating council, what that is?

[9:13:44 AM]

>> Mayor Adler: Greg, do you want to address that? >> Casar: Yeah, the community justice coordinating council has existed for a couple of years. It was formed by the former district attorney, the new district attorney hasn't yet announced exactly how or if he will change the plans related to that. But currently myself, acm Arrellano and the chief are the city's representatives there. The judges have a representative, the sheriff sits on that council, and it's a place since the criminal justice leadership is split amongst city and county, it's the coordinating body for that. >> Alter: Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Any other questions about this? Kathie? >> Tovo: Yes. I had a question about the national league of cities, why it says all council. Is that one where we learned we don't is have a rep or what are is -- >> There's not a rep. Anybody can sign up to

[9:14:46 AM]

attend and participate. >> Tovo: I see. So there was never a designated contact for that group. Okay. That makes sense and I know a lot of us on the dais have participated. I actually haven't gone to their conferences, but I hear their really valuable when we can travel again and I look forward to doing that when we travel soon. >> Mayor Adler: That would be good. I recommend that for everybody if you have not done that, you should try to do that. >> Tovo: And there was one other. I think it was the capcog things that I wanted to better understand. So capcog -- I see. The general assembly, can we talk about that for a minute? Not that long ago I was on capcog's executive committee and I thought that it was typically held by members of the committee. Are we suggesting to move

[9:15:46 AM]

away from that model by appointing four members of the council instead to the general assembly? >> Mayor Adler: In my six years we haven't appointed somebody from the community so I was unaware of that as a practice, Kathie. I was just unaware of that. We haven't done that in the last six years. >> Tovo: I didn't realize that. I think we should just look at that because it is a nice opportunity. Some of those like C.A.N. And some of those other places are just really good opportunities for members of the community to show leadership. If I'm remembering that general assembly correctly, I think that was one of those

opportunities and I know as we've -- there have been a couple of intergovernmental boards where we now fill it with a councilmember rather than a community member. And just in terms of really growing community members and leadership, I think we should at least have that conversation. If we could think about and get a little bit more information about the general assembly of capcog between here and Wednesday, that would be -- I wanted to

[9:16:49 AM]

say I think it's terrific. I'd love to see new members on the hate crimes task force. I had served on it in the past and then realized that we only had one of our dais coming after I stepped off, so it's great to see that our council will be fully represented again on the hate crimes task force. So thanks to new members, councilmember harper-madison and Fuentes for joining on that. >> Mayor Adler: I was unaware of that tradition. Let's take that and can I work with you to look at that and work with the capcog person and talk with Ann who will be on the executive committee of that and maybe come back to the council with a different list of representatives? >> Tovo: That sounds great. I don't have any more info than I shared. I can't remember even who those folks were. >> Mayor Adler: I'll tee that up for us to talk about.

[9:17:49 AM]

Mackenzie? >> Kelly: Yes. Thank you. I would like to contribute to the mobility committee, the public safety committee as well as audit and finance. I was hoping that with my appointment to the general assembly that I could also serve on capcog's executive committee. >> Mayor Adler: That's a choice that the capcog executive committee makes. So the executive director had reached out and had asked about Ann's availability for that and that's one of the reasons why. And Ann had expressed an interest so that's why I had done that. But that's a position that I think you need to be lobbying the executive committee of capcog to because that's a choice that they make. >> Kelly: I have spoken with other members of the executive committee about that. I was hoping that maybe I could just keep my spot also with the general assembly in

[9:18:50 AM]

case I'm able to move forward on the executive committee. >> Mayor Adler: Absolutely. We'll make sure that that at least happens, and given the conversation that we had with Kathie and to maintain you in that place. Anything else on this list? Ann? >> Kitchen: I would just support keeping Mackenzie on the general assembly and I'm happy to work with ma Ken assessment I would like to keep the executive committee position, but I'm sure I can work with Mackenzie and we can figure out a way to share some responsibilities. >> Mayor Adler: Sounds good. Why don't you two talk about that. Okay. And by the

way, I think I said to you that is decided by the executive committee, that's not right, it's decided by the general assembly. And whoever the general assembly picks is the person that would be in that spot.

[9:19:52 AM]

Kathie? >> Tovo: Yeah, I may be mixing those up. I look forward to more info on that. I did also want to say about the downtown Austin alliance, I think the last time that council had designated you as the rep and also had designated me as the representative since I represent most of downtown, and then we learned that there's really just one spot and the spot isn't a voting member. So just -- you know, I would like to be designated as a non-official member just to make it clear because I do attend those meetings regularly. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. I'll do that, Kathie, and I will also convey that to them. >> Tovo: And I think generally it might be useful as things move forward for us to really talk with the daa about how many positions the city has and what kind of role they play on that board given its relationship to the public improvement district and some of the -- it has a real clear tie to the city.

[9:20:57 AM]

>> Mayor Adler: I agree. I'll join you in that conversation with them. Okay. Anything else? All right, I'm going to recommend -- so the audit and finance membership stays alter, pool, Adler, tovo, additionally Kelly are all on Austin energy. Oversight adds Fuentes, Kelly, pool and Ellis. Health and human services adds Fuentes and me to tovo, harper-madison and kitchen. Housing and planning is Casar, Renteria, Ellis, harper-madison and kitchen. Mobility is Ellis, Kelly, kitchen and alter. And public safety we have harper-madison and Casar at this point. Does anybody else wants to join and be part of the public safety committee? >> I thought I heard, mayor, that are councilmember Ellis wanted to be on that. >> Mayor Adler: And Kelly. Anybody else want to be part

[9:21:58 AM]

of the committee? I think a lot of people will want to be on that as we've seen. We'll start with those three. If that changes just let us know and we can always add people. There are two more available spots there. I'll have the clerk add that to what we're doing. City manager, let's go to the presentations. We'll have the homelessness presentation, but hold says so we can get into executive session. We'll make that call just as we're going into executive session in case we can let the staff go. Manager? >> Cronk: Thank you, mayor and council and good morning. This is our first formal work session of 2021. It's great to see everyone. And as the mayor said we do have a packed agenda for today. So we'll dive right into it. As you know we have a

[9:22:59 AM]

legislative session that has technically started, but is certainly in the works and we wanted to make sure that we use this time early in our meetings for 2021 to brief you on some of the items that have been brought forward and the work that our intergovernment relations team will be doing. So with that I'm going to have I.T. Bring over our director, bree Franco, who will be walking us through a presentation at that time. >> Good morning, mayor and council, bree Franco, intergovernmental relations officer for the city of Austin. I'll go through this quickly since as you all said, you have a busy schedule in front of you. I.T., can you pull up my powerpoint, please? Next slide, please. Just to update you all very quickly, as we predicted, Republican Dave D DeLeon was

[9:24:00 AM]

elected speaker of the house. It was almost a unanimous vote, just two voting against him. That's not uncommon. Also they are already grappling with the state budget. Before their budgets came out they already had about a one billion dollar shortfall projected. Now with the two budgets, which given outline of all the things they would like to fund, there's about an additional seven billion that I think they would have to find if they wanted to fund all those budgets. That doesn't mean they will. That's their starting place and we'll see where they end up. Senate committees were announced on January 15th and distributed to you all. And house committee preference cards were due last week on the 22nd so we don't have those house committees yet, but they will be forthcoming. They're already few a strong clip as of bill filing. As of January 21st they have filed almost 1700 bills. Remember their norm is to file about 7500 bills.

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Remember the majority of the bills are filed during the last 10 days of bill filing that goes to March 10th and that's when they drop about 4,000 bills. So we still have a ways to go on what's to come. I think the house committee assignments come out you will see a strong increase in bill filing as people will file bills to match the committee assignments and we're also waiting for the governor to do his state of the state, which may produce more legislation. Both chambers will convene tomorrow and the house has announced they will be in for just a couple of days and then come back next week. As for the protocol for how they're handling covid and other rule making authority, as predicted, the lieutenant governor did request and the senate acquiesced to lower the three [indiscernible] Threshold amongst the senators from 19 to 18 votes. As for covid protocol,

[9:26:07 AM]

senators and staff are required to take a covid test before entering the chamber and before entering a committee hearing. Staff must be tested the first day of the week, but they also must be tested before accessing a hearing or chamber. In the house there is testing that is done at the members' honor that they have done it. So it's not mandated, but all the house members have been provided with covid-19 testing and hopefully are using it. House members and staff and the public will be required to wear facemasks, but they are only going to allow virtual testimony in the house for invited witnesses, meaning witnesses that the committee, chair invites and for redistricting. In the senate they'll allow it for redistricting, but that's the only virtual testimony they're going to allow. So it's still going to be a difficult session about

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managing how to testify with covid still at the high pace that we have. Next slide, please. You guys are familiar with this slide. This is the pyramid I present to you all every session of the key priority issues. The ones in yellow means there's a bill that's already been filed in that area. As I explained to you all before that top line is just pick your flavor of preemption, actually should add a care on there that includes homelessness -- square on there that should add homelessness and the governor still wants to overturn the city's ordinance on homelessness. He hasn't filed anything, but I expect to see something at the state of the state. We have filed a preemption that cities can't cut their budgets and if they do there are certain consequences for

[9:28:08 AM]

that. The covid preemption has to do with the governor's authority and even mayor and county judge's authorities. We have seen some bills that would filed omit that or penalize certain actions taken by those officials. You know they're talking about the community advocacy bill, we're talking about the [indiscernible], that has been filed by senator hill and Milton already. And we've already seen some legislation related to Austin energy that would seek to either deregulate or put under PUC authority Austin energy. Also bills related to limiting or penalizing Austin energy for using renewable resources or as the bill states, not just using gas as the source of fuel. Those are the bills we've already seen. You'll see these bills weekly in the updates that my office provides every Friday. Next slide. The next couple of slides just go into more details on these bills and provide more

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description of it. I am -- there are these bills which again I just talked about in the pyramid. I.T., if you can move forward one or two more slides. Next slide, please. But we also have some of our priority legislation that the council asked for our delegation and others to file, has been filed as well related to try to remove the ban on discretionary zoning that has been filed by representative Hinojosa. As well as some other initiatives related to allowing public health to become a provider for medicaid reimbursement. This doesn't expand medicaid, but it does allow public health to use that -- to use that health care system to continue to provide services that it might lose funding on through loss of federal

[9:30:11 AM]

funding, the prima fascia speed limit bill you're all familiar with. And I think this is the last slide. Next slide, I.T.? That is the last slide. So like I said, short and quick, I am available for any questions. Congress congress thank you, bree. -- >> Cronk: Thank you, bree. We can now take any questions. >> Mayor Adler: Colleagues, does anyone have any questions for bree at this point? It doesn't seem or appear to be any. Bree, thank you. >> Thank you T. Mayor Adler: City manager? >> Cronk: We'll move to

[9:31:12 AM]

item b3. The item on homelessness related issues. We welcomed our new homeless officer Diana gray to our team and we are grateful for her to join us at the city and the depth of partnership and collaboration that she has been able to bring to the city is extensive but we're thrilled to have her come forward today, talk a little bit about what she's learned over the last several weeks and what current projects that they are working on and a path forward. But to begin with I'm going begin with director Hayden Howard and how will her to tee up this discussion before Diana joins us. >> About a month ago we sent a memo to mayor and council to talk about the realignment of the homeless strategy office. At the time we created the homeless strategy division in Austin public health and we continued to work closely with the leads for this

[9:32:13 AM]

priority area. And we began providing weekly updates and discussing strategies in order to strengthen the work that was happening within the city. At that time we formalized the city management executive team and we assigned three full-time employees. And we began our work with our external consultants. In 2020 Bella Harmon was named the homeless strategy officer. We want to thank her for the work that she was able to do by standing up to the vision and continuing to move us forward. Under her leadership we welcomed the consultants in March of 2020 and began working very closely with them. At that time we were having discussions about our motel acquisitions and moving that initiative forward as well. And then as you all know,

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covid-19 efforts began shortly afterwards. We are very excited at the beginning of this year as Diana graves has moved into the position of our homeless initiative officer and we will continue to work together with mayor and council our community across the city to move us forward. At this time I will transition to Diana. Thank you. >> Thank you, Stephanie. I believe we have a presentation that can be shared on screen. So first of all, I just want to say thank you for having me as your homeless strategy officer. There we go. Today marks three weeks in the position, and I have had the opportunity to meet and speak with several of you one on one or in meetings

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about the many projects that are underway currently. And I just want you to know that that has been so important in informing the beginning of my work and that I do intend to make time for each councilmember to just sit down and listen to what is happening in your district and any specific concerns that you might have. I have been in Austin for about 30 years and I have been doing affordable housing and work in homelessness for about the last 20. So my background really started with work in the Springdale weberville neighborhood and in St. Johns doing first time home ownership for low income households. And from there had the opportunity to work with a couple of national non-profits, enterprise community partners that is really focused on affordable housing generally, and I worked for their loan fund

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structuring housing development finance. And then about 10 years ago we had the opportunity to start the Texas office of corporation for supportive housing, which is one of the nation's leading non-profits around creating that permanent housing full of folks with long-term needs who will have ongoing service needs and ongoing needs for peak subsidy. Having said that, through those years working with national organizations my work was really rooted in Texas and continued to be rooted in Austin. And so I step into this position knowing our community and our community providers quite well and have had the opportunity to work with the city directly over the years also. And so one of the assets that I feel like was given to me coming in is that I know how dedicated and bright both city staff and

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members of the community are. And so I feel very confident moving in that we'll be able to move forward together very well. One of the things I do is work with the homeless services division in this first year as it's been stood up and working directly with Bella Carmen who has carried a tremendous, incredible load and will continue to be just a huge asset to the division. So I want to thank her for her work and just express how much I value her. So today's presentation is going to be quite high level. As those of you who have been councilmembers for a long time know that the full briefing on homeless activities can take hours. We're going to try not to do that today, but particularly because we have a couple of

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new councilmembers, I thought we would do some high level description of this system and some of the city's activities and then just talk briefly about some of the new things that are underway, areas that we're gaining momentum and also some of the priorities that are on deck that we hope to tackle very soon. So we can go on to the next slide. So these are the most critical data points in terms of homelessness in Austin. On any given night about 2500 individuals in Austin are experiencing homelessness. Of those almost 1600 are unsheltered. So they're either in a tent or under a bridge or sleeping in a car or an abandoned building and we all of course are acutely

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aware of the crisis around unsheltered homelessness that we're experiencing right now and the urgency of confronting that. On any give 10 night of course there are 2500 folks or so, but people cycle in and out of homelessness over time. Over the course of an entire year we understand that about 9,000 austinites experience at least one day or night of homelessness. Our system capacity, the beds and program slots that we have to confront this are unfortunately inadequate as many communities confront and we will be working to expand that. We have about 500 emergency shelter beds, acknowledging that right now because of covid-19 that number is substantially reduced to reduce transmission. About 120 transitional housing beds, those are

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primarily for domestic violence survivors and in some cases for youth and young adults. 463 rapid re-housing beds. And then about 1100 units of permanent supportive housing. This data really all comes from echo, from their various hud reporting tools and their homeless management information system. We'll go on to the next slide. So it's been impressed upon me that my title is the homeless strategy officer and we really want this division to be about is strategy and coordination. And so in thinking about

my view of the key roles for the division, there are three areas that I wanted to touch on briefly. One is obviously the strategy centerpiece and planning, so we want to

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identify what our best interventions and strategies are, what's really going to work for us. And then think about how we fund those interventions, making sure that we're leveraging funds from the state, the feds and the private sector as well. Acknowledging that funding is limited and we want to use our dollars to the highest impact. And additionally we will with some frequency decide that we need some deeper knowledge around a particular topic so we hope to serve as that locus of expertise where when we find a need we're able to source the best experts in the industry, nationwide and bring them into work with us. We have two consultants that have been with us recently and have done amazing work for us and really helped us

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particularly during the covid crisis. You may also remember the national alliance to end homelessness came in and worked with us to look at our shelter strategies and how effective they are. The second piece is that cross-departmental support. The amount of work that is being done within the city across so many departments is stunning and it takes quite a bit of effort to make sure that we are all aware of what everyone is doing and making sure that our efforts compliment one another. And I think importantly ensuring that across all of the different manifestations of our work around this issue, we are embodying our values around what our goals are, how we treat and

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respect people who are experiencing homelessness, etcetera. And then in addition to the departments that are either providing direct services or working in the public space management area, of course we will be working closely with communications function and with the intergovernmental relations office on issues related to homelessness. Finally, there is so much work to be done within the city, but we have so many relationships externally facing in the community. Probably the most important partnership for my division will be that relationship with echo to make sure that we are supporting one another, holding one another accountable and not duplicating

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in the community engagement at the community level both when neighbors are experiencing challenges in their areas or when we have an opportunity to bring an asset into a neighborhood to build permanent housing or to look at new strategies that we might deploy in those neighborhoods to really develop those strong relationships with the citizens themselves. Go ahead and move ahead. So this is a graphic that I'm not going to go into in detail, but it will be familiar to most of you. It is a framework that was presented to us through the investing for results report that was developed with poppy and associates. And I think it has provided us with a useful framework for thinking about the categories of effort that we have around the issue of

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homelessness. So I'm going to leave aside the reducing inflow for the moment. Crisis response is really about meeting that need where it exists in the moment of homelessness. So our shelter work, our outreach work, ensuring that people who are currently homeless have access to critical health services, etcetera. And the housing stabilization piece, which is really about getting the housing services, housing stock to the people who need it to end their homelessness and to provide them the support that they'll need to remain stably housed. Finally, the third piece here is the public space management, which comprises all of the work we do that is not really this direct service piece that impacts how we all experience our city. The ability of people

[9:45:50 AM]

experiencing homelessness to access resources in the public space as well as all of the other citizens. So this touch touches on all of our public safety strategies as well as the cleanup efforts that we have, etcetera, in those public spaces. Using that framework if we'll move forward, if we just touch on a few areas of primary activity in the city in thigs three categories. So of course the city owns the arch and has a contract with front steps to run the shelter there. We have homeless outreach street teams which are comprised of an APD officer, integral care, behavioral health, a professional and our community health paramedics that are in the encampments talking to folks everyday, addressing

[9:46:56 AM]

critical acute needs and making referrals to connect them to services. We fund integral care's path program, which is another outreach effort. And then the downtown Austin community court also plays an important role here in terms of interacting with people who walk in looking to access services, what they are determining, triage case management, helping people make that contact from the street. They also coordinate the Austin homeless advisory council which is a critical body for us made up for people with lived experience of homelessness so that we're communicating with the people who have the real

expertise on the matter. We even have specialists on the Austin public library staff who have the opportunity to interact with our neighbors experiencing homelessness frequently and so APL has made the commitment to have some specialized staff to work

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with those library customers. The core he have ending homelessness is expressed in a variety of ways both through a wide array of contracts that the city holds with non-profit service providers and some direct services, within Austin public health probably the two largest re-housing types of contracts are rapid rerousing, expressed largely through our best single source plus program and our psh service contracts. We also through the housing and planning department focus on developing housing that we need that is low barrier enough for people exiting homeless to qualify for and we utilize not only our general obligation bond dollars there, but also some of the federal funds, home, cede, etcetera. Within housing and planning, as you know, we have also

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set aside some general obligation bonds specifically for acquisition of hotels. We also have a new program within housing and planning, which is a local housing voucher program. I'll speak a little bit more about in a minute, which is a really innovative way for us to ensure that we can operate these developments long-term. Downtown Austin community court also provides some of these longer term services in terms of intensive case management and they also contract out with other non-profit service providers for housing some of their clients who need that support to maintain housing stability. I'm not going to talk a lot about additional public space management activities. I touched on most of that. I think a couple of things here that perhaps merit special mention are our

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violet bag program which distributes both trash bags and trash bins to encampments across the city to support the collection of refuse and safety and hygiene in those spaces and a relatively new program, which is the violet keep safe personal storage program, which provides what are essentially identical to large trash bins, which are lockable, and people experiencing homelessness can store their items there without having to worry about carrying them on their person or leaving them unprotected. As you know much of the last year has been focused on the response to covid-19. That has been certainly true in the homeless service division and in its related

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and partner departments within the city. We have expanded access to food and hygiene resources within encampments. We have opened five protective lodges, which are site for people who are high risk under the CDC guidelines for poor outcomes should they contract covid-19 and those five hotels have a total capacity of about 300 rooms. Our current census is about 240 and rising. We had begun to decommission as we thought we were going to need to do at the end of last year so the census has had dropped, but we are now cleaning and preparing rooms and moving guests in daily. And I think really the exciting piece of that overall effort is that of

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guests who have been at the protective lodges we have re-housing 149 rather than having them exit into homelessness. The downtown community court has responded not only by doing virtual docket and having more walk-in services, but they have pitched in to staff, the pro lodges, and provide on-site case management there and will be providing some of the rapid re-housing services that we are able to expand because of some hud emergency solution grant funds. Between the monies that the city has received and some dollars thhca has provided to providers, we have been able to provide 500 more additional households by the end of 2022. That is huge. That has begun to move and we're very excited that

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we're able to also focus those resources on those who are most vulnerable in terms of their health risks should they infected with covid-19. Something it that is not a city resource, but we are partnering closely with the housing authority of the city of Austin for is that haca was able to apply for and receive 100 mainstream vouchers which essentially mirror housing choice vouchers so those are long-term permanent cities for very low income people -- subsidies for very low income people and they will be prioritized also for pro lodge guests. Finally while this is not specific to people who are already experiencing homelessness, housing and planning has dedicated substantial resources to financial supports and eviction prevention so we can stem the tide of people who are experiencing severe

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rent burdens or arrears in the face of job loss due to the pandemic. So this is the most exciting from my perspective. Some of the pieces I wanted to show you today as we look forward to the coming months are a, items that I think we are implementing and are gaining momentum on, even if they have been to some degree in play for some time. Pieces that we are actively planning, and then the priority next steps

that we know are going to be really critical to our success moving forward. We will in awhile go into executive session to discuss the acquisition of two additional hotels. The council initially set a goal of 300 units acquired

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for conversion to either bridge housing or permanent supportive housing. Should we acquire the two hotels that are on the agenda for Wednesday, we will be at or near and I think there are opportunity for more and to expand that strategy particularly in the current climate and current market. So we'd like to push forward on that. I mentioned the 550 households that we expect to be able to rehouse with the esg dollars. We have started that work really just in the last couple of months of 2020. And so we're picking up speed there and think that we will see a real impact in the coming months. In terms of ensuring that we are getting not only the hotel acquisition and conversion work moving, but

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also looking at the pipeline of our conventional housing development, so for example, on Rutland that will provide us with 170 units of very affordable housing and at least 44 units of permanent supportive housing, we've drawn together a working group that includes the homeless strategy division, housing and planning, as well as both local housing authorities to look at deals as they emerge, opportunities that are presented to each of us in our different environments, and so that we are constantly communicating about what a project might need, how we might explore making it more feasible or how we might support that work. And then finally, housing and planning's local housing voucher program is using \$3.6 million annually in housing trust fund monies. And the first commitment that they have made is to

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espero at Rutland and we have structured that to mirror project based vouchers from our local housing authorities and we think that this is really going to expand our ability to create sustainable psh over time. So there are some pieces that are in planning or in the contracting process, but have not hit the ground yet. Aph has approved the expansion of integral care's path outreach team and so they are in the process of beginning the hiring process within their organization. We hope we would see those folks on the ground soon. For roadway inn we have received a proposal for an operator of the hotel long-term that would presumably be when it converted from prologue to use as bridge housing or shelter, but we are closer to being able to look at that facility as being

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something that we could make choices about in terms of whether we keep it as part of the covid-19 response or move it into a more general bridge housing role. The homeless service division and echo have been sitting down regularly to work through our respective roles. We are attached so closely in our day-to-day work, but one of the things that we've heard very clearly from the investing for results report was that we needed to spend some intentional time determining who was lead in particular areas and how the other entity or entities would support. So that discussion I think has been very fruitful already and our intent is that that would result in memorandum of understanding between the two organizations that would guide the overall relationship in addition to the contract that the city

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has funding echo's activities. >> Finally, we have reconvened the various funders that had committed to the paper success initiative. We do not at present think that the paper success structure is what we will utilize, but most of those funders remain very committed and we believe that we can design a collaborative that will allow them to participate and for us to really model how we have many partners at the table supporting this work that is so important across governmental entities and private sector alike. Finally, in terms of what's immediately next on our plate, Spencer may have mentioned, and the mayor will probably talk about a planned summit for February

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which is really intended for the community at large, not just the city, to sit down and take a hard look at what it is we need to do to expand capacity in shelter, in rapid rehousing, in permanent supportive housing, and potentially in some other areas, but that we set hard number goals, that we identify timelines, we assign accountability, and that we all agree that we are collectively committed to reaching those goals. When that happens, I see it as our charge to come back to council and articulate for you what and how we think we can contribute to those goals. So that not only are we working in partnership with both other jurisdictions and the private sector, but

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council and leadership also have clear metrics by which to hold my division accountable. Hand in hand with that, I think is going to be a process by which we bring forth some recommendations around how we program our funding going forward. We do have some new fiscal year \$21 available, and we want to make sure that we get that money into the community quickly or we're also very strategic about how

we target it. The next piece -- the next two pieces of course are very related and that is about how we more intentionally create connections with our unsheltered population and housing resources, how we proactively work with those living unsheltered in encampments, and not just do outreach, but determine how we can most effectively and

[10:02:14 AM]

efficiently move them into housing, and also that we, as a community overall, have a consistent policy around public space management and that ranges from not only which spaces are available for use, but under what circumstances, how public safety interacts with both people experiencing homelessness and their neighbors, et cetera. And so we understand that that is very pressing and something that is incumbent upon us to respond to. Finally, one of the pieces that was called out in the investing for results report, was a recommendation that aph and hsd look at the procurement and contracting process and tools around our homeless services. So that I believe will be a slightly longer process because we need to do some deep analysis and figure out

[10:03:16 AM]

really what the appropriate tools are, timing, and criteria, but that is certainly on our dashboard as something that we will be beginning to work on very soon. So that is the summary of where I think we are now and I would welcome any questions. >> Well, thank you, Diana. It's great to have you on board and we're looking forward to your leadership in this area and the vast amount of expertise you bring to this work, the hitting the ground running mentality that you've already had in these few weeks is very evident and really appreciate the opportunity for you to provide this overview to the council today. With that, mayor, we'll turn it back to you for questions from you and the council. >> Mayor Adler: Colleagues, when we started this morning, we had talked about potentially taking a break at this point. Going into executive

[10:04:16 AM]

session. I think we moved through the calendar here more rapidly than we had thought. So I think we could probably ask questions now. Getting into executive session no later than 11, but let's see what happens as we hit that executive session. Ann. >> Kitchen: Mayor, I would suggest that getting into executive session at 11 really limits our opportunity to talk during executive session because it's only an hour and I would prefer that we get into executive session by 10:30 because I think it's going to cut us short on that conversation if that's -- that's just my suggestion. >> Mayor Adler: Well, we could take a break and have the executive session on the motel and come right back out to do questions if people

would prefer to do that. We have staff here. It may very well be that some of the staff is joining us in that executive session for the discussion, I'm not sure. Do you all want to ask

[10:05:17 AM]

questions now about the homelessness generally or do you want to pause and go into the executive session on the issue of the motel strategy? Leslie. >> Pool: I'm happy to go into executive session. I think that would be a good use of our time. >> Mayor Adler: Kathie is nodding. Let's do that, manager, and then we'll come right back out. All right, city council will now go into closed session to take up one session, pursuant to 551.071 of the government code -- pursuant to 551.072 of the government code, we'll discuss real estate matters related to the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property for the motel conversion strategy. Without objection here at 10:05, we'll move over to that channel. After we're done discussing the motel strategy we'll come back out and ask Diana or director Hayden or others

[10:06:18 AM]

questions. Yes, Ann? >> Kitchen: We just might take a five-minute break to make sure people are able to switch over. >> Mayor Adler: Okay, we'll do that. So basically at 10 after, let's see if we can be in the executive session area. Okay. See you guys there. (Breaking for executive session)

(Break)

[10:49:53 AM]

>> Mayor Adler: It is 10:49 here on January 25, 2021. We'll continue our council work session and we'll continue in the questions with respect to the homelessness briefing. Do we have Diana with us? >> She and director Hayden are being moved over. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Thanks, Spencer. Grad okay, good. >> Mayor Adler: Colorado lesion, let's see if we can get through the q&a on this briefing. Does anybody have any questions for Diana?

[10:50:56 AM]

Yes, Mackenzie. >> Kelly: Thank you, Diana, for all the hard work you're doing to make these pro lodges work. I was wondering if you had responses to the questions I sent you last week? I know there were quite a few, but if we could review those. >> Absolutely. >> Kelly: Those are the concerns that have been brought up so far. >> Some of these I think -- I'm not sure, I know Alex had answered some of them. I'm not certain which ones have already been communicated, council member, but we can go one by one. And answer all of them. The first question is about any meaningful input from the community regarding the purchase of the hotel. And so I think we mostly touched on this in terms of, you know, the difficulty of communicating with stakeholders before there is site control of the property. But our intent then is that we will broth identify

[10:51:57 AM]

explicitly any neighborhood association or neighborhood contacts on the residential side who are immediately adjacent and work with the council member offices on this and any other hotel to identify stakeholders you'd like to make sure we reach out to. >> Kelly: Thank you. I would like to make it known that the Anderson mill limited district has reached out to my office and they are currently strongly opposing the hotel purchase. >> Okay. >> Kelly: And it would also be prudent to reach out to pecan park place which are small residential townhomes in close project connects I am to it the hotel. >> Yes. Excellent. The second question was regarding public transportation nearby. And a concern that there wasn't any meaningful public transportation within proximity. And so there are three areas I think are important here:

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One is that you are correct, the nearest bus stops are 0.7 and 0.8 miles away, however, it is quite close to the lake line metro station as a primary transit hub, but we acknowledge that we're going to have to solve for that sort of last mile transportation, if you will. We have had in other cases some success working with capital metro to see if we can move a bus station closer to the property, however, we also in other properties have had a van on site that is available to staff to transport tenants either to a transportation node or to common sites that they need to use for errand, groceries, et cetera. We've also been told that because permanent supportive housing is reserved for people who are chronically

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homeless and therefore by definition are living with a disability, it's fairly frequent that these individuals have medicaid benefits which also cover transportation services for them, particularly as relates to their medical needs. >> Kelly: Just to provide background, my understanding is the park & ride for the lakeline mall area is 2.1 miles away, which equates to a 41 minute walk and they would have to pass over

through some very busy intersections and thoroughfares. I'm glad to hear 245 there will be an option of putting another bus stop on site or providing that van transportation. >> We would not anticipate that people would walk to that site as their primary means of arriving. So there is a question about what services would be brought on

[10:54:59 AM]

site. You mentioned this was indigent health care in cedar park that was a V.A. Clinic with women, infant children services. So the way we would typically see this work on a property like this is case management is on site. So there are staff there they are providing social services and in some cases outpatient mental health services, really just in terms of that intensive case management. So they are working day to day with those individuals to help them maintain their housing stability, but also really connecting them with services. Again, we would anticipate that a van would be one of the most common uses of that would be for access to health care. It would seem likely that the primary care of choice for most of these folks would be our community care clinics, and we can find out where the closest community

[10:55:59 AM]

care clinic is for each of those, as well as any other clinics that could be relevant. >> Kelly: Okay, thank you for that. I'm curious, the services that are on site, by having them on site, is it affecting the utilization of some of the rooms available for residents? >> Yes, so in most cases as we look at these two hotels, they are currently 83 rooms and 65 rooms. We assume that depending on the current configuration of the building, we would give over some number of rooms to offices and/or additional common spaces. The pecan park property actually has more common space and more offices, so we might only lose three or four units for that property. The property on Burnett has substantially less, and so

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we think that would probably take five rooms or more to create some of that space. There was a question, council member, regarding the proximity of the nearest grocery store, which I believe Alex has confirmed is there are H-E-B and Walmart super center at 1.1 million-mile and 1 mile away. We have not done a formal traffic study and there are pedestrian protected intersections at those underpasses, but again, would anticipate working to ensure that there are some alternatives to simply walking there. Then there was a question regarding the impact for

[10:58:01 AM]

emergency services. I do not know currently the response time to that area. Alex has reached out to ascertain that from the fire department. There are not on-site community paramedics. That's not typically necessary for these properties, but staff are there in case anything would emerge from a health perspective. They are well trained in that sort of crisis management connecting with emergency services if that is necessary. >> Hey, Diana, to add to that, I did hear about from AFD and they let me know that the fire station 34 is 1.3 miles away. And the response time is at seven minutes or less, which is well within their goal of having an eight minute response time. >> Kelly: Thank you for that. Real quick, Diana, I was hoping that you could tell me a little bit about what

[10:59:02 AM]

well trained meant. Is there a certain level of bls training that those individuals on site have that we could be aware of? >> So let's look into that. I would expect that to be the case, but I shouldn't speak for our service providers. All of the case managers are typically credentialed in one way or another, so we can talk to the service providers about what that is and get back to you on that front. The subsequent question is around the input from business owners. We -- I think Alex and I both communicated with a representative of one of the nearby businesses last week. We went back and forth a bit via email and I have asked this week that our community

[11:00:02 AM]

engagement specialists follow-up and perhaps set a meeting because that was all fairly, you know, quick conversation back and forth previous to some meetings that that gentleman had. And again, then we would -- if you have had folks explicitly reach out to you, we are available to sit down and speak with them about the project. >> Thank you for that. I do have plans to connect us all together with the business community and then as well as the residential community. I will say that right now with the over sounding emails and calls that we're getting about not wanting this in the community, while there is a need and I expressly see that need, I would not feel comfortable moving forward with this purchase until we're able to get that educational component to the community. And so my recommendation for council is going to be to postpone on Wednesday. I just wanted to get that

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out there. And then also Alex, if you could confirm for the rest of the council that there will be no problem with postponing as far as the negotiations go? >> Uh yes, I'm sorry I didn't say my name. Alex

gale, officer for the office of real estate services. Yes, councilmember Kelly we did talk with the property owner and we think our negotiations would still be okay if this item was postponed to the first meeting in February. Potentially that second meeting in February as well. But we think we would be okay with that as far as our negotiations. >> Kelly: Thank you. That's all the questions that I have. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. To that end, colleagues, I want you to know that I got a call from Williamson county commissioner Cynthia Long who is the commissioner in this area. Also she was asking for

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postponement of consideration of 31. And raised concerns about it happening in her precinct without advanced notice to her to be able to look at. I talked to her about the difficulty in a real estate transaction in making these issues public before properties are tied up. And she wanted to make sure her interests were conveyed and I said I would convey that to the council. Councilmember Casar. >> Casar: Just for the benefit of everybody -- of discussing this before our vote in a couple of days, I certainly want them to feel

[11:03:06 AM]

comfortable. We've had similar emails for hotels including hotels in draft 3 and district 4. I think it was the right decision to purchase those in district 3 and district 4, and I feel confident voting for both of these hotels on Thursday. Of course, we'll respect the will of the majority. I'm glad to hear and think it's really important for us to communicate to the property owner that if this does get postponed that it won't throw it off track, but I feel just as comfortable voting yes on Wednesday because of the urgency of the work and because this creates an opportunity for us to pull, you know, nearly 150 people off the streets and then over the years of owning these properties we'll be able to pull hundreds more. So I really appreciate the staff working diligently to bring these forward. I appreciate the service providers for stepping up and offering -- offering to provide the services.

[11:04:07 AM]

I appreciate the council for taking the bold step of reinvesting dollars away from just a policing approach to a housing approach. That's the only way we can get these hotels running is the budget. We're purchasing the hotels using the housing bond, but we are only able to purchase and run them because of the budget that we passed. So I think because it has been so many months of work, it's so high priority, I feel confident voting yes on Wednesday. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Leslie. >> Pool: Thanks. I wanted to just mention that one of the reasons why the item that's -- for the hotel purchase in district 7 will move forward on Wednesday is because we did have the time since I was on the council and knew

about it coming and staff had advised my office about it. So we were able to reach out to the surrounding community

[11:05:07 AM]

over a number of weeks this month and before people were sworn in first part of January and trying to get their sea legs. So I recognize that our new colleague, councilmember Kelly, is trying real hard to represent her community and be their voice and to get them the necessary, accurate information so that they have a fuller appreciation of what's going on and to that extent I respect her request for the postponement on item 31. And I support that. Of course our staff can tell us if the one week delay -- and also Mckenzie you should tell fuss a one week delay would help or if we need to push it to February 18. I agree with my other dais colleagues that I would like to see us complete these purchases, but I think there is room within our time frames to make sure that the

[11:06:10 AM]

community's quiz are answered and that you be given the opportunity to represent as robustly as you desire with the folks who have put you in office. >> Mayor Adler: Colleagues? Kathie? >> Tovo: I have questions about more generally this presentation, but -- >> Mayor Adler: Can you move your microphone closer? >> Tovo: Sure. I have questions about the general homelessness presentation. Is it appropriate to launch into those now or are we still discussing the hotel-motels? >> Mayor Adler: Let's finish the discussion about the hotels. Does anybody want to talk about the hotels? Mackenzie? >> Kelly: I wanted to thank councilmember pool for her support in postponement of this issue. I want to talk about is some of what councilmember Casar said. I'm not in opposition of this hotel being purchased. My understanding is the work that will be done there is very important and vital to our neighbors experiencing

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homelessness and we do need to move forward with finding places for these individuals to go. My concern is that we haven't had a chance to have meaningful input from the community. This hotel in particular backs up directly to single-family residential homes and I believe that their input should be taken and we should use it as an educational opportunity to let them know what our plan for this use of this property is. Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Mr. Renteria, Pio. >> Renteria: Yes. I agree that we should have -- should reach out to the neighborhood. The roadway inn that I approved and supported was also butting up against a neighborhood there and there was a lot of concerns, but what they saw that improvement that went on in that -- with that hotel was so good, so great because we were able-- that particular

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place I don't know about, the one in district 6, but it was used as a place where they ran prostitution and they had a lot of drug sales there and what we did was that we improved that awareness because we're not in that kind of business. We're trying to help our homeless population and get them off the street. So you can also look into what the roadway inn and how it helped the neighborhood there and it can be one of the areas that you can also take back to your neighborhood and say let's take a close look at houses, motel or hotel that's being used and what kind of improvement are we going to have there because you're going to have someone that's controlling everything and letting people in and out.

[11:09:15 AM]

So it sometimes becomes a blessing when you buy these places. >> Mayor Adler: Ann? >> Kitchen: I had a question for councilmember Kelly, if she had a thought in mind for how much additional time she was thinking of in terms of talking with her community? >> Kelly: Thank you for asking that. I think a week would be enough time for us to hold several town halls. [Dog barking]. I apologize for the dogs. And then we can move forward. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Anything else on this item? Okay. Kathie, let me turn it over to you for more general questions. >> Tovo: Thanks and welcome Diane. It's great to have you at the helm of this. I had a couple of week questions. I have seen the news -- I think this was from the national housing coalition. They highlighted the fact that FEMA has now under the

[11:10:16 AM]

executive session, well, under whatever things that have happened with the new administration, changed from a reimbursement rate of 75% to 100% for things such as the prologue. Do you have a sense or estimate of how much money we may have budgeted for the city's portion of that 25% of the prologue? >> I cannot, councilmember K I think those dollars are running through o'clock and vela has been tracking that closely so we can follow up on that. >> Tovo: Sure, I just wanted to ask the a specific question. I just wanted to say that's a pretty great change and I that frees up some additional funding that we didn't know we had a couple of weeks ago. So I'm excited about the possibilities of how we might be able to use that. The prologues capacity I'm struggling a bit with.

[11:11:16 AM]

There are two numbers I'm not clear on. One is it sounded like in one of our previous conversations I thought I heard that the prologdes were at capacity. From today's presentation it looks like they are not. So Diane, can you address the additional beds that are available and how staff intend to use those? >> What I do know is that it has been a moving number for a variety of reasons. We as you know when we thought we were going to decommission the prologdes, we began as people exited to not rebuild those rooms and then changed course when we decided that we were going to be prudent to keep them open. So some of those rooms then are unoccupied, but did need to be cleaned or repaired. We also have had a tranche of rooms at the roadway that was not occupied because of

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renovation that were happening there. So I would like to go back to staff because truly those numbers are changing daily and we can come back with an accurate accounting of just how many rooms there are, how many have humans in them and how many are actually available for occupancy at this time. >> Tovo: That's great, with the intention assuming they are ready to be used and not in need of renovation is the intention to fill those? >> Yeah, I believe so. I believe they have started moving people in. >> Tovo: One of the wonderful reasons why some of those are vacant is that the individual is now in permanent housing. I thought I heard a hire number for that. Is that the official count, 149 that was in your presentation today? >> Yes, that's the number I received yesterday. >> >> Tovo: Thanks to our staff and partners for

[11:13:19 AM]

making that happen. One more question and one that may take more time. The public library, thanks for highlighting the public library efforts. I think this is one of the many efforts that the city engaged in that the public isn't always aware of. I know some downtown residents one day gave me a list of ideas and most of them are actually in progress to one extent or another and one was the idea of having on-site individuals to help -- to interact and be a resource at the public library. At one point we had some graduate classes or some social workers who were in training who were part of that initiative at the public library and I wondered if you could -- if you don't have that information now if you could be get back to us on whether any of those efforts are still -- whether those relationships still exist and could be implemented once we're back in a -- in full public mode at our libraries. I think that was a really

[11:14:20 AM]

great help for the students and also for the city to work with them. And then I would -- my last question is maybe going to take a bit more response but as you know and I know you and I and some other colleagues have talked about the situation in some of those public spaces and in particular the growing

number of individuals camping on parkland especially down at the hike and bike trail trail. Sorry. We have school going on here as well. Could you please address why -- what the parks department is doing with regard to individuals who are on our parkland at the hike and bike trail and whether you and staff are working on kind of a longer term solution. We are as you are aware receiving lots of information from lots of questions from constituents

[11:15:23 AM]

about the encampments down at the hike and bike trail and what the -- why they're being allowed to remain and kind of what the longer term strategy is with regard to [inaudible]? >> So we are certainly having those conversations, councilmember, and I know vela Mcdade was going to be available and listening in. I don't think I'm in a position to give you any one answer there. We are of course dealing with a lot of intentions so far as we have CDC guidelines that I suggest that we not move encampments at present. And as a community we have largely been following those except in cases of explicit dangers to health or safety.

[11:16:33 AM]

We can come back to you, but it is a conversation that we are actively having with what a reasonable response is in a situation which we are not currently able to give the managers of our public spaces the kind of resources that they need in order to -- in this case to enforce that ordinance in such a way that feels useful and if it actually changes anything because the sense is that people would just move a few feet away. >> Tovo: I think too if you would just for the public's benefit explain the CDC, the rationale for the CDC guidance. >> Absolutely. So CDC guidance suggests that we should not -- that municipalities and governments in general should not be removing

[11:17:33 AM]

campsite because there are people there who are typically interacting in a small social group much like a bubble or a pod that we might have with our neighbors and that when we are forced to clear a particular area, it is anticipated that they then would move on, find other places to be and quite likely interact with new individuals in close quarters. So there's a concern about the likelihood of transmission there and they are intensified because of the common chronic health issues that our neighbors are experiencing homelessness live with which makes them more vulnerable to the virus. >> Tovo: Thank you very much. >> Councilmembers, this is

[11:18:34 AM]

Kimberly Mcneeley from the parks and recreation department and I would like to concur with what Diana did just explain to you. I want to also let you know that the parks and recreation has visited a number of encampments on parkland and advised individuals that they are not permitted to be on parkland. So we advise individuals of what the current ordinance says. We ask those individuals to begin making plans or considering what alternatives they may have to be on parkland. We do also connect to connect those individuals with our other service providers like integral care, like host, like tac, those entities that provide certain resources that the parks and recreation department does not have. We also try to provide information about leave no trace, which is how to be

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environmentally sensitive in the space in which you are currently residing. And we also help individuals understand that there's going to come a time when they're not going to be able to remain in that space and just to concur with what Diana said are a challenge, at this time for some of those locations is where is the best place to ask people to relocate to as we fear that if we ask them to relocate they'll select another location that is neither -- is not the most appropriate location and then they'll have to relocate those individuals again. So we have been working with Diana's office even before she came on board and we'll continue to do so. We're very aware of the space -- of the spaces that are of concern to our community and we're trying to address those

[11:20:38 AM]

systematically. >> Tovo: Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Kathie, just by way of mentioning, I talked to Ralph about the administration's letter asking or saying that the FEMA reimbursement should be 100% for the non-congregate sheltering. And he pointed out to me that it was really good news, but that it was a letter, not even an executive order and it contained a provision that said consistent with law, so it doesn't suggest a change in the law. But to the degree that it is consistent with what our interpretation of what the existing law is, the hope is that that's going to help us with FEMA, but still an

[11:21:38 AM]

undecided issue at this point so our staff's lobbying efforts on this continue. Unfortunately it's not a clean establishment of the policy. >> [Inaudible]. >> Mayor Adler: Councilmember Ellis. >> Ellis: I wanted to follow up from councilmember tovo in a slightly different way. I wanted to add to the positive news that Diana is conveying with respect to our hotel acquisition and conversion strategy that if we move forward with these two hotels across these next couple of councilmembers that will be at or near our

original target of the 300 rooms, you know, and just when we set out the strategy and we set our numbers, we were not in covid and there are opportunities that we see in light of of that.

[11:22:38 AM]

And I think that's positive. I also wanted to acknowledge dsg funding and the rapid re-housing possibilities for 550 households by end of fiscal year '22. I think that's all really good news. However, when we go and we look at the numbers that we are trying to address, just if we did a snapshot of time view of it we are saying that we have 1574 unsheltered a night and those numbers don't get even all those people in one night off. And we know we have 9,000 experiencing homelessness each year that we also have to worry about. So we're not yet there in meeting the need for housing. And for a long time we have chosen to emphasize the long-term investments that we believe are better solutions and have not seriously taken into

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consideration temporary options. So I wanted Diana to speak to this question of whether we should be considering designated camping areas and what is the process and where does that fit into the plan. The camping and parking that we are -- in parks that we are seeing is new camps. These are not -- these are new camps that are being formed as opposed to moving camps that be established for many months. And I think -- I think we might all agree that where some of that camping is happening right now is not where we would designate it if we had to designate it, but it is default a designated camping area and there has to be a better approach. So can you speak to what the options are and how staff is thinking about that and where it fits and how thinking may have evolved now that we've moved beyond

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the initial forays into this process? >> First of all, I do want to say that I think the month of February is going to be really critical not just from the division standpoint, but from the community standpoint and coming together and thinking about not only what types of interventions we need, but how much to actually make a change in terms of the, a, the unsheltered numbers that we are seeing right now, but not just moving those folks into shelter, but in more palatable camping spaces, but understanding that we have a road to permanent housing for them. I -- from my perspective nothing is off the table at present, so long as we are holding to our values about respecting the rights of these neighbors and that our intent is to provide housing.

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We think that we need to look at the cost, the timeline and the adequacy of any number of shelter options, if you will. It does not exclude sanctioned campgrounds. I think that that clearly typically would provide facilities that were not as complete as you would see in a structure, right, or a series of small non-congregate shelters, but I think it's on the table and I think that, you know, with staff we can look at all of those options and come back to you with at least initially what we believe the pros and cons of those are with an eye toward identifying more concrete

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strategy. >> Alter: I think it's important that we get the information about those pros and cons. I don't know at this time where we stand with that. I understand the advice that was given at a much earlier stage, but I think we're at a different point in time and I think it's important that we reassess. I want to be clear that when I say it does ban the camping that it certainly could include the pop-up shelters. I forget what the -- the individual structures so that it's non-congregate. There are many different ways that that could be structured and how that could look. And I agree completely with the goal that the goal is to get people to housin, but where people are camping right now does not seem particularly humane and we have to ask the question about whether we can get to that other place quick enough or if we need to put

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some temporary steps in place along the way and we have to openly confront that and have that information out there. It is possible that the conclusion will be that that's not appropriate, but I think it's really important that we have that information and that we are able to consider that as one of the steps -- one of the many steps that we might take. And particularly if we are going to address the camping in the parks, which is not allowed right now. We need to -- we really do need to think about if there's a better alternative, the parks department is under -- does not have the resources, does not have anyplace to move people to and those are really very valid concerns. But I think we need to be creative about what the solution is and be open and honest in a R. That we have that problem and find a way forward for the community so that we continue to have support for the end goal of

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housing everyone. >> Mayor Adler: Ann? >> Kitchen: Thank you, councilmember alter. I think that your comments and also councilmember tovo's comments are well taken and I appreciate hearing those. The only thing that I would add to the comment so far is I just want to speak to the non-congregate aspect of

it. I think that can make a difference in whether a designated shelter area is safe and appropriate for someone because the ability to put in place those pallet homes or whatever you want to call them, the non-congregate approach to shelter really provides some privacy to people and gives them their own space and can also give them better shelter than they have in a tent right now from the

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weather and other things. So I know that -- I know that Ms. Gray will look at that aspect of it too as they're examining in response to your question, councilmember alter, as they're examining the possibilities there. I also know that there are efforts going on at the espy ran is a community he is par ran is a community, and the opportunities for things like pallet homes and things like that. I look forward to what we receive back from staff about that because I do share the concern about what we're experiencing in the parks. We have some parks areas and greenbelt areas in district 5 also. So thank you. >> I want to add my voice to

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some of the other sentiments that have been expressed. I know that obviously this is a topic that's being discussed in the community. I think there are two things that we need. I think we need to have that implementation schedule that tells us over time how long it's going to take to get this done and what has to happen and benchmarks along the way so that people can measure progress. But I also agree with my colleagues that we need to do something with greater urgency on the immediacy of the challenge that the community faces, and I'm encouraged to area the -- encouraged to hear the continued conversations in that regard. I think it's significant that when we first looked at this we had pretty much taken off the table designated camping areas because that's not something that is -- that is generally

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desirable. At the same time, we have an emergency situation and a need for rapid housing that may very well trump that. So I appreciate the conversation, the investigation that's going on in that area because I think that we need to do both things, the long-term plan as well as dealing more -- I think it's real -- for me going back to where we were in the past is not the right solution because all that does is hide people experiencing homelessness and the challenge grows until it becomes to a scale that we can't do something about it. We still have a scale that we can and I'm encouraged with all the work that's been done and conversations that are being Teed up both within the city and outside the city to be able to recognize that we shouldn't go back because that's not a good choice.

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We need to continue with this work and do better than we are now. Further discussion? Natasha. >> Harper-madison: Thank you, chair, I will be brief. I wanted to be certain that my constituents know that in a situation like this if I'm not contributing to the dialogue, it's certainly because it's not important. It's also certainly not because we haven't heard your concerns and questions. We are asking many, many questions and exploring all the possibilities behind the scenes and with our colleagues and I don't have any questions in this setting. It doesn't mean that you are not being represented as far as the subject matter is concerned. So thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Yes. Councilmember Fuentes. >> Fuentes: Thank you. This question is for Diana. Can you explain more about the housing homelessness

[11:33:53 AM]

summit that we're planning for February and what the community can expect from that summit and the format if that's figured out just yet? >> You're muted. >> So the city is not actually the convener of that summit. It is being convened by a variety of community folks, including the daa and echo and the mayor may be able to speak more broadly to some of the folks putting it together with the idea being that we really come to some concrete goals that we share as a community. And hold each other accountable. It is not framed as a long planning session, but rather taking the action plan to end homelessness that echo released I believe in 2018 and perhaps updated in 2019.

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But taking those strategies and attaching masks to them so the number of units of housing, shelter beds, etcetera, that we want to produce and when. >> Mayor Adler: I really don't want to get out in front of those folks that are organizing it and I don't think that they're at a place yet to really talk about what their kind of vision is. I share the same vision that Diana has. We will have to wait and see what it is that comes from those folks. But I think that they're still at a premature place discussing it. Hopefully they can bring something to the community. Alison? You're muted. -- You're muted. >> Can you hear me now? >> Mayor Adler: Yes. >> Alter: I wanted to go back to the last slide of the looking forward and just acknowledge the really

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important work that's being done to define the rules of the city and echo. One of the challenges we've had is the city is trying to be all things to all people on this. And I think what we've seen from other lessons from other cities with more successful responses is that they're better definition of the roles

helps everyone to be strategic and focus their efforts where their contributions can be most effective. So I appreciate that. I wanted to bring that in with the memo from January 20th that we received from Mr. Gale and Ms. Gray and I'm not sure which of you would be the best to answer this. But there's a portion towards the end of the memo part that references that community partners have indicated that there is substantial philanthropic interests in supporting the hotel conversion strategy. Were someone with means

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interested in supporting the motel conversion strategy, can you please provide greater detail about what that role would be? Because it's not just echo and the city that need to be involved in this solution. There's all the non-profits, but the business and philanthropic sector also we need them to step up if we're going to find the resources and the will to do this. So very specifically with respect to the motel conversion strategy can you speak to some of the philanthropic opportunities and what that looks like? >> Sure, I can do that. So I will say that there are any number of ways to become involved in the hotel conversion strategy. In the case of these two particular hotels, one of the most obvious places might be to contribute dollars towards the renovation costs. So the city is coming in if

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approved would acquire the properties and then would be looking to establish sustainable operating funds for the service providers as well as the service dollars. They always need supplementary funding to enrich those services, but one thing that we would love to see is the private sector coming in to help bring these buildings right where they need to be to be turned into folks' long-term homes. And that will both make best use of the city's dollars and it will move the process along more quickly. As you can imagine if we go through a process for additional dollars for renovation, there is a time cost there as well. So the memo that you are referring to has two letters of interest attached to it from our two non-profits that have expressed interest, and I am certain

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that they would love to hear from anyone who has an interest in contributing to that effort. >> Alter: So would that be the appropriate avenue would be for someone to reach out to integral care and caritas or is there -- who is it that somebody talks to and feels like they would be interested in a significant investment. >> So we are happy to speak with folks. I'm sure if people are interested or have relationships with echo, they can direct those conversations, but we can certainly get them connected with opportunities within the field to contribute to the effort. >> Alter: And once we were to make those renovations are there federal dollars that we're then in a position to pull down for ongoing costs as part

of this? >> So the federal dollars that we would likely target first would be the possibility of project-based

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vouchers via our local housing authority. So we need to ensure that the property has the resources it needs to operate, but then once operating we believe -- or even once we have site control we could conceivably apply for federal dollars to provide the operating subsidies, which is the same as the rent for the building. And certainly if we see other opportunities for federal dollars on the service side, we would pursue those as well. Absolutely looking for every opportunity we can to bring the city dollars in to secure the project, to solidify it so that then we can capitalize on those other opportunities. >> Alter: But as a philanthropic investment then it's really set up that it would enable leveraging potentially, obviously we have to go through the process at the federal level, but there is an opportunity to set the stage

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for it to be if not fully self-sustaining, but a large portion of it self-sustaining once you make the renovations that allow you to be eligible. >> That's correct. That would be our hope. >> Alter: Thank you. I think it's really important for people to understand the real opportunity for philanthropic involvement to make a difference. And the sooner that we can get these motels converted and up and running and moving forward, the bigger dent that we can make and that we can demonstrate as has been demonstrated in other cities that this motel conversion approach is the cost effective and efficient way of moving forward. It's been complicated by covid, but it is nonetheless much more cost effective than trying to build housing from scratch in terms of the timeline as well as being located in areas that we might otherwise not be able to build.

[11:42:02 AM]

So thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Pio. >> Renteria: Thank you, mayor. You know, we haven't heard anything from the housing department about community first. You know, we waived over three-million-dollar fees for them a couple of years ago with the understanding that they were going to have 300 units built and also that it was going to house 400 people, 200 units for a single person and 100 units for married couples. Can you give us an update on that or you don't have that information if you get it to us later on? >> So Pio, I can give you my general understanding, but we'll definitely want to get back to you with more granular detail. So my understanding is that community first village has

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launched that phase 2 and they have begun housing the first residents of that second phase, which is I believe between 225 and 250 additional homes, but we will certainly touch base with them and we can come back to you with that. >> Renteria: I was wondering also will you document that? Is that on your dashboard of when you house and actually get people off the street and into those units? >> So I am not certain about that. Because community first village is such a unique model insofar as they use predominantly private dollars, they are not woven into all of the datasets in quite the same way as some of our other partners. But I need to understand just what the reality is there and we can let you know. >> Renteria: Yeah, it would be great to document that and people can actually

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see that we are getting people off the street. I saw that you had 147 permanent housing that you provided last year and I was just wondering if those units were not considered as community first? It's just that we might be housing a lot more people than you are documenting. So I just want to make sure that -- that that information gets out that we are going to be funded. I think what is happening also is that the community is getting frustrated because they keep seeing these camp sites and they keep growing. And what I feel like, we actually accomplishing what letting people come back and fill that place with people. Because of what you said, you said any time -- at any

[11:45:10 AM]

time there are 9,000 people experiencing homelessness, and if we could get that information of who these people are and are they losing their house because of the pandemic, they can't get to work. So we are getting people off the street, but there seem to be a lot more and it seems like these people that are losing their homes are people that cannot afford to pay for rent. And because of their background and some might be -- been evicted in the past for sleeping in the streets and now they can't get a place to move into. So it would be very interesting for me knowing that we are going to be under pressure with a lot of people and that the people in the city of Austin have a petition to find out exactly what's going on and how we're going to be addressing those issues.

[11:46:11 AM]

So we need to be prepared for anything that comes down on us. >> Mayor Adler: Okay, colleagues. Kathie? >> Tovo: Just a couple of quick last points. Diana, at one point in your presentation you talked about the number of individuals that the city is proposing to house or echo has the goal of housing. I'm sure -- I'm not sure I have the presentation printed out. I know you've made it available and it's not any

longer on the screen. But does your presentation also talk about -- one, I just want -- I want you to speak for a moment to the fact that the city's efforts are just one piece of a much broader community effort. So those numbers aren't really reflective of the number of individuals each year that are being housed and exiting through the work of our partners, some of whom we help support through our city dollars. If you could just speak to a

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minute I wouldn't want anyone to come away with a feeling that 500 or the city's efforts are all that's going on with regard to getting individual -- our neighbors who are experiencing homelessness into permanent housing. And then I wanted to express support. I know I've had an opportunity to talk with staff and with the managers and several of my colleagues about this idea of revisiting designated camping areas as -- and learning from some of those consultants that have experience with what has worked or hasn't worked. I wanted to add my voice to my colleagues. I know that several of us have talked about whether it is necessary or useful to provide an ifc with some timeline for that conversation so I will be continuing that over the next couple of days to figure out if that would be helpful in setting that conversation up for our council. >> Sure. And as I answer, councilmember, stop me if it sounds like I have not understood your question

[11:48:14 AM]

fully. What I will say is that yes, as a community, we tend to look at how many folks are housed overall and those programs are funded through a variety of sources. And just as an example, I was able to work with the city in those two first phs goals that were set in 2010 and 2014, I think. And we sat at a round table and these were fairly small goals at the time, 300 units, 400 units of psh and putting together that puzzle of how we would get to that many units with those resources would probably involved 15 funders in different ways for different projects. So one of the reasons that I think it's important that we talk about having a community goal, ideally a shared goal or goals, is really they will be very

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carely cases in which the city goes and the city itself alone creates housing or housing opportunities, right? Almost all of these projects are going to be [indiscernible] In one way or the other. So we can look at resources this flow through the city and perhaps that's what you were alluding to with the 500 units or lots of rapid. I will say that that is actually a combination of esp monies flowing through the city of Austin and dsg monies that were passed to Austin through tdhca with the input of echo. So I want to help council understand what we specifically are doing in terms of the mechanics of what's passing

through the city, but also absolutely be very cognizant of that overall environment where we are very much interwoven with our partners.

[11:50:17 AM]

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Leslie? >> Pool: I think this may be Diana, a question for later, but I would like to get an idea about any coordination or the mechanics that we would need to develop to try to get our arms around more of a coordinated, regional response to homelessness. I think we find that Austin will get to the limit of what we can do as an individual city, but that is why I would like to acknowledge all the surrounding areas in the [indiscernible] And maybe advance that conversation more broadly. >> Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Paige? >> Ellis: Thank you, mayor. I wanted to add in because it seems like we were maybe closetory wrapping up this conversation, I agree with a lot of the sentiments of my colleagues, especially some of the discussion of

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designated sites. I know as has been stated we thought earlier that wasn't necessarily the way to go. I think we're seeing some of these encampments more close to public spaces start to verge on the headcount that we might see on a more concentrated campsite. So I think this has been evolving over the last several months to look at we're already seeing people organizing in spaces, sharing space together and with the addition of the pallet shelter conversation, I'm really intrigued about how that might be advantageous to a situation where we might look at doing a more designated campsite. Then you have a little more structure to how many spaces are safely being provided for people, when you might need to move them or relocate them so that other people in other parts of town have another opportunity to have that first step out of unsheltered homelessness.

[11:52:20 AM]

I was able to tour the other one's foundation operating over at camp Esperanza and seeing some of the work they're doing. They also have the workforce program that we have, and I believe that contract may be coming back for renewal or additional funding this week. I know it's through family elder care and so we're looking at some of the details of what that contracting looks like. So I wanted to go ahead and verify that. I think as this evolves and as we find what works for our community and different ways we might be able to find successes, I think that there's a little more tools that we have to utilize to make sure that we're providing any and all option that might be helpful for those experiencing homelessness, especially during the pandemic, which I know is so difficult. But I also know with some of the questions about some of the camping going on in park spaces, I know that our ordinances currently do specify that parks without a

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camping registration, without a permit process for camping or something that are not included in what is currently allowed under our code. And I know that if the CDC is saying it's better not to move people for risk of them inadvertently becoming infected or infecting others, it's certainly a concern that we want to make sure we're paying close attention to. But I know when you're dealing with the general public using trails for recreation, transportation, trying to get out and get some fresh air for themselves as they are doing their own social distancing that we may inadvertently be creating a situation where the general public is accidentally infecting other people and vice versa. So I think that's an interesting conversation. I wasn't really aware of kind of the federal guidelines around how to make sure that people in encampments are safe during this time, but I am interested in that conversation around trying not to move them, but also knowing they may

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inadvertently be in a space where people who may not be social distancing and wearing masks are entering that space. So I think it's an interesting conversation that's obviously evolving along the way, but these are some of the discussions I've thought about over the course of this morning and I'm curious to see where we head from here. So thank you for your work and I'm glad you're on board. >> Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Colleagues, it is 11:54. I'm going to need to leave. Kathie, I don't know if you can take over the chair. We have several other colleagues that are leaving at noon. I don't know if you are going to come back. Someone said that the cap metro meeting someone checked and said it should be a couple of hours so I don't know if it's possible to reconvene at say, like, 2:15 or 2:30 or something like that when we will all be back again. But I will leave that to you

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guys to decide. Kathie, can I give you the chair? >> Tovo: Yeah, thank you, mayor. I was going to suggest that if we can we try to hit the other items on the pulled list before we break. >> Mayor Adler: All right, guys. I'll be back. Thank you. >> Tovo: So I guess the first question the mayor had asked was about cap metro. So cap metro folks, do you have an estimate of when you might be back? Councilmember kitchen? >> Kitchen: Well, it's -- I don't know. I'll see what councilmember Renteria thinks, but it seems like -- I don't know that we could predict before 3:00. What do you think, Pio? >> Tovo: Councilmember Renteria, do you have an estimate? >> Renteria: I just talked to Ed, and I think they're going to convene the meeting at 12:30. Ann, do you know? >> Kitchen: Yeah, there's a public hearing at 12:00. As you know, we often don't have much in terms of participation there, but the

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meeting convenes at 12:30. >> Renteria: So I really don't know. I don't believe that we have that much to discuss, but we are going to be electing the officials for vice-chair and committee assignments and stuff like that. I really don't have an idea of how long it's going to go. >> Tovo: So I propose that we try to take the other pulled items. I know councilmember Kelly said that you had just quick questions about them so maybe we can get through the other pulled items. I probably -- probably with the exception of health south. So let's see how many of yours we can hit before we lose some of our colleagues. And why don't we plan at 2:00 to finish up the pulled items and go into executive session and then we'll have to figure out if you guys aren't back what to do next. Does that sound reasonable? Councilmember alter.
>> Alter: I just wanted to

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ask one thing for Ms. Gray as a follow-up and she doesn't have to answer it now, but one of the things we hear a lot about is haven for hope and we've had much earlier in our conversations over homelessness we had a lot of homelessneses about why our consultants and our staff felt like that was not the appropriate model. I think the conversation in the community it would be helpful for us to communicate why we are not adopting that model and what the reasons are and it's coming from an informed place as we're responding because we continually get that question and I think we benefit from some broader education about some of the choices. >> I'd be happy to do that. Thank you. >> Tovo: Thank you, councilmember. Okay. So why don't we have that plan, councilmembers on cap metro I know we will be losing you here quickly, but

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let's tackle the pulled items and coming back at 2:00 and checking in together and then we'll figure out if we need to delay at that point to wait for the rest of our colleagues. Councilmember Kelly, I believe we completed 31, is that sense of it too? Let's go ahead and jump in to -- how about item 24? That looks like the quickest. And the other three we'll take the same step. Let's see if we can take up 24 quickly. >> Kelly: Okay. Is the staff here for that? >> Tovo: Good question. City manager, I think my proposed order would be 24 and then 14, 16 and 27 if they haven't already answered your questions on 27. >> Kelly: 27 is good to go. >> Tovo: Super. Thanks. So city manager, 24 and then we'll take up 14 and 16. >> Cronk: Great. We do have staff and director weeks is here to answer questions for number

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24. And we'll just be moved over in a second. >> Kelly: So would you like for me to ask the questions on 24 now? >> That would be great. >> Kelly: I was wondering if we had any other schools that currently participate in a similar program because I'm concerned about equity across charter and public school districts success to our libraries. My thoughts on that it it would be a great program and we should include as many different school districts as possible instead of just showing favoritism towards one. >> Tovo: Thank you, councilmember. Manager -- direct weeks, I see you on this call. Can you answer the councilmember's question?

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>> Just give us one minute. Sorry. >> Tovo: Manager, I'm not sure if I'm remembering this correctly. I know aisd has this program and has for about a year. And I believe that del valle also does. Councilmember Fuentes, I see you saying that's correct. So those are two school districts. Director weeks, I see you now. Do you want the councilmember to repeat her question? >> No, I got it. Good afternoon, everybody. Roosevelt weeks, libraries. Councilmember Kelly, you're exactly right -- >> Tovo: I'm sorry, we're having trouble hearing you. If you could just get a little closer to the microphone. >> Can you guys hear me now? >> Tovo: Yes, much better, thank you. >> Councilmember Kelly, you're exactly right.

[12:01:30 PM]

Our goal is to have every student in Travis county to have library cards. We currently have del valle and aid as a partner in getting library cards. So our goal is to take these school districts and charter school one by one and later on library commission is going to set a proposal, a recommendation that we conclude all the schools that's within Travis county so that we don't lose any of our students as far as getting the [indiscernible] Access to our resources. >> Ellis: Thank you for that and for -- councilmember Kelly for that and for your hard work that you are getting everyone access to library cards. You mentioned schools in Travis county D that include schools in Round Rock ISD that are in Travis county. >> That's an excellent question. One thing that the charter will not allow us to do is if you're outside of the etj that you can't do that. So it will take an act by council to make those changes so that we can

[12:02:30 PM]

include those school districts within Williamson county and outside of Travis county. >> Kelly: Okay. We do have some Round Rock ISD schools that are located within Travis county so that's just to further clarify they would not be in the etj. >> Right. That's one of the challenges we've got is that we recognize that there are some schools within that has Austin addresses. We don't want to have some kids that's part of the school get library cards and others not get library cards. So if we can, we would like to be

able to give them all library cards versus just some of those classes or students. >> Kelly: That's great. That answers my question there. Thank you very much. I'm looking forward to seeing this whole program roll out and the positive effect it has on our students throughout the community. >> Thank you, councilmember. >> Tovo: Thank you, councilmember, thank you, director weeks. Number 14, this is the economic development department.

[12:03:31 PM]

Hopefully they're on the call as well or can we pull them over? Councilmember Kelly, would you like to combine 14 and 16? Let's address them both at once if you would like to share with the staff what your questions are? >> Kelly: Yes, thank you. They are very similar questions. My concerns and questions were how we determine how each organization provides the oversight? What sort of oversight they are providing and why these programs aren't being managed directly by the city of Austin? >> Good afternoon. Good afternoon, councilmember Kelly. Items 14 and 15 were programs that were approved by council as part of the cares spending framework. So the economic development -- Sylvia holt-rabb, economic development department. Items 14 and 15 were part of the city council approved

[12:04:32 PM]

spending framework from the cares funding. The economic development department procured a third-party services to execute guidelines approved by council. And so we monitor the contracts that we have with better business bureau and United Way, but they execute our guidelines. >> Kelly: Okay. So as a follow-up question to that, and thank you again for your work in providing that feedback and background information. What are some ways that we might be able to create more transparency amongst the city in regards to these programs and how things are distributed to -- through the cares act. >> Thank you for that question. Currently we have a dashboard on atxrecovers.com for all of the programs that were executed for the

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economic development department. Each dashboard includes data on who applied, the districts, the ethnic break down, etcetera, as well as who received the funds. So the first page of the dashboard shows applications and then the last page shows awards. And we have dashboards for all of our awards. >> Tovo: Councilmember Kelly, do you have additional questions? >> Kelly: I do not at this time. Thank you for that clarification. It looks like other councilmembers have questions as well. >> Tovo: Yeah, I see a few. I was just going to ask director holt-rabb, deputy director holt-rabb, your office had provided mine with some information about how those changes break down to the better business bureau and if

we could treat that as a question for the q&a, that might answer some of the questions that I know I'm getting from constituents and it sounds like councilmember Kelly may be as well.

[12:06:36 PM]

Councilmember pool? >> Pool: Thanks, Kathie. To our staff if you could give us a little more background on why the better business bureau was selected to be the [indiscernible]? >> Yes. We actually through the procurement process invited 11 vendors from the city of Austin to interview with a third-party administrator. Seven of the 11 came. We looked for their capacity in terms of outreach, intake, case management, etcetera. And the better business bureau came out ahead to provide those services along with the speed we were instructed to deploy these funds quickly and they were able to do that. And we can provide the q&a from December 3rd council, we can send that back out because that included the breakdown, the administrative fee, the

[12:07:38 PM]

total amount disbursed, etcetera. We'll get that back out. >> Pool: Thanks so much. >> Tovo: Councilmember alter. >> Alter: Thank you. I wanted to point out that the fee for the better business bureau is under 3.5% for this, which is a very low rate compared to what we often see for administration of this. I did have a clarification that I wanted to get. So there was a couple of funding sources. One is the cares act funding of the 2,095,125 which I believe was detailed recently in a memo from economic development of how they were handling some of the balance of the spending framework funding. Then it also lists a community development block grant and that's 2,500,000. Can you speak a little bit to that funding source?

[12:08:43 PM]

And how that ended up in this bucket? >> Yes. In December the neighborhood housing and planning department, excuse me on their name, received notifications that they were receiving additional community development block grant. They held outreach through the community to get feedback and the council approved this first [indiscernible]. Some went to rental and a portion went to a small business grant program. So what we will continue to do is move down the list of applicants. As you recall we received \$120 million in requests and the original spending framework had about 16.5 million. So we anticipate those funds from the community development block grant coming some time this month and the better business bureau will disburse those funds. >> So we passed an thumb

[12:09:45 PM]

that had that piece of it and now it's just where it's getting spent. I just couldn't remember where we had allocated. Thank you. >> Tovo: Further questions on either 14 or 16? All right. So I think that leads us back to 10. Councilmember Kelly, you had pulled that. That's the additional funding for the renovation. >> Yes. And my question was what type of renovations were being completed. Understanding more of what the purpose that would be, and if the property was able to be utilized before the renovations. I just wanted a deeper understanding of what's needing to be done on the property prior to -- well, currently with the renovations. >> Tovo: Thank you very much. Alex gale I see on the line.

[12:10:46 PM]

Alex, are you able to answer those questions? >> I believe so. Alex gale, officer for the office of real estate. I believe we have Rolando Fernandez with capital contract is on here as well. It's my understanding what the purpose of this for is that we're seeing costs when doing the renovations and replacing some of the flooring there that needed to be level. And so this action is just increasing that contract with the group to be used towards those unforeseen costs. And yes, we are currently using the roadway inn as a protective lodge, but due to some of the -- we are doing renovations floor by floor mentioned this previously. There are some rooms that we weren't using while we were doing some of the renovations, but the other areas of the property are still being utilized. I see Rosie is on as well from housing and planning department.

[12:11:55 PM]

>> Kelly: Thank you. That was all my questions for that agenda item number. >> Tovo: Thank you. So we'll need to return anyway for our executive session. So I'll hold my health south conversation for that time. Ann Morgan, is it possible to agree to recess until 2:00. And if we get word from our capital metro colleagues that they are not going to be back by 2:00 to post on the message board a different time? Or would it be better for us to reconvene at 2:00 and then agree to recess a little longer? >> You can use the message board to have a conversation about it, but a the two oak you will need to come out, councilmember tovo, and tell the public what we're going to do I think would be the best way to handle that. >> Tovo: Great. Why don't we now recess until 2:00 and we'll come back at 2:00. And if need be postpone it a little longer. I see councilmember harper-madison's hand and councilmember Ellis'. Councilmember harper-madison. >> Harper-madison: That was a failed attempt at a wave. >> Tovo: Councilmember Ellis, were you also waving? >> Ellis: That was a real

[12:12:56 PM]

hand's up. I wanted to clarify what was left on our agenda for today. Did we have any more briefings or is it just do we have one more pulled item that we'll be covering? >> Tovo: So I know we have one pulled item and we have one -- we have at least one executive session item. City manager, do we also have a briefing? >> Cronk: We do, we have the briefing from the economic development department on the equitable chamber funding and we're prepared to give that as well. >> Tovo: And do we just have one executive session item? >> Just one remaining. >> Tovo: I'll discuss with the mayor, but my proposal would be that we come back, have our -- councilmember alter, did you have a thought? >> Alter: I didn't mean to interrupt you. I just wanted to know which executive session item it was? >> It's on the petitions, the citizen-initiated petitions. >> Tovo: My guess is that's probably the lengthiest of the conversations we'll have today. So colleagues, unless anyone has a suggested path forward, I would suggest to

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the mayor that we take up the health south item and then the staff briefing and then go into executive session. Does that sound reasonable, city manager, based on what you know of that presentation? I'll see you all back at 2:00.

[1:35:33 PM]

>> City of Austin in executive session, January 25th, 2021.

[2:05:35 PM]

Let's go ahead and reconvene, January 25th, 2021, it is 2:05. We have three things left to discuss, colleagues, out south the equitable chamber briefing and then the executive session. Health south. We still have about three members that are at the capital metro meeting, so they are not with us. And expressed a desire to be part of the executive session on the may election. So we can get to that question before we get to the next two. Kathie you pulled -- >> Tovo: I did. Back in September I posted a list on the message board of some of the amendments that I intended to bring forward. I wanted to give my colleagues a heads up that we made a couple of changes to that. But I think my staff members

[2:06:36 PM]

are about to post the draft motion sheet to the message board so that will be available, the motion that I intended to be on Thursday, I had a couple more things to say about it. But the -- I did want to raise -- one, I wanted to ask for feedback for the items on there that people wanted to discuss or that they had concerns about. I wanted this to be a place where we could do that to give us all a chance to think about it or to -- to get more information. But also there is -- there is an element that I brought forward on -- in my message board posts that will not be in the motion sheet going forward that I think particularly I wanted to make sure councilmember Renteria had an opportunity to get in on that conversation, around the downtown Austin community court. But really I just pulled it to say we have transformed that into a motion sheet. Happy to talk about the piece that is about the process.

[2:07:36 PM]

That I'm going to propose we take going forward but also to open it up for a conversation among council about -- about office space generally and to let you know that I did pull back on the Austin community court piece and I wanted to make sure that we had an opportunity to talk about that piece, too. Again, that's about to be posted. The draft. There will be a couple of changes before Thursday, but it's in the main what I intend to bring forward. >> Mayor Adler: People have thoughts, when they have a chance to see the message board post, they will be able to post prior to the meeting so that there's some -- some disclosure there, that would probably be helpful as well. Is there anything that you would like to bring up directly here as part of the work session? >> Tovo: I will offer a

[2:08:36 PM]

few comments of what I am hoping to generally achieve. We have talked with staff about a variety of options. The option that I'm proposing on Thursday -- I mean Wednesday is that we move forward with negotiating with aspen heights, which is the staff recommended proposal, that we negotiate with them for lease and redevelopment of the site, including the terms that were in my message board post and possibly a few others. And the general intent here is to -- I think that we have a decent proposal. Before us. But to really push on the items that I have included are those that have come forward from stakeholders or that I have brought forward that are really attempting to achieve more community benefits from that tact of city-owned land. This is one of the first big redevelopments, the only really big redevelopment that our council has undertaken. I think it's really set we [indiscernible] To achieve benefits that the market is not providing. So, you know, one of the things that shifted from the time that the rfp came out

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to now is that -- that we've been able to interrogate and get some changes made to the -- to the financial requirements that are -- that have netted about five to \$6 million of extra value. We should absolutely be seeing, you know, some of that value return to us in the form of I think more affordable housing. But there are other benefits that I believe we should embed within this development, like childcare and some other provisions. And so I'm really, really excited about the project. And I'm excited about the developer, but again I think -- I think we have an opportunity to really embed more community value in this -- in this proposal and I hope we can get there through the -- through the elements that -- that I've identified and those that others might want to add. It may come at a cost and I -- you know, I understand that some of what we are asking them potentially to scale back on, like potentially office, might come at a cost and we need to understand that. But I think it's still worth

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doing. Again because we know the market is not providing affordable housing in this location and that is, you know, a much-needed benefit. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Anybody want to comment on this further? Certainly would be helpful to go on the message board when you see it. Okay. City manager, do you want to take us through then the briefing on the chamber stuff? >> Thank you, mayor, good afternoon, mayor and council. As you know, in response to a council direction that we received via a budget rider, the economic development department staff has worked to develop an equitable funding model for the minority chamber contracts and staff will review that model today. It will also be an opportunity for council to provide further specific direction via a resolution that would be considered by council on February 4th,

[2:11:39 PM]

that has been posted to the agenda. But at this time I will turn it over to our chief economic recovery officer and EdD director Veronica Briseno. Director Briseno. >> Good evening, Spencer is correct. We are responding to a budget rider that was approved a couple of years ago, to take a look at how we're funding our Mecca chambers. We have enlisted a consultant with us today and presented that final report to council about a year ago in written form. We are now at a point where in December of this past year, we approved our contracts for these chambers for another year, but committed to come back to council with a presentation and that is why we're here today. If we can go ahead and pull up the presentation? And at this point, as that's being pulled up, I will turn it over to dust community McCormick, our manager of these contracts. He will introduce it and

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then kick it over to our consultant, who will talk about what we have included in this report. Dusty? >>
Good afternoon, mayor, council and city manager, director Briseno and staff. My name is dusty
McCormick, the project manager for the multi-ethnic chamber alliance project. I -- I'm happy to be here
today. I want to start off by saying that the -- we have a consultant, Mr. Jeremy [indiscernible] Working
with us for the last two years to help draft this particular funding model. And so I'll start off with
reviewing the history and Mr. Jeremy [indiscernible] Will come in behind me and address the funding
model and explain that moving forward. Next slide, please. This starts out in 2011, the chamber
contracts totaling

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[indiscernible] Were transferred from the Austin convention and visitors bureau to [indiscernible]
Department and were restructured with an economic development focus. It came to us in the
[indiscernible] Amounts, the greater Austin hispanic chamber at 125,000, capitol city African-American
chamber at 90,000, the Texas Asian chamber of commerce at 30,000, the Austin Asian chamber of
commerce at 30,000, then later on the Austin gay and lesbian chamber initiated a contract at 10,416.
Subsequent to that, the Texas Asian and the Austin Asian chamber of commerce combined those
organizations and one chamber representing them called the greater Austin chamber, greater Austin
Asian chamber of commerce. In 2014 the greater Austin economic development corporation or better
known as the opportunity Austin contract came to us at the amount of \$350,000.

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Then in 2018, 1955, now known as 2111, this is when the council gave us a budget rider that provided
recommendations to us to bring back a method to [indiscernible] Refund the chambers, including small
business development [indiscernible] Poor audio] Accepted without objection. To transfer over to
Jeremy and so he can proceed from here. >> Thanks. Thank you, dusty. Moving on to the initial
improvements, the equitable chamber funding model was initially delivered to council in October of
2018 2018 -- 2019, we took the time to meet with a handful as well as the Mecca chambers at that time.
Moving forward in response to council and the meca chambers, we made the following reports. The
chamber contracts were all sended for one year, to serve as a transition year.

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And the contracts were restructured to align with EdD's other business development contracts. We also
updated the scope of work to include four main areas, including business engagement, workforce
development, chamber specific initiatives as well as capacity building. We also made sure that there
were performance based deliverables and we added a monthly reporting requirement and with regards

to the report, we updated some the demographic data as well as forms of economic discrimination as well as model adjustment scenarios in the report. Next slide. And so going back to the beginning, the project's goal at the outset was to develop a framework and methodology to allocate city of Austin funds to local non-profit business and economic development organizations. That would result in equitable allocation and provide a mechanism to engage in new organization.

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So to start there is no industry standard for developing an equitable allocation. So for this project as equitable allocation considered the target population that each funded organization represented and we aim to identify those critical factors that would comprise equity, particularly from an economic development perspective. So the first things that we looked at were the council transcripts that created the budget rider as well as watching the meetings, which centered around a meca funding model. We looked at this new at the time strategic planning initiative. Strategic direction 2023, how that would overlay with these contracts in the model. We also worked with the equity office to add definitions, particularly to equitable funding. To provide that initial direction. So we held a stakeholder engagement process where we met with all of the chambers and their board members in group format and then also met with each of them one-on-one. We also produced a

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self-assessment to gain a written understanding of each organization and particularly the issues and needs that their communities face. We also performed national best practices research, reaching out to dozens of cities to identify what they are doing with regards to equitable funding, contacted chambers and finally collected data from the census bureau as well as other research reports in order to find those recommended factors that were going to comprise our equitable funding model. What we will run through now is those particular accident force that create the -- particular factors that create the model. So the first factor is race and ethnicity. So the sb 23 definition is to advance equitable outcomes the city of Austin is leading with a lens of racial equity and healing, raises the primary predictor of outcomes, time to understand and address racism at various levels. The second factor was population. This case from -- came from

[2:18:48 PM]

best practices research. When I spoke with the city of Portland, they have been using an equitable funding model for economic development neighborhood initiatives for about a decade now. They recommended using a per person measure based on their community engagement processes. The third factor is education and income. And the correlation between educational attainment, household

income, particularly by race and ethnicity and the differences that exist there. Especially in comparison to the average Austin educational attainment, average Austin household income. Next slide. The fourth factor that came up was economic discrimination and the way it's experienced across each of the populations that the meca chambers represent. Research shows that the economic discrimination in any form is detrimental obviously for those that are being discriminated against as well as employers and markets that are looking to maximize productivity. The fifth factor is capacity building. Really important one with

[2:19:49 PM]

the city, especially to understand with our long-term relationship in funding these organizations, how are we helping these organizations grow. Also it's vital to growing these organizations nor to provide the resources to achieve equitable outcome. An average across the seven chambers that the city funds, funding on average approximately 33% of their total operating budgets. So there's three organizations that we fund where it's greater than that amount and in two of the instances we are actually funding over 50% of their operating budget. Ultimately this is not a benefit either to the city or the organizations themselves, the organization being dependent on one revenue source to that extent. So those were the five factors that came from the previously described process and we will run through what the model looks like now. Next slide. So this is what we're calling the base equitable funding model, where the

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model starts. So at the top of the [indiscernible] Brought back in December 2020 was for 5.15 million total budget for the sake of the report, the EdD total chamber contract budget is 1.22 million. And so as you look at the chart here, you will see at the left side of the chart in yellow the greater Austin black, hispanic, Asian and lgbt chamber on the left side. On the right, Aida, Austin independent [indiscernible] Alliance, greater Austin development corporation which is opportunity Austin and the Austin young chamber. What this really signifies is two sides of the model. And the left side is what we're calling equity side, the equity budget in the model. And the right is the non-equity budget. The way that this was determined was verbatim from the written chamber assessments from our engagement process, where the organizations on the left, which are the meca

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chambers, said that a primary function of their mission is to address equitable okays, the organizations to the right their mission was not primary function [indiscernible]. So as you look to the left, you will see the previous contract amounts and looking back to the top left, you will see the 739750. Then on the left side of the chart, you will see the 61%. So very simply what that means is the -- the equity side of the

budget has a total allocation of 739,750 and that is 61% of the total chamber budget. On the right, the non-equity budget is 481,100, very simply, looking at the chart from a macro perspective, left side equity, right side non-equity, that's our starting point. To the bottom left you will see the equity factors that we just described, race and 1998, population, education,

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household income, economic discrimination and capacity building. So each of these factors is weighted equally. And you will see to the right of that and that is the -- each 20% allocation is of the 739750. So each factor gets an allocation of 147950. Then based on the data that we provide on the previous slide, it's allocated based on applicability, except for population which is a simple quantitative ratio where it's based on the population figures. And then it is added at the bottom there. And so -- so this is the -- this is the base equitable funding model. It can be adjusted into three specific ways. Next slide. So there are three -- there are three ways in which it can be adjusted.

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If you could actually go back to the chart. Okay. So the three specific ways that it could be adjusted is that there -- you could -- change a factor on it, add a new factor, which there's an example in the report that has been added. You could remove one of the factors. Or you could amend one of the factors that's on there. So there's different ways that the factors could then be adjusted. You can also shift budgets from the equity side of the budget and the non-equity side of the budget back and forth between where you have the 739,750 and the 481100. It can be shifted from the equity and non-equity side of the budget to change the amount that we are distributing towards equity. The third way that it can be adjusted is by adding a new organization.

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So you can add either a new equity organization, to that side of the budget, or a non-equity side on the other side. So this -- those are the three main ways that it could be adjusted. Moving forward in October I mean December 10th, 2020, council approved the following 2021-22 contract amounts. Greater Austin hispanic chamber, 252,882. Greater Austin black chamber, 230,797, greater Austin Asian chamber, 202,500. Austin lgbtq 15,750, for opportunity Austin 350,000, for the Austin young chamber, which is divided between EdD as well as Austin resource recovery, it was 61, 100. With that, I will hand it back to Veronica for the next slide. >> Thank you, Jeremy.

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So we can go to the next slide. As a summary of what we are recommending as a part of this report, I would note that this is the first time certainly that the economic development department has devised a way to quantify equity in terms of our contracting mechanism. So we are confident in the report that has been completed and we are recommending adoption. We will be bringing an action item for council's consideration at your February 4th meeting. That has a resolution that adopts the equitable chamber funding report and its findings. And any further council direction, including any specific changes to the model? In the methodology for contracting can be made at that time, but we will be bringing that forward for consideration. But I'm happy to answer any questions and I should note that we are joined here with the executive team of EdD, so [indiscernible] On the call as well as Suzanna

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[indiscernible] And [indiscernible] I believe is in -- in the room as well to answer any questions. Thank you. >> Thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Colleagues -- Allison? >> Alter: Thank you, this work originated from a budget rider that I put forward. I appreciate the work that went into it and the thought. I do have a bunch of questions that I would love to run through and some of them also perhaps we will have a meeting before the 4th. But can you clarify in -- I haven't had a chance to look at the item itself. Are you putting forward the base model or the example with the intersectionality as the base? Or as the -- when you say that we are adopting the

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funding model, what does that mean is the funding model given that you gave us variations of that? >> Councilmember alter, we are putting forth the base model. >> Alter: Okay. >> Mayor Adler: I couldn't hear that. Say it again, you were faint. >> We are putting forth the base model. >> Mayor Adler: Thank you. My fundamental change in this has been something that I have been struggling with the whole time that we have been through this process is that originally [alter] We were talking about -- about equitable funding based on deliverables and as you will note, none of this funding model is connected to deliverables. And I understand you are making a connection between the contract and the deliverables, but I'm -- I'm -- and the funding model, but I'm still having a challenge with understanding, you know, part of this was to fund

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folks based their performance. I appreciate the addition of the capacity factor, I think that is important for the organizations. But I would like to have you elaborate on how deliverables, outcomes or tps or

[indiscernible] Are factored into the funding model, because our foundation was not just about equitably funding it, but metrics, performance metrics in particular. Can you speak to that, please? >> Absolutely. So this was part of our last discussion where we talked about at the end and -- and part of this is how we are, you know, getting back to the definition of equity and what equitable funding means ultimately. So you are taking -- you can't treat all of these communities as equal. So it -- so performance measures you have communities that have different sizes, different needs, different economic outcomes and so part of the issue with addressing it in that way is it's impossible

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to have a one to one ratio where you have certain communities that don't have the same size, same population, same, you know, especially for the business communities and the economic outlook. So I don't know how you develop a performance measure that is quantitatively objective that applies to community that face different -- communities that face different situations and different circumstances. >> Alter: These are fundamentally, you know, business organizations and there is a performance element and there was still a fundamental question that we were trying to ask when we were looking at the chamber funding about what was being delivered to the city for our money and how that was structured. And so again I'm still -- I'm still finding it troubling that the model does not track their performance and -- at all. And I will keep having that conversation and think that

[2:31:00 PM]

through a little bit more because I don't think we're going to get an answer today that I'm going to be comfortable with. Can you speak to how it was better addressed in the contracts? Because there was a portion of this that it was a function of the contracts and -- and vagaries of the contract that were making -- raising some questions about the deliverables and what was being enumerated and what wasn't across the different chambers. >> Right. So we changed the deliverables in the contract during the transition year that we talked about. So they have a monthly reporting requirement. And they have to meet certain performance standards in that contract now in order to be paid, so it's a pay per service model where they have to achieve and set up certain deliverables that are performance based, based on the -- on the EdD's goals and how it aligns with sb 23

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and all of the metrics that EdD is collecting with regards to that strategic planning initiative. That's a number of small businesses that they are connecting with, that's also a variety of ways including outreach events, they are promoting city covid response programs, to their communities. They are working with workforce solutions to provide workforce development initiatives. They also have -- each

have community-specific needs that they are addressing and so they have -- we're happy to send the contracts to you if we haven't sent them already. So we are actually going through this process of updating them again for this next year as well. So now is a good time, if you want to review those, to have that discussion. >> So I would -- I would like to have those sent to me. What I'm understanding is that we have the funding model and we have the contracts and the funding model is being used to determine how much money we should be investing in each

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of the chambers that fall into this equity category. Being eligible for equity portion of our chamber budget. And then we have the contracts that have performance measures as part of that. How do the performance measures vary across the contracts? >> Performance measures don't vary as much across the contracts. Because this is where we talked about aligning with other EdD. The instruct teenager of the contracts is on -- structure is on a billable hour. But you are overall correct because again this is what -- this goes back to the very beginning of what is equitable funding. What are the -- what are the ways that we are trying to address community specific needs. So that's how we're determining the amounts ultimately to determine the contract amounts because we're trying to address the community needs based on the fact that -- factors that we described. So within that, we are setting up -- we set up the

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structure of a billable hour contract, that's how EdD's other contracts are structured. And so then, yes, there are performance measures and deliverables that are associated with each community. They are not all the same because each have -- each has different community needs. So we are happy to share with you. >> Alter: Great. One of the issues that doesn't seem to be factored in here is language access requirements. So -- so a couple of the chambers have -- have to provide services in multiple languages and that -- that increases costs and adds a layer of complexity. Sometimes you know the Asian chamber, in particular, has to provide these services in -- in multiple languages hispanic chamber also has to provide multi-language access. Seems to me that might be an additional factor that we

[2:35:03 PM]

might want to add to the model. Can you speak to that? >> This is one of the things that I've been working on for a couple of years now. In both of their contracts, both the great Austin hispanic chamber, Asian chamber, they have allocations for translation services, this is something that I have worked for to make sure that all of our materials that EdD is putting out are available in Spanish, mandarin, Korean and Vietnamese. All of the language that marina has been asking for the city has been addressing, as well as under that chamber specific element they are able to provide this. So -- so language translation is

a form of economic discrimination and it's listed in the report as well. >> Alter: What is the argument for having it in the contract and not in the funding model? Because presumably -- to deliver everything else, you need to have more funding if you have the language.

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Challenges. >> Um ... I mean, it seems to me perhaps it ought to be in both places. >> I suppose, that's one way to look at it. I don't have an exact answer. Besides we attempted to address the needs and yes, there are iterations of economic discrimination that is unique to each community. -- Inherently an equitable funding model, our goal is to make it as acquainted take quantitatively objective as possible. So while there are examples that can be brought up for every single organization in here that are unique to it. Marina and the greater Austin chamber has made it parent that language and translation is one of them. Each of the other chambers have things that are specific and unique to them as well. So we could -- that's why we created the economic discrimination factor because each community faces

[2:37:09 PM]

specific issues that impact -- their economic outcomes within their communities. That's why the economic discrimination factor was created in the way that it was. Ultimately. So that's why language discrimination is a form of economic discrimination, it's in the report. As well as several others which you can look through which -- which each organization is lobbying quite frankly to have the [indiscernible] So we create a catch all for these unique scenarios which are inherently qualitative in nature. >> Alter: Thank you, that's a helpful clarification, I will go back and look at this section of the report where you define that and see. It just seems like there's still some issues. Back in November I highlighted some outstanding questions from the Asian chamber and I have not been involved in a forum where you addressed those. Have you addressed those concerns and questions? >> Every question that your office has sent, we have sent back written responses

[2:38:10 PM]

to. I would like to make sure that I have those written responses, I may have gotten them and missed them in you will a of the email. In all of the email. We may want to set up a meeting perhaps on Friday if we can make it work with them. So that we can all be hearing the same -- same information. And avoid a game of telephone continuing. >> Alter: The other question is there's contract -- there's a contract piece where you are recommending that they add 501(c)(3) Status? In some way? When they are all already five C 6 organizations, which -- 501 C 6 organizations which allows them to provide the services to the city, whereas having to do that extra step address complexity if that's not a part of their model. So I wanted to understand that piece and

[2:39:11 PM]

recommendation better. >> Sure. This goes back to capacity building. A function of my contract with the city has been to help each of these organizations grow, so that way they are not as dependent on city funding. And so -- so a 501(c)(3) is a chamber foundation, which from a business development perspective for the organizations allows you to go towards corporate and larger funding which is tax deductible. So it is a proven way to get access to funds that a 501 C 6 does not have that tax deductive ability. The great Austin hispanic chamber has a 501(c)(3). In the time that I have started Austin lgbtq has established one and already using it to bring in funds. The greater Austin black chamber has already established theirs as well. This is purely from a capacity building business development best practice or chambers of commerce and raising funds nationally

[2:40:13 PM]

have worked and [indiscernible] A number of other chambers do -- [multiple voices] >> Alter: How is that operationalized in the model. Is that a requirement? It's good to know that the others ones have began that process and this process is allowing them to see new funding models. But how is that -- you know, that is if it was a requirement in the contract as opposed to -- to a suggestion for capacity building and that was what I was trying to understand. >> Okay. This was I apologize for the confusion. It was a contract recommendation in the report. It's just a consultant recommendation. As a function of the city wanting me to work on capacity building with the organization. >> Alter: Okay. It should be interpreted as a recommendation of how to build capacity, not something that has to be required to -- to have a contract with the city. >> Correct. >> Alter: Because you could have a new organization come in, they may not be ready to do that piece of the puzzle, may not

[2:41:17 PM]

sit where they are on the for a given year, this doesn't preclude them from getting money. >> Right. This is part of the conversation with the greater -- without having to establish an organization but ultimately they have been unsuccessful in identifying if this was -- [indiscernible] So there are a variety of ways to do it and but ultimately it is up to their organization. I'm making a recommendation only. And it's up to them whether it fits their model or not. >> Alter: Thank you. I appreciate your patience in answering these questions. And colleagues, I will -- I will hopefully get that information with the responses from the Asian chambers and the contracts and will do my best to be able to review that in time for next week, but since we only have one week, I don't know, so I may need to ask for some additional time if I'm not able to get that meeting set up. And the material reviewed in a timely manner, depending on how much material it is. So thank you.

[2:42:21 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you, Natasha? >> Thank you, chair, thank you councilmember alter. That actually brought up a question for me one of my constituents asked before, I hadn't occurred to me until just now with that line of question. I'm going to follow up with you, because sounds like you have done an extensive amount of research asking questions here. The question was around language breakers specifically for the -- barriers specifically for the African community because translation services are not considered for the greater Austin black services for folks who need translation services also, I am interested in being able to pick your brain around what it is that you have been able to glean from the conversations that you've had around that, thank you. >> Mayor Adler: Okay. Colleagues, anything else on this presentation? All right. Then I think we're done. Staff, thank you.

[2:43:21 PM]

Were there any other questions that you had that you wanted answered? Dusty? Was there more direction on anything? That you didn't get that you want? >> No, sir. I think we're -- I think we're good, sir. [Indiscernible]. >> Mayor Adler: Mayor [indiscernible] Assistant city manager. I did want to point out, of course, that we have a resolution slated for [indiscernible] Council meeting and so this is an opportunity for council, of course, to get that resolution and provide [indiscernible] >> If I could add mayor, in relation to the questions that councilmember alter had about the questions previously submitted, I would recommend that we do that as backup when the item comes forward for consideration. >> Mayor Adler: I don't know if there is anything

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specific in the conversations that you were having that you wanted to address, then you have the opportunity to do that. Got it. Thank you, guys. So the only thing that we have left is the executive session. Kathie? There was something I wanted to ask the manager about before and wanted to make my colleagues aware of. So I have an ifc on the agenda regarding an initiative with the downtown Austin alliance foundation and we got some updated information about the cost of the banners. And so the posting language, and this is really a question for the manager and for our city attorney. The posting language is now structured in such a way to waive an amount that's not accurate we're going to need to wave an additional cost. And so my question really to the manager is I wanted to keep it on this week's agenda and maybe just provide direction from the dais to return with -- to

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ask staff to return with an amendment reflecting that additional waiver. We wanted to just ask you what your preference was, if you would rather we pull it down and repost for next week on the addendum with the correct amount or just handle it the way I've suggested. >> Thank you, councilmember, I'll defer to our legal department, but I think we could keep it on and then just work with you to have that further clarification and what other direction we would need on the dais. >> That's fine, you can do it this week and then bring another ifc for the following week with the extra amount if that works for you, councilmember? >> Tovo: I think if that's the way we would need to handle it, my guess is that it would probably be better just to postpone it, revise the amount, bring it back. I was hoping we could just leave it on, pass it and ask the manager to come back with whatever action is necessary on the addendum. But if you all want to just let us know what's the better, but colleagues, I apologize to the co-sponsors

[2:46:21 PM]

that we didn't have an opportunity to reach out. But we said we got some different information, so we need to revise amount that we would be waiving. >> Mayor Adler: Alison? >> Alter: I wanted to raise something that was a different topic. >> Mayor Adler: Hang on a second. I support that, Kathie and whatever would make it the least amount of work involved I think is what we're shooting for. Yes, Alison? >> Alter: I wanted to just surface something for the city manager and the mayor office we've been hearing increasingly from constituents and organizations, neighborhood organizations around the city that they're uncomfortable with the virtual format for our zoning public hearings. And that they are finding that the process is not allowing them have their voices heard in a comfortable way because of

[2:47:22 PM]

the separation between the case and when they're speaking and their inability for them to respond to the applicant and what the applicant asserts. So I just wanted to flag that broader question and ask the clerk to come back with some options and see if -- now that we have more experience underfoot with virtual reality setup overall across the city and in lights of the planning commission being able to adjust their processes, if we can come back with some options and begin experimenting with ways to improve that system. >> I think that's reasonable. We did it this way because if the clerk can accommodate that or the planning commission, that would be great. Manager, can you have staff come back with an option for functionality more proximate to what we used to do?

[2:48:22 PM]

>> Yes, mayor and councilmember alter, thank you for flagging up. We'll follow up with the clerk's office and legal on what some recommendations that we can bring back to council would be. >> Alter: Thank you. I already flagged this with Ms. Goodall and she's amenable working on it. I will acknowledge that the clerk's staff is already working on multiple petitions, which takes a lot of time in the immediate next week or two, but even if this involves some iterations that might be introduced to experiment, that would be a dr.start, I think. >> Mayor Adler: And maybe there's a way to do it in a hybrid format so that somebody that didn't want to be waiting and watching a council meeting for hours not knowing when they would get called, maybe there's a hybrid that let's people speak at the beginning of the meeting if they want to

[2:49:24 PM]

know they can speak and then be done speaking. Because I've heard both that gives people a chance not to speak, but I've also heard that it gives them a chance to speak because they're not waiting for us to work our way through an agenda. So the a hybrid might be good. All right. Anything else? All right. Do we know where our colleagues are? >> Tovo: They are moving toward conclusion, but the latest I heard was probably not before 3:30. So it sounded like maybe if we reconvened around 3:45 we could maybe get -- we could have them with us for the executive session and that would allow us to at least get some work underway. >> Mayor Adler: Ann, does that work? We can certainly bring this up on Friday -- Wednesday as well. Is it posted for us to be able to bring it up on

[2:50:24 PM]

Wednesday? >> Yes, it's posted for both days. I think we could get started today and finish Wednesday. >> Do you guys want to take a break until 3:45? Okay. So let's do that then. So the city council will go into closed session to take up pursuant to 551.071 legal matters related to the may 2021 election. We'll convene that meeting at 3:45. It is 2:50 right now. Without objection, I'll see you guys in executive session -- >> Tovo: Mayor, one minute. I'm sorry, I just got late breaking news that they may end by 3:30. Maybe we better just stick with 3:45. >> Mayor Adler: Let's stick with 3:45. We'll do that executive session. We will not need to come back out to the general session.

[2:51:25 PM]

I'll just do that to close out the meeting. So I'll see you close at 3:45 in executive session. This meeting is in recess until then.

[3:48:58 PM]

(Executive Session)

(5:01:15 PM)

Mayor Adler: We are out of closed session. In closed session we discussed legal matters related to item: E2. In an earlier session during executive session earlier today we discussed real estate matters related to item: E3. That is all the business we have before us for today's Work Session. At 5:01 p.m. I am adjourning the Work Session here on January 25, 2021. Thanks guys.