

Housing and Planning Committee Meeting Transcript – 05/03/2021

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>> Casar: Ann, you back with us? Hey, okay. If folks at atxn want to get us rolling, we can get started. >> Oak. Let's go ahead and start. >> Casar: Okay. Great. Good afternoon, I'm Greg Casar, chair of the housing and planning committee. I'm calling this meeting to order on may 3rd, 2021, we're meeting virtually. I'm joined here by all of the members of the committee and mayor pro tem Harper Madison, councilmember kitchen, councilmember Renteria, councilmember Ellis we're also joined by councilmember fun entes. We're going to try to keep today really quick because we had to reschedule, so we'll hopefully be out of here by 3:00. If I can get a motion to approve item number one, the motions prior meeting. Motion made by mayor pro tem.

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That's adopted unanimously with supplemental support noted for the record from councilmember Fuentes. We'll move on to representative for the CDC. This item it's laid out in our rules that there's a member of the CDC that's recommended by this committee for the council to appoint. The item and backup is to appoint Kendra Garrett. She currently serves on the commission, but in one of the neighborhood seats, and so by us appointing her, we would essentially keep her on the commission, a person that previously served in the CDC seat I understand is ready to step off, and then Mrs. Garrett, then, would stay on. So this would not be -- it would be the same person, but in a new seat. Is that right, director chulaf? She's nodding. >> That's my uerstanding.

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>> Casar: And we're also joined by the mayor. Hi, mayor. Can I get a motion that they appoint Kendra Garrett for this seat. So moved by councilmember Ellis, seconded by councilmember Renteria. All those in favor, raise your hand? And that is also unanimous. Okay. See, lightning speed. Okay. So items 3 and 4 include a presentation from our homeless strategy officer on the -- on the summit and its goals. And then we are posted for action with resolutions and backup to recommend that we update our housing plan, which is otherwise known as our housing blueprint with those goals. So we'll take the presentation from the staff first and then discuss and see if we want to forward a recommendation to the dais. >> Good afternoon, folks.

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I am pleased to be here today and I think before I start the presentation, I just want to acknowledge something that is on many of our minds, which is that proposition B passed over the weekend and that we will be looking at implementation on the 11th, or the law goes into effect on the 11th. I just -- I think, you know, pertinent to this committee is simply that it underscores the urgency of getting more units available for folks experiencing homelessness, as well as rental supports so that, I think, certainly relates to the presentation today. Let's go ahead and go to the next slide. So something that we started certainly before the summit and have done previously in the history of the city and its other psh goals, which I

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believe were 2014 and 2017 or '18, is that we really start to track the pipeline carefully of -- and these are developed units. These are not the scattered site units. We do currently have about 50 scattered site psh units in process of being implemented. And also just to clarify, this is the pipeline of psh-specific units. There are other units that hfc helps finance that are dedicated to referrals through the coc that might end up being psh referrals but can also be rapid rehousing, so these are dedicated psh units. So we look at this and we currently have 191 units in the pipeline. Rut land as you know is in partnership with the pacino group, they have 51 dedicated

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psh units, but in addition to that, they have another 49 or maybe 50 units that are dedicated for general use by the coc, so that could also -- those units could also be utilized for psh. I want to point out, because it is a little bit confusing, that the capital commitment shown here for espero at rut land is prorated for the psh units only. It is overall a much more substantial investment of, I believe, \$8.5

million. Ahfc has also made this the first project of their quite innovative, I will say, local housing voucher program in which we are taking local funds and mirroring in some ways the way that public housing authorities provide ongoing rental supports to affordable housing projects.

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They do indeed have some vouchers that will be dedicated to this building, and so in total we will have 101 units of the 171 in the total project. We'll have ongoing housing choice voucher housing supports that will allow tenants to pay only 30% of their income, whatever that is. Ap H does anticipate bringing forth a funding action for at least part of the services for this building around psh. This is new construction so right now we anticipate, or at least occupancy in probably September of 2022. The next two projects on this list are ones you are familiar with. Insofar as they are part of the city's hotel conversion strategy for a total of 140 units. Those, of course, have not yet been acquired. They -- but are in the

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pipeline insofar as we have committed funds to them and will be -- or they are in the due diligence process. The other piece I want to note here is that internally in our conversations, we know that there are other projects out there, other developers that are interested in doing permanent supportive housing projects, but because, of course, there is a fair amount of uncertainty in the development process, we are not listing those here, but part of the purpose of the pipeline working group, which includes representative from my division, representation from ahfc and representation from the public housing authorities is that when developers come forward with a potential project idea, one of our roles is to troubleshoot with them to identify resources and in some cases, to do some -- you know, if you

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will, informal match making with potential service providers, property managers, et cetera, when there is a need to bring additional expertise to the table. So I just want to mention that as, I think, one of the real values of having a focused working group on pipeline, which isn't necessarily immediately evident in the numbers that you see here, but will be evident as we bring more projects explicitly into the pipeline with some committed funding. So let's go to the next slide. So in terms of psh pipeline, of course the summit to address unsheltered homelessness set a goal of rehousing 3,000 people over the course of three years starting about two and a half weeks ago. And so through April of 2024.

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In addition, part of those 3,000 units, we have targeted to be capital development, so whether that's new construction, acquisition and, you know, rehab properties, et cetera, but 1,000 units that are explicitly -- explicitly dedicated to psh typically with some substantial city subsidy in them, as well as leveraged funds from the state and other sources. So in terms of thinking about how we might ramp up to those thousand units, we know that we need to accelerate our development production. We are not there right now in terms of what we have been putting on the ground annually, although there certainly has been progress. So my hope is that by the end of this calendar year, we would be looking at somewhere around 160 units operational. And then really in calendar

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years 2022 and '23 we begin to ramp up to 300 plus units per year to hit what I will want to be clear is a pretty ambitious goal of that thousand units by April of 2024. So part of the reason that I think this is important is that as we think about the resources that the city can provide for capital projects, we need to be taking that into account in terms of the resources at ahfc's disposal to support these projects along with their existing pipeline of important affordable housing deals generally. Go to the next slide. So since this is the housing and planning committee, I wanted to speak to the summit goals explicitly around capital, because, you know,

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over half of the \$515 million estimated cost of the -- to reach the summit goals is capital associated largely with those thousands psh units, although there is a bit of money in this modeling for some subsidy of coc units that might be utilized for rapid rehousing placement, et cetera. So I think the positive news is that we think that about \$150 million of that 275 million is either committed or there is reasonable anticipation that we can secure those funds without too much trouble. So we already have 32 and a half million dollars in general obligation bonds committed, and -- or at least planned. And so that consists of roughly \$30 million that has been targeted to hotel conversion, plus the two and a

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half that is a hard commitment to espero at Rutland. In the American rescue plan act outside of the local fiscal assistance dollars that council will be contemplating uses for in the coming weeks is a direct allocation to ahfc of \$11.4 million, which is -- we are calling it home dollars. They're calculated on the home formula. There's some flexibility there in terms of utilizing that for services, but it is framed and we right now think the likely use is for capital. So 11.4 million. I have about \$66 million in low income tax

credit equity here, and this assumes not that we are going to capture very many, 9% tax credit deals, which provide a deeper subsidy, and we hope we will be able to secure, but that a

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substantial portion of our pipeline units do apply for 4% tax credits, which can provide, you know, just as a rule of thumb 30% or so of the capital for a particular deal. The -- also at the state, Texas department of housing and community affairs, there is what is called the multifamily direct loan program, and that program provides a wide variety of financing for affordable housing projects in Texas, but it does have a set-aside of essentially forgivable loans for supportive housing. So most deals would be eligible for a \$3 million request from that fund, and importantly, as of this year, that fund is expected to double in size. So we expect that we could probably increase our capture from that fund.

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The good news is that it does not rely on annual appropriations, but rather is funded out of some of the profit, if you will, from Fannie Mae and Freddy Mack. And then the final source, federal home loan bank is a grant program really that is through the federal home loan bank, but also through their proceeds. So that leaves us with \$125 million capital gap, and, you know, we certainly hope that this is a place that philanthropy could come in and help us fill the gap. We could conceivably look at some expanded access to general obligation bonds. That, of course, would be at council's discretion to put it to election. We could look at some of the local fiscal assistance dollars, assuming that as we get additional guidance, we continue to believe it could be used for

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capital, and then there are some other federal dollars that flow through the community. This is very high level, but I wanted to give you a sense of what our gap is, but also what is making up that sort of committed and anticipated column, which is not all of it is 100% sure, but these are revenue streams that have been very consistent over time. Next slide, please. Happy to answer any questions you might have. >> Casarif y'all will take that down and then we can pull it back up if need be. Committee members, any questions of Mrs. Gray? Councilmember kitchen? >> Kitchen: Just a quick question, and thanks for providing the backup on the dollars. Does that include the dollars that we had designated for purchase as part of the bond package? Was that 2018 bond?

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Yeah. Does that include -- >> It explicitly includes the dollars that were generally targeted toward the hotel conversion. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> That sits within the overall acquisition allocation, if I am not mistaken, and I don't see any distress on rosy's face, so I think that's right. >> No, you're correct. We -- >> Kitchen: Go ahead. I'm sorry. >> I was going to say, you are correct, we had dedicated 30 million of 100 million for land acquisition and that was reflected on the chart of funding sources that Diana had. >> Kitchen: I know this is a conversation for a different day, but I will want to understand the extent of any discretion for us between the 35 million and the 100 million. If there are it may be all committed, I don't know. >> It is close to all committed at this point.

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We've got the funding set aside for the 30 million and then there is a modest amount that's coming for next fiscal year, and then I believe that is the last of the land acquisition bucket of funds as they were allocated in the -- from the 300 -- the 250 million general obligation bonds. >> Kitchen: Okay. Last question, how much of that is coming next year? >> I know Mandy is on the call. Mandy, do you want to -- >> I am [indiscernible] Can you all hear me? >> Yes. >> Just order of magnitude. I don't need exact. >> We have an additional \$20 million that will be appropriated next fiscal year. So thus far, 80 million out of the 100 million for land acquisition has been appropriated, and rosy is correct, we are at about 75 million out of that 80 million committed thus far. So we are very, very close,

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tight on our budget. >> Kitchen: Thank you. >> You're welcome. >> Casar: Councilmember Ellis? >> Ellis: Thank you. Are any of these numbers considering what might just be in our normal general fund fiscal year budgets? I know that we had some appropriated between '19 and '20 and are likely to have some from '20 to '21 or '21 to '22, can you tell me if some of those are being considered here or what the magnitude of those would be? >> So I'm not sure that I understood the question, so please stop me if I'm going down the wrong path. So this -- these numbers are, of course, they're -- it's capital only and so it does not represent for the most part general fund dollars because the dollars that we had allocated for acquisition construction, you know, or rehab of properties was all coming from the general obligation bond, I believe.

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And so the -- I will say that the commitment to espero at Rutland appears at this year's fiscal budget. Mandy will stop me and correct me if I'm wrong. >> Ellis: Is that a normal -- sorry. I heard Mandy jump

in. >> I'm so sorry. That is correct, that 8.5 million for espero at Rutland is coming out of this year's appropriation for general obligation bonds. The 2.5 million is a subset of that 8.5 million, if that illuminates and doesn't confuse. But that is all represented in this year's general obligation bond dollars. >> Okay. So those are obligation bonds. Is there any building structures we purchased with general fund revenue?

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>> Not contemplated in this forecast. And it is -- >> And not -- and not typically. >> Right. Exactly. There is -- >> Ellis: Okay. >> As you recall, we acquired roadway using. >> Community development. >> A bringing together of community development block grant funds. We have housing trust fund that is also available for -- that could be available for land or for facilities, but it is not currently envisioned in the programming of that. >> Ellis: Okay. So -- >> Homestead preservation, district a, tirz funds are also another source of funding, but not envisioned unless a property came up in this particular geographical area that would be for permanent support housing. >> Ellis: So it sounds like very generally we don't use general fund revenue for buildings and structures, we use obligation bonds or cbdg

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grants, but services could come out of general fund revenues; is that kind of how you break it down? >> Yes, because those are ongoing on an annual basis, we typically utilize general fund for that. >> Ellis: That makes sense. I appreciate that. I do like the slide that you have kind of identifying the capital commitment it would take to achieve our summit goals. The portion that says 11.4 million for the affordable housing, ahfc-specific rescue plan dollars, is that something that is spelled out in the arp guidance? I don't know if we have, like, all of the guidance has been fully approved yet, and so I want to make sure I'm understanding the process in that. But is that designated specifically for things like what our ahfc agendas would cover? >> Yeah, it's money that is coming to participating jurisdictions like the city of Austin using the home allocation formula that can specific -- that is specifically called out to be

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used for homelessness. It could be used for services, it could be used for things like emergency -- or like tenant-based rental assistance, but it also specifically lays out activities like capital acquisition. And that's what our preliminary conversations, that's what we anticipate spending that on. >> Right. And just as a clarification, councilmember, we are still waiting on substantial guidance, I think, around the act, but this source of funding was actually defined in the act itself as a separate funding stream that would come to local governments that is not, you know, flexible in the same way the local fiscal assistance dollars are. >> Ellis: Okay. That's helpful. I'm trying to find the right words, I just want to make sure I

understand. But I think some of the allotments between cities and counties went in line with what the federal government already knows that we as cities and counties need; is that correct? Maybe you can put better words to it, but I remember that

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idea, then identifying that need by our historic numbers and our grants and things that we've applied for in the past? >> Right. So I -- yes. And I think this speaks to what Rosy said about the home allocation formula, which for most humans, you know, means nothing, but the home housing opportunity something for everyone -- help me, Rosie, so this is an annual allocation that cities and counties get if they're participating jurisdictions, and so that is sort of that calculation, you know, presumably that represents need in the community. And so that is the way that they calculated this particular source of funds. I will say that part of the reason we are seeing this year the counties dollars in local fiscal assistance outpace what the city is getting is that they did not use that sort of typical formula around we are

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going to look at what the city gets and then we're going to define what the county is outside of the city, right? So it was additive rather than sort of looking at those two separately. >> Ellis: Uh-huh. That's helpful. I appreciate you running through that again with me. >> Of course. >> Casar: Mayor? >> Mayor Adler: I just quickly have -- I think those are good questions, commissioner Ellis. [Inaudible] As looked at the kind of things for the arp and has expressed his opinion that they're going to be consistent with what comes out eventually from the treasure department. >> Casar: Any other questions from committee members? I have a couple questions, but first off, I really want to thank you, Mrs. Gray and

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everybody that participated in working on that -- on the summit. I appreciate that we have had adopted plan around addressing homelessness, but really laying out a three-year stretch and a really significant and bold investment in three years and a really drastic reduction in unsheltered homelessness. This year, and then further more in the next year and the next year I think is what we've heard from a lot of folks in the community that they really want to see, so I appreciate you laying that out here. My two quick questions are, one, the espera at Rutland, you had listed 51 pphs units, but caratas is planning on pulling 150 people off the street or more into that building, but I understand that a ph S unit may be different. So as we count toward our

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3,000 goals, what are we counting and what are we not? Are we -- when you count towards the 3,000, are you counting all 150, 160 units at espera at Rutland or are you only counting the 50 lowest barrier, heaviest served? >> So in order to avoid duplication in counting, the way that we will expect to count toward the 3,000 goal is placements into housing, right, with resources. So as you say, you know, caratas serves this population generally. 101 of the 171 units, they've committed to taking referrals through the coordinated entry system. And of those, they're dedicating at least 51 to sort of pure psh. These are really for those individuals. And so we expect that those

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101 -- I mean, those are huge resources because we know where the units are and they've got the rental subsidy already attached, we will need to bring the services to it, but, yes, my -- that is where and how at least, you know, 101 people would be resourced toward our 1,000-unit goal, and then of the remaining 71 units, decent chance that caratas would place more folks in those units so they are available as housing stock for that purpose. >> Casar: Got it. That's really helpful. So as we count toward our goal of 3,000 more people, what we're doing is counting how many people we pull off the streets and into housing, we're not just counting doors. So if a unit is for a family of three or two, we're counting those folks, we're not just counting -- we're not just counting units. And so if it winds up being 140 of those units are pulling folks out of tents and into

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housing, then that's 140 towards our goal? Sorry, Mrs. Gray, I think you're muted. >> The piece about the pipeline that's so important is that, of course, it -- you know, there's a lag. It takes a while to do the development, and so, you know, when we commit capital in our minds, you know, we know we're committing psh, but that psh is not necessarily going to hit the ground for a while, depending on whether it's acquisition rehab or new construction. But, because we know we desperately need the housing stock that is low barrier enough for people to move into, you know, part of sort of the policy and strategy work of the city has to be nurturing, you know, and building that pipeline going forward. So we know, as we get to the place where, you know, these units are already, we can place folks into them and we've got the resources in these cases for the rental subsidies. We feel really confident about

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those future placements, but to your point, we don't count them typically until people are in them. >> Casar: Councilmember kitchen, do you have a question on this point? Go ahead. >> Kitchen: Oh, if you've finished your line of questioning. >> Casar: I had one other question, but it's a bit separate, so if it's close to this, you can go ahead. >> Kitchen: Yeah, I was just going to ask a follow-up question on the how we're counting towards the 3,000. So just to make sure I heard that right, so we count towards the 3,000 based on -- did I hear you right, the individuals who are rehoused, basically? Whether that's a permanent supportive housing or a rapid rehousing or something else that fits that person's needs, it's the person being rehoused; is that right? >> So not quite. And let me, I think, elucidate. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> We anticipate committed to rehousing 3,000 people with pretty intensive housing

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interventions, which, you know, will typically be rapid rehousing or psh. Because we know that there are folks that fall into homelessness, you know, every year who really need not as much, not as long, not as intensive of supports, maybe need a month's rental supports or maybe need money to reunite with family, et cetera, those folks we expect to be rehoused, but we want to hold ourselves accountable to creating the capacity for the deeper need. So we -- and these are -- I mean, an emerging model, but during our analysis process, our consultants said we are holding ourselves accountable to the 3,000, you know, robust intervention rehousing events, if you will, but there's probably 10,000 folks rehoused over all during -- over the course of that time. >> Kitchen: Okay. Thank you for that clarity. I wasn't sure what all individuals fall within the 3,000.

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So it's the -- it's rapid rehousing or permanent supportive housing, but it's those folks that require that more intensive effort as opposed to, you know, someone who very quickly gets a first and last month rent or something like that? Okay. Then the second and last question there is, I assume that we are counting the heel initiative as we proceed toward those initial four locations with counting those first four targets in the first level targets, right? I forget. I mean, you've got several targets in there. I'm not asking which one, I'm just saying that the first couple of target dates that we have there that the folks that are rehoused through the heel initiative will count towards them, right? >> Yes. And we have currently some funding coming into place

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through esgcb dollars, so essentially the -- you know, the covid dollars. For folks who have not yet been placed, largely folks who were in the pro lodges who were unsheltered or that came in. >> Kitchen: Okay. >> And that will contribute to our initial, initial goals, because I think probably to your next

question, by June 30th, you know, we probably won't have everybody housed. >> Kitchen: Yeah. >> -- Through the process. >> Kitchen: Yeah. Okay. So that's going to be those early out is a combination of the heel initiative and also the pro lodges and the work there, which has been ongoing. >> That's accurate. And just to your -- I think that this is what you meant, but let me be clear: The dollars that we are showing in that breakdown of committed, anticipated and gap are only capital, so heel dollars, since that's -- >> Kitchen: Right, right. Yeah, I understand that those dollars are only the capital side. There's other dollars that are operational, but counting the number of people is a little bit different thing.

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So -- okay. Thank you very much. >> Casar: Councilmember Renteria? >> Renteria: Are y'all also counting the community first village that they seem to be in the process of really expanding? And their goal is almost, what, 2,000 people? >> So their goal is 1400 units over the next 10 years. And community first is wonderful and unique and also a little idiosyncratic in our world insofar as they certainly serve the homeless, they do it very well, but it's not typically permanent supportive housing by the definition of the intensity of services and the sort of guarantee that people will only spend 30% of their income on their rent. So they have very modest rent, which is not -- and because some of the units do not have

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full bathrooms or kitchens or running water, you know, in the kitchens, that -- those typically wouldn't meet hud quality standards, so that is not falling into this pipeline. But I will tell you as we think about that 3,000 unit goal overall, 3,000 placements, we know that some folks will absolutely go into to production that comes through community first village, both existing and new sites, and I think that, you know, one of the questions that we'll have as Al and amber Fogerty move forward in this process is kind of what they think the timeline looks like, how many of those units might be on the ground in the three years of this particular goal setting that we've done. >> Renteria: And I know in the past that we have waived their fees. That's a pretty substantial

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amount [indiscernible] Are we going to be able to help them out in the same manner as any of the funds that we're receiving or is that the federal restriction [inaudible] So that it wouldn't qualify for any of that? >> So you're correct insofar as while there may not have been outlays of capital, there have been some waivers of fees. And I don't know if we have acm Gonzales on this call or whether that's something Rosie could speak to, but I know it has been discussed. And so I would -- if I were you, I would expect to hear from us soon on a recommendation on that front. >> Yeah, I don't have any details on that, but I'm happy to follow up with Denise and with acm Gonzales. >> Casar: Mayor pro tem? >> I actually didn't

have any questions until Pio asked that question. So along those lines, I know that I was in communication

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with amber and Alan recently, and we were talking about barriers, essentially. And they brought up for me a couple things that would help their process move considerably faster. And so so I just wonder what we can do on the city's end what can make their process go faster, but as importantly, what can we do on our end when we are making acquisitions, when we are doing the building out of permanent supportive housing, how do we make our process go faster? Do we get in our own way with our processes is more or less what I'm trying to assess. >> Director truelove? >> I think we probably do get in our own ways at times. We do work all the time with our friends and neighbors across the city to help ensure

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that we have smooth development. I know that our real istic group is even still -- we're going through a process of working on process improvements and things like smart housing. I don't know, Mandy, again, I'm going to call on you, since I can't see you, I think you're still on the line, to see if there's anything from the -- your experiences with our latest ahfc developments that would be helpful to bring up here? >> I am still on the line. This is Mandy with ahfc. As far as was mentioned we are gathering, we've met internally to support our affordable housing, smart housing processes, and we are in the process next week, I believe, of sitting down with our external stakeholders to identify some low-hanging fruit from process improvement perspective. And certainly community first village would fall into that category. These are the types of

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developments that we want to incentivize and prioritize across the community. I don't have anything specific, but I think that is something that certainly Rodney, AMC Gonzales and director Denise Lucas that we need to sit down and talk about how we can specifically assist community first village in their expansion efforts. >> I appreciate that. And what I'll do is forward you the e-mail, they laid it plain for me in four bullet points. I'll share that with you and hopefully you all can take that up in your meeting. But as an extension of that -- we certainly don't have to do it today. But as an extension of that, I find myself on the precipice of very quickly having to produce housing for folk whose are currently unhouse and folks who may currently have shelter but may be really struggling to find housing soon, the thought I keep having is what it is that we can put in place now that will

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take away -- I mean, we can't change the cost of lumber, we can't change the market, but there are things we can do on the city's end, so just having a really good idea what we can do on our end and what council might need to be able to do to help us produce housing quickly. Any advice that you have in that area, I would happily accept. >> Casar: And, y'all, I think we need to hit on over to if other items if we're going to hit the other goal. I know we're getting a further presentation tomorrow so there may be some further questions we can bring up tomorrow unless there's anything else urgent? I really appreciate

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resolution which would forward a recommendation from this committee to the full council on may 20th that we update Austin's housing plan that we call our housing blueprint with the -- with the goal of -- of housing 3,000 more people and providing them services in order to drastically reduce homelessness in our community and equitably rehouse people from encampments. So we have that item in backup. If there's a motion to move that forward, I think that would be great. We can discuss that briefly before we take up the last item. Councilmember? >> Kitchen: I move that we pass -- there's two versions in backup and so I've got a version that says proposed amendment. That's the one that I was looking at. >> Casar: I think that one has been incorporated into the main one in backup. I think it's just a grammatical difference where before there were a few comma ands and now it's set into sentences. >> Kitchen: I see. Okay.

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So -- so I see what you are saying. I didn't realize that it had been -- um ... Okay. Then I move passage of the one that says [indiscernible] Resolution which incorporates the content that I had in my amendment. >> Casar: So moved by councilmemr kitchen. Is there a second? Seconded by vice chair Renteria. Councilmember kitchen I will let you take it first. >> Kitchen: I think this is a good step for us to propose that the council take, really what it does, it -- it states our commitment. To -- to -- states our commitment to rehousing unsheltered folks at the level that's been recommended, it came out of the summit, 3,000. I think it's important that we update our goals to

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reflect that commitment. We have additional steps that we will need to take as a council to work with the community as a whole and identify the total amount of funding to reach that goal. And -- but I think it's absolutely critical that we take this first step to go ahead and make a commitment to -- to reaching those goals to -- to -- to rehouse folks and to -- to get the -- to the goal of reaching effectively ending homelessness. By providing what's needed for these 3,000 folks to be rehoused. >> Casar: Thank you, councilmember. And I have talked to so many people in the last few months, every single day, people torn about prop B, for prop B, people against prop B. What I found in virtually every single conversation,

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especially when you had some time to talk was that the vast majority of people were not divided on the issue of pulling folks out of tenets into housing and to housing our fellow neighbors that are living under bridges or in creeks. Just for far too long we have had our goals far too low for housing people experiencing homelessness. The rise in housing costs, the shredding of our social safety net over generations has led to a really, really significant challenge. I appreciate so much that -- that the -- that what was produced out of this summit was for us to finally raise our goals to the level that they should have been at for -- for a long time. So that we -- and I think through this recommendation we are committing to more bold action as a city, alongside other local government partners, alongside the private sector and philanthropy and non-profits for us to drastically reduce homelessness in our city.

[2:48:17 PM]

If we actually get this done, I think it will be a really drastic change that so many people are looking for. So thank you. I saw councilmember Ellis had her hand up and then if somebody else hasn't talked I will kick it to them, if not I will kick it back to you, councilmember kitchen. >> Thank you, chair. I really do appreciate your comments and the comments of councilmember kitchen. It's clear through this presentation that Diana gray has given us that there have been historic commitments to finding the dollars that are needed to house people who are experiencing homelessness. We will have some discussions in the future about how to find the rest of the money. I do hope that everyone ready, able and willing to partner with us will step up and affirm that commitment. We have a lot of work to do. We care about our unhoused neighbors, but this is a path forward and I think it's good for our committee to be adopting the strategic housing blueprint goal for our neighbors. >> Casar: Thank you, councilmember. Agreed, everybody needs to chip in for this to work. Vice chair Renteria, mayor pro tem after that.

[2:49:18 PM]

>> Renteria: I'm not the vice chair anymore. >> Casar: I think you are in. >> Renteria: I pay Paige was. >> Casar: I think she kicked it back to you. [Laughter]. I have known you long enough that I feel that

describes how you have led on housing issues for a long time. You gave this over to me, gave the vice chair over to page, we gave it back to you and you don't need the title. But I think that you are the vice chair. >> Renteria: Okay. [Laughter]. >> Casar: Is that what you are raising your hand about or did you want to say something? That was it. We'll check the agenda, but I think we did change that in 2021. Mayor pro tem? >> Thank you, I just wanted to make sure to point out that I think it's super important that our goals do actually reflect our needs, you know, two years ago when we were establishing our

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policy, those guidelines, we determined that we need to update our strategic housing blueprint at every level. So I'm really pleased to see this come forward. I also really look forward to getting back to that conversation and our land development code. That line of questioning about -- about community first and thinking about what things -- what levers we might be able to pull to just make this considerably less challenging and so -- so, you know, I -- I look forward to -- to revising our land development code so we can implement the changes that will be necessary to achieve our goals. I mean, every time we have these conversations about our neighbors experiencing homelessness, it just keeps coming back to housing for me. So -- so, you know, I wanted to put that out there. Also, I didn't take the opportunity to do so earlier for the folks that maybe don't know her, Kendra Garrett is amazing and her experience in housing I think it's absolutely going to be a benefit to the community with her service on the community development commission.

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So I really appreciate that -- that she's been brought forward as a candidate or as an -- was selected as a candidate and I really look forward to the full council being able to take the opportunity to allow her to serve our community. >> Councilmember Fuentes. >> Fuentes: Real quick. I know that we are running out of time. I realize that I'm a non-voting member of this committee, just passing through, I just want to emphasize my support for this blueprint, for the strategy and for the plan that council will consider in a few weeks for formal adoption. I think it's incredible and as we discussed how we utilize the American rescue plan dollars, not only at the city level, but at the county level, that we come together. It's going to take both of our bodies investing sizeably to meet the needs of our community. I know we can do it. We're an innovative city and we can do it. We put our heads down and get the work done -- heads

[2:52:21 PM]

down and get the work done. I really look forward to conversations with Travis county and would love to see their support in this effort. >> Casar: Thank you, councilmember. You are always welcome here. The last item on the agenda is something I know that you have worked on quite a bit. Right before I kick it

over to you councilmember kitchen, folks, are we able to stay until 3:10 in case this last item takes us 10 minutes? Is there something coming up after us? >> I can, but I don't know that we voted. Did we vote? >> Casar: We haven't voted yet, I wanted to interject before I forget to ask that question. Are we able -- everybody able -- we might have to go 10 minutes over. I tried. Okay. Councilmember kitchen and then back to the mayor pro tem. >> Kitchen: Just very quickly, I know that we are trying to move fast. I want to emphasize what we are doing today, we are making a commitment. When we are making that commitment and we are thinking in terms of the summit and the recommendations that came out of that, we wanted to emphasize that we are committing to rehousing

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those folks living in encampments equitably and setting a course toward equilibrium, I want to define what that means. Equilibrium on unsheltered homelessness is really about -- about having a homelessness response system that has an intervention within 30 days for all persons experiencing homelessness. So we are talking about -- we're talking about taking to scale what we're doing now with the heal initiative and a whole bunch of other things that we are doing now, taking that to scale and then establishing a system that works he couldably so that we have -- equitably, so that we have equilibrium so if someone does ends up homeless they are not homeless for very long and not on the street for very long.

[2:54:21 PM]

I wanted to emphasize that I think that it's a very important commitment to move forward -- move forward today and ask the rest of the council to support. Mayor pro tem, did you have your hand up? >> Harper-madison: I wanted to see procedurally if I needed to walk away. I don't want my vote to not be counted. I have to pick up the kid in five minutes. What I had planned to do was listen in, but I won't be able to -- >> Casar: Why don't we go ahead and take the vote right before you go then unless there's any objection so we can all be here. Okay. All those in favor please raise your hand. That passes unanimously amongst the members and councilmember Fuentes if you want to raise your hand, too, we know that you are very supportive. Thank you. We will move on to this last item and thank you for still being able to listen in, mayor pro tem. >> Pool: All right, good afternoon committee members, director -- let's see if we can get you out of here on

[2:55:21 PM]

time. We want to thank you for the opportunity to come before you. We have a short briefing for you on the damage that is related to the winter storm uri related to both health and safety. With me today this afternoon director -- assistant director Daniel ward will go over that and we are available for any

questions after that if you have any. >> Without objection, I will move through this presentation as quickly as I can. Good afternoon, everybody. Daniel word, assistant director of the Austin code department. Purpose today to provide you a briefing on health and safety property damage resulted to winter storm uri. Next slide, please. As I'm sure you are aware, the city shut-down essential -- non-essential operations during the winter storm as road conditions worsened and that continued through February 19th. The Austin code department did have a group of field inspectors on stand by if some type of catastrophic

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structural event occurred during that time. Fortunately that did not need to be mobilized. But during the power outage the code department did collaborate with the development services department to work on permitting protocols for emergency repairs. We partnered with ctm to get a programming change into Amanda so we could better track winter storm related cases. We also partnered with 311 and helped create some standardized responses to winter storm related complaints. Next slide, please. We launched operations back up again on February 20th. To begin our process of trying to move through the backlog that was created while the city was in shut-down. Department leadership did make a strategic decision to prioritize inspections for complaints. Classified either as covid-19 complaints on as what we internally assigned as priority 2 complaints. And this does include complaints related to occupied substandard conditions, things like a hot water -- water -- water

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service at all, no heat, other time sensitive situations that can have immediate impact on health and safety of occupants. Also want to note the Austin code provided staff to assist with the identification of properties that lacked access to water. We also assisted in the subsequent distribution of the drinking water to those properties. We generally followed our standard policies and procedures. But one change we did make we delayed issuing notices of violation to properties that provided an action plan within 48 hours of receiving notice from us that the violation had occurred. For owner/occupied housing, we referred them to a website that would stood up to provide assistance to homeowners looking for permitting requirements, tree removal issues and other available community resources. For tenant occupied properties, we performed inspections and -- we also advised the tenants to reach out to their landlord and request service repairs. We held cases open until it

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was determined the landlord had corrected violations. And for complaints related to act accumulations of brush, tree limbs, construction debris, we coordinated to see when the additional brush and bulk

collections services would be available. Next slide, please. So this is a snapshot available related to winter storm cases. Case volume generally peaked in the last week of February and first week of March. Just for clarification, nov is a notice of violation, which is the department's formal notice to a property universal recycling --property owner. The timeline for compliance stated in the nov has been exceeded and the inspector is not seeing progress towards compliance. Next slide, please. The above chart is a representation the different sections of the property maintenance code that the code inspectors noted in

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their notices of violation. The bulk involved damage to interior surfaces, talking about things like damaged dry wall, peeling paint, water heating or water service issues, hvac equipment, primarily heating and then work without permit issues. Next slide. This is a breakdown of the winter storm cases based on zoning district. The category other includes commercial based and mixed use districts. If we look at the numbers based on available land use data, there were 649 total cases at multi-family properties. Next slide. This is a heat map that was generated by our it division. You can see a concentration of cases in the urban core of the city. In general, we have observed that older structures suffered more damage likely due to aged infrastructure. However, that said, we have seen situations where similarly aged properties that are in close proximity to each other, have

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experienced different levels of damage. We have also observed the builders that had fire sprinkler lines installed, also susceptible to damage due to bursting of the pipes due to long term exposure to the cold weather. Next slide. This map and chart shows a breakdown of cases based on council district. Complaints received and violations found were most prominent in district 4. About that said, but that said, all districts were impacted to some degree. Next slide. Just a quick summary of our actions. We delayed novs when we were provided with action plans within 48 hours. We recognized the availability of parts and labor were constrained at the time. So this is a way for our department to provide some reasonable flexibility to property owners that we believed were acting in good faith. Owners that failed to cooperate were issued notices of violation. In cases where progress is not being made in a timely

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manner are being expedited to our legal enforcement and he was. Code department also developed and enhanced our ability to perform remote inspections when tenants are uncomfortable providing access to the interior of their division. Additionally our it group is working to deliver a public-facing dashboard where some of these images being provided are coming from to help highlight activity at winter storm

affected properties. Next slide. Going to briefly touch just on the repeat offender properties. We have taken a proactive approach in monitoring conditions at those properties. We currently review each property every 30 days to identify those that might warrant a suspension. From their ability to rent vacant units. We have made internal enhancements to our process to identify properties that may qualify for the program. We have also added our internal periodic inspectional door to the rope website, just to enhance our transparency and provide additional notification to tenants of

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our activities at their property. As we did with all rental property, we requested action plans within 48 hours of validating a violation and we are escalating cases to our legal avenues when needed. Also want to emphasize that we have stayed in constant contact with our key stakeholders. We've collaborated with them to enhance our community inspection efforts. Next slide. Just -- just general overview, we typically have three avenues available to us as code inspectors to escalate cases to a legal action. We have third party administrative hearings, we have the building and standards commission and municipal court. We have requested a special called meeting from the building and standards commission, chair frieberger has agreed and that meeting is now scheduled for may 13th. This will only include cases -- will only include cases that are damage sustained from the winter storm. And there may be additional cases that we will bring

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forward at our regular building and standards commission meeting on may 26th. Next slide. So going forward, the department will continue to monitor conditions of properties affected by the winter storm. We will escalate cases as needed when we are not seeing the progress that we expect. In addition we are partnering with Austin public health to look at our health impacts to the community that arise from these kinds of situations and what we as a city can do to improve or responsiveness and service delivery. The law department, of course, will also be included as part of that discussion. Next slide. And that concludes my presentation, thank you for your time today. The opportunity to discuss the code department's efforts. We are very proud of the work that our inspectors and support staff carry out each and every day to try to make a safer and greater Austin. I along with director Roig are available for any questions you may have. >> Casar: Thank you, thank you for getting through a dozen slides in record time

[3:04:33 PM]

here. To note there's also an item on Thursday's agenda related to addressing these issues and so we can discuss this a little bit more in the work session at the council meeting. We should absolutely take

questions and use this time well, but know that we can have other opportunities to continue to bring this up through the week. Councilmember Fuentes, I saw your hand up. >> Fuentes: Yeah, thank you. I just want to make a comment. One thing that I say as a result of the winter storm, I really would love for us to come up with a way how to fund or how to do this is to be able to provide emergency relocation services to our uninhabitable living conditions. I walked into construction sites basically with walls torn apart. I mean, there's no way families can LE in those conditions. So I would love it if the city had some type of program or mechanism in place where we could provide a voucher or a hotel stay for the weekend, since we have our housing and planning department here as well, I wanted to also

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emphasize that. I know this is on all -- everyone's radars, but just wanted to mention that. And thank you for the presentation. I appreciate it. >> Casar: Thank you for raising that. I think that I might mention some potential ideas here before we close out on that front. Councilmember Ellis? Former vice chair Ellis, thank you. [Laughter]. >> Ellis: Thank you, chair. This is a really helpful presentation. I would -- I would love to know more about my district, the exact needs that you have on your record. I know that I'm aware of some because I drive by them and I see where water infrastructure isn't repaired, buildings aren't repaired yet. I would love to get a bit of a deep dive, if you can send that to me off line or we can chat later. I would love to see what you are seeing just to make sure that it's lining up with what we're seeing in my office. >> Sure, be more than happy to help you out with that. >> Ellis: Thank you so much. >> Casar: Any other points or questions for code?

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To -- to councilmember Fuentes' point, some of the conditions that I've seen lately are just unthinkable, just really awful condition that's have persisted. We've had some residents reach out saying that now they're getting notices that they have to leave because the conditions are too bad after they have -- as they reported it, after they have reported it to code, right? So the property owner has charged them rent multiple months now since the storm, they have lived in mold or construction sites, they have waited to see if there would be repairs, there's persistent lack of repairs. The tenants have done the work to -- to speak out against those conditions, report it to the city. And then they get a notice that they need to -- to leave. Which just seems so wrong, right, that you are trapped and either living in bad within conditions and not getting repairs done and

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then being asked to leave. I have encouraged those constituents to -- to -- if they want to stay in their apartments to fight that out and bring that forward to jps and to make sure that they get their due. But I

have to agree with what councilmember Fuentes has said. If we can find better work to come up with ways that we can help accommodate people in situations like that so that people don't worry about contacting us, that would be really helpful. I know there was a case in my district that the council dealt with where -- where the lawsuit and the fines against the property owner went to -- to the housing trust fund but then helped to relocate people when that property became so dangerous people couldn't stay there anymore. So as we face more and more climate disasters, I think it's really important for us to find ways to make sure that we are having that collaboration that people can be taken care of when units have to be repaired or when we deal with these issues of property owners

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deciding to -- to charge people some rent and then several months later ask people to leave. [Indiscernible] Looked like you were going to say something? No? Cool. Anything else on this front? Okay. I have some photos to show folks related to the mold and those issues, but I will bring them up tomorrow during the mold resolution so that we can keep to the commitment of only running 10 minutes late. Okay. >> Thank you. >> Casar: Anything else? Okay. I think with that, is there -- I think our last agenda item is if there's anything else folks want brought up at future meetings, you can always contact me directly unless there's anything that you want to raise here on this last item. Okay. I think we covered some really important things, really getting to work even

[3:09:37 PM]

faster on homelessness response. And not forgetting that people are still suffering from the damage of the winter storm. So thank y'all for rescheduling and for your patience on the tech issues from last week. And I hope you have a good rest of your day. Without objection, we will adjourn the meeting. [Meeting adjourned].