

# City Council Special Called Budget Work Session

## Transcript – 08/05/2021

Title: City of Austin

Channel: 6 - COAUS

Recorded On: 8/5/2021 6:00:00 AM

Original Air Date: 8/5/2021

Transcript Generated by SnapStream

=====

***Please note that the following transcript is for reference purposes and does not constitute the official record of actions taken during the meeting. For the official record of actions of the meeting, please refer to the Approved Minutes.***

[9:19:37 AM]

>> Mayor Adler: Then we have a quorum, we have everybody here. I'm going to call to order today's budget work session, today is August 5th, 2021, we are handling this meeting hybrid, some of the council here, some virtual. And it is -- it is -- 9:18. And we'll begin this meeting. Colleagues, today in front of us, we have executive session, we also have the budget items. We don't have a hard stop mandated to us today, but I think we should try real hard to put in our heads and see if we could hit it, stop at 5:00, that gives us a full day to be able to be here, but we can adjust that again. That's not a hard stop, but let's think about the day that way. I would suggest that we start this morning just with

[9:20:37 AM]

the presentation and work through those items. Maybe let's see how far we get on those, see if we can work our way through the budget stuff. That would clear us then to have lunch and come back in executive session, if we are able to do that. But let's get started and see how we move, okay? All right, manager, I think we're going to start then with the -- with the executive session. I'm going to need to step off the dais at 10:30. For -- for half an hour. Maybe a tad more. But I think about a half an hour. But you all can proceed in the budget discussion here without me. All right. Manager, I'll turn it over to you.

>> Thank you, mayor, council and good morning. This is the continuation of our budget work session from Tuesday. We have updated the presentation and sent that to you yesterday. But we're going to have our

[9:21:37 AM]

interim budget officer just walk through the agenda that is -- that has been posted and we'll get started.

>> Thank you, city manager. Kerry Lang, interim budget officer. And as we get the presentation pulled up --

>> Mayor Adler: Can you all hear her okay? Okay.

>> So go to the next slide, please.

>> Harper-madison: Chair, I can hear -- never mind, sorry, that's bigger, thank you.

>> So we're going to start today's discussion with the update of the revenue for fiscal year 2022 and then we'll move forward with a presentation by the Austin parks and recreation department based on the park's foundation's recommendations and then the homeless strategy officer will come and speak about

[9:22:40 AM]

the homeless strategy office, [indiscernible] Activities across the city and APD will come and talk about police staffing and funding overview. Finally, we have an update on the financial policy changes that have been approved by the audit finance committee. So we'll get started right now with the budget office presenting the update and our interim budget officer, Eric -- interim deputy budget officer, Eric Nelson will be giving that presentation.

>> Mayor, I have a quick question. On our agenda from Tuesday, we had scheduled to get a briefing on economic development or from economic development.

>> Yes. And I apologize for not including that in my email last night. The economic development department provided a detailed -- response to a budget question about their budget overall. And when we were looking at the timeline for -- for today and Tuesday, we decided to remove that EdD

[9:23:41 AM]

overview to -- to make sure that we had enough time to cover the other items.

>> Thank you.

>> Eric?

>> Good morning, I'm Eric Nelson, interim deputy budget officer. If we can go up a slide or two. I just want to provide a relatively brief update about the general fund revenue situation after the receipt of

the certified tax rolls and doing the official tax rate calculations. I'm also going to do a little update on sales tax towards the end as well. I'll begin as I usually do with the gloom and doom, but I promise it will get a little more optimistic as we move forward. This is a chart that we just called "The chart" in the budget office now that you are all pretty familiar with. It just shows the five-year

[9:24:44 AM]

forecast situation for the general fund as of the proposed budget. As you are all very well aware, we are getting squeezed by changes to the state revenue cap. These figures are much better than they were at forecast, but we are still projecting budget deficits beginning with next year and expanding on into the future. Again primarily as a result of -- of being squeezed on the property tax side. If we -- can we go to the next slide? Sorry, do I control that? Okay. Thank you. This slide summarizes the results and the changes from the receipt of certification from the appraisal districts. The first couple of lines show we are actually very close with our projections about overall taxable value and new construction value. The net effect of those

[9:25:44 AM]

changes to drive our projected tax rate down a little bit, which had some positive effects for our typical taxpayers, as we'll see in the subsequent slide. We did come up a little bit short relative to our projections for total general fund property tax revenue, although that's primarily a function of what I've been calling the mystery adjustment that the state added during the last year's certification process and which Kerry addressed in the cover memo to the five year forecast report. And this adjustment is a forecasting name frankly but also just deleterious to our revenue and it's difficult for the [indiscernible] Total date it as well. We would have been very close, but T cad made a last minute change to how they are handling that adjustment this year, so that eroded some of our expected revenue. Next slide, please.

[9:26:44 AM]

As I said, the tax rate did go down a bit from the projections. Very marginal changes to the underlying typical home values themselves. So the -- these updates are mainly just a reflection of the tax rate. But we have been projecting that the typical homeowner would save about \$9 in comparison with the prior year and now we're expecting that to be over \$33. This is primarily the result of council's efforts to go to the full 20% general homestead exemption back in June. For our senior and disabled homeowners, it's also good news. Because of this lower tax rate. They are going to experience significant savings and now that savings is approaching almost \$200 a year. Next slide, please. These changes also have a favorable impact on the overall situation for our typical rate pair. You know, the only line on here that's changed since the proposed budget is the

[9:27:45 AM]

property tax bill, which should tie back to the prior slide. That 33 -- \$33 or so a year is about \$2.79 a month, the net effect here is that the whole basket of goods that are -- that our typical resident is paying each month is only going to increase a little over a dollar, 0.3%. Since we started tracking this about 10 years, that's the second best, second lowest it's ever been and the comparable, the only lower year was the first year that the council instituted the general homestead exemption back in fy '16, I believe it was.

>> Mayor Adler: Could you speak up a little bit.

>> Oh, sorry.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Next slide, please. In response to councilmember Casar's request, we took a look at what the tax rate increase would be where

[9:28:45 AM]

there would be no exact to the typical homeowner. That works out to exactly a 6% effective increase and at that rate it would generate an additional \$14.4 million in property tax revenue. As I think we have addressed in other contexts because of -- because of recent changes to state legislation, any revenue in excess of the 3.5% increase would get backed out in a future year. So we would strongly recommend that any revenue generated in excess of that be devoted to one-time purposes. So at that zero dollar impact level you could generate \$14.4 million and councilmember also asked for a nominal increase and actually at the full 8%, it only works out to about a 2.09% month increase for a typical homeowner, that would generate \$25.4 million, again for one-time purposes. Next slide, please. In addition to looking at the property tax, they've

[9:29:46 AM]

also been tracking sales tax closely and so we've revised our sales tax projections as well. Since we finalized the numbers for the proposed budget, we've had two payments come in. Those have been very strong. I think a lot of that is reflecting pent up demand. Because they reflect April and may sales, which is when things are just fully reopening. And you also have the effect of, I think, federal stimulus payments. So I'm a little bit hesitant about that being a sustainable trend for the long term, especially at the levels we've been seeing. We are also now facing the prospect of -- of stage 5 restrictions returning and that could have -- that could tamper sales tax growth as well. So in light of that, we've recognized

the effect from those two payments and we've also bumped up our expectations for the remainder of the year,

[9:30:47 AM]

slightly. The net effect of those changes is that there would be an additional \$5.8 million in sales tax revenue expected for fy 21st. That would float reserves and therefore become available for one-time use in fy 2 '2. Then looking at fy '22 itself, we have the negative 2.5 million as a result of property tax certification. The revised estimate for the sales tax would be \$5.6 million in revenue for a net 3.1 million in revenue for fy 22. Technically that would be an ongoing revenue source, but in light of the first slide, the chart showing our ongoing deficits, we urge you to devote those funds to one time as well, so as not to worsen that deficit. We could go to the next slide, which I believe is just a discussion slide and I'm happy to take any questions, thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: So just to

[9:31:48 AM]

summarize to make sure that I understand this. Because of the changes in certified value, you are saying that if the council were to -- to adopt the tax rate that would have -- there would be neutral to the typical homeowner, not raise taxes at all, that there's a -- a potential at that point for an additional one-time spending recommended beyond what you indicated in the manager's budget for the combination of those three elements, the 5.8, the 3.1, and the 14.4. Is that correct?

>> That's correct.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Thank you.

>> Casar: What does that combination total to? I didn't know whether to subtract the property tax or

[9:32:49 AM]

add, did that come out to like just over 17 million?

>> Yeah, you could add all of those figures together.

>> Mayor Adler: When you add them together it's higher, it's 14.4 plus the 5.8 plus the 3.1, is that correct?

>> I think -- is it 23.3? Is that what I'm getting.

>> Mayor Adler: 23.3, thank you. Mayor pro tem? And then councilmember alter and then councilmember kitchen.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you so much. I think what I heard, excuse me, you said "Tremendous" results from a projections perspective. I didn't know what to make of that. And I think some of our

[9:33:50 AM]

colleagues and constituents also don't know what that meant. What do you mean by that?

>> I'm sorry, could you remind me what I was referring to?

>> Harper-madison: It was early on. Like the third slide, you said tremendous results to our projections moving forward.

>> Sales tax revenue.

>> Oh, sales tax. I just mean the -- the payments we have seen have been just incredibly strong, as we see the rebound from -- from -- from the pandemic's restrictions. And so we've seen some incredibly strong payments and that's why we would be increasing the payment for fy 21 -- the year end estimate by about \$5.8 million.

>> Harper-madison: You have to forgive me, I'm still not quite tracking it.

>> Well, during the

[9:34:50 AM]

pandemic, obviously, we've had months where we've had year over year declines in sales tax. With these -- we've started to emerge from that earlier in the year, but with these payments the year over year numbers have been in excess of 20%. Are in comparison with a much lower base from last year, when we were at the very bottom of the sort of impacts from the pandemic. If that's helpful.

>> Harper-madison: That's helpful, thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> So I have three questions. One is can you -- obviously you're not going to be able to do it right now, but can you give us a calculation for what the one-time would mean. I'm not sure keeping it at zero impact would be the right comparison. Because we did have a

[9:35:50 AM]

projected impact that was saving folks \$9.06. I'm not sure that I would be comfortable going in a direction that increased that. But I would be curious to see how much revenue that would generate and whether there were some ways to invest that. That would make sense over the long run for addressing our challenges.

>> Sure, we could provide a breakdown for an entire range of taxpayer savings and impacts, all the way from the 3 and a half up to the full 8 if that would be helpful.

>> Alter: Yeah. I'm particularly interested in what -- if we were to keep the tax bill impact at the negative 9.06, what that would generate. I think that's still -- that still leaves some room to consider what we might want to do there. Again, this is new to me, so I'm not sure so I would like that data point. Then how is it that we have a formula that we have

[9:36:54 AM]

increased taxable valuation, increased new construction value, and then we end up with a negative on the revenue. Is that just that thing that you were talking about, that peculiar thing? It doesn't make any sense.

>> It is counter intuitive. A lot about the tax calculation ends up that way. You don't always get more revenue -- usually you should if new construction is increasing, but not just in the base value is increasing, we have a revenue cap so our rate will ratchet down in response to higher property tax growth. But it still is counterintuitive because we did see the increase in new construction. There's a number of adjustments that also flow into that calculation, but the primary one that's harming us is that new state adjustment. And also the -- the different way that tcad chose to treat is versus the way they treated it last year.

>> Okay. Can we get some information on that? I don't expect you to -- I don't know if anyone else is

[9:37:54 AM]

interested.

>> I could go into the gory details.

>> I don't think everyone needs the gory details right now. But I am interested to understand the differences there myself because I don't understand how you can increase by 400 million your -- your new construction and end up with less revenue. Doesn't make a lot of sense to me. Then finally, some of this what to do with, I think, with the new construction. I don't know if that also means that we have different estimates on the numbers that would then affect the revenue for other of our enterprise funds that have different kinds of -- non-taxable -- non-tax revenue that they are getting. You know, contemplate, for instance, the proposal that Mr. Casar put up that

[indiscernible] Supporting for stipend, we would have to be able to fund that across the organization. So I would like to

[9:38:55 AM]

understand if we have a corresponding amount of fees for our enterprise units in any way that are -- that are going up as well. Given that we have so much more new construction or if there are any of those estimates that also got reflected somewhere.

>> Just offhand, you know, that's reflecting values as of January 1st, so that construction would have already been filled. The most likely place to see it would probably be in dsd, but I think that revenue would have actually already been booked in large part. I can continue to think about it. Offhand I can't think of other enterprise departments that would see a direct revenue benefit as a result of that number being slightly higher at certification in comparison with the notice values.

>> Don't you have user -- don't that represent increased numbers of users? So like wouldn't your tuf go up or your basic energy? I know that you have to have

[9:39:56 AM]

a cost to serve them --

>> I don't think there's a one to one tie because this is really just focused on value. As opposed to number of units, it could be largely commercial. But that's something that I can look more deeply into and talk with APD or public works and see if they have thought about that.

>> I certainly hope that our commercial units are paying those fees as well. I just would like to understand if that creates some flexibility if we were to try to provide a stipend, additional stipends.

[Indiscernible]. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Anne.

>> Kitchen: I have a few questions. The first one is if you could put up again the slide that shows the rates and fees. This is very helpful information and I appreciate you going through it. It may be a little fast for the public, I want to go over a few things with you. So -- so because we -- we've gotten some questions from the public trying to understand what numbers we are playing with. Not that one, the page that

[9:40:58 AM]



shows --

>> I think one more, please.

>> Kitchen: That one right there. Okay. So a couple of things there. For explanation purposes. So I have received questions about what is the reasoning behind the increase in fees. For the-- for the transportation user fee in particular and then confirmation that the increased -- the Austin resource recovery, what that's for. So could you speak to those two? Again, this is questions my office has gotten. The other feedback my office has gotten is that, you know, you guy does a great job in putting a lot of good information out for folks, but sometimes it's not as easily -- not as easy to -- to -- sometimes more detail and not as easy to get through to the bottom line. Can you just explain for the public the reason for the

[9:41:59 AM]

raise in the transportation user fee and the reason for the raise in the Austin resource recovery fee?

>> Yeah, if I misspeak, please assistant city managers come up and correct me. Offhand I believe Austin resource recovery is just responding to increased cost drivers and so they are increasing their cart rates. As far as the transportation user fee, atd and public works, also have been experiencing cost drivers, public works in particular, has not increased that fee in some time, so they need to do so to avoid continuing to dig into ending balances and keep up with their fees. Atd also adding a significant number of staff to help speed progress on a number of recent transportation related bond initiatives.

>> Kitchen: Okay. So arr is not for any particular program with the expansion of a particular program?

>> Not to my knowledge. I believe that's mainly addressing just base costs.

[9:43:01 AM]

>> Okay. All right. And then the bottom line from this slide for people to understand is that the -- the -- [indiscernible] 13, you know, times 12 is -- is what the anticipated net or total increase is for someone who is at -- at the typical value, so can you speak to that again, which I think that you have at 3.99 here. Can you speak to that.

>> Sure. So that \$2.79 I think it's \$33.42. That will be their savings for -- that would be the savings for the typical homeowner in comparison with their actual property tax bill the prior year. So that's -- that's mainly a function of the work council did to expand the general homestead exemption to the full 20% back in June. So just, you know, the headline is that the typical Austin homeowner will pay less in property taxes in fy

[9:44:02 AM]

'22 than they did in fy '21.

>> Kitchen: Okay. Then please explain the total line.

>> Totally, we look at this whole basket. Basically reflects your property tax bill plus the usual felines and utility -- fee lines and utility service lines that you would see on your monthly utility bill. When we add them up, we get sort of a total tax and rate burden experienced by the typical homeowner, in not we are expecting that to -- in total we are expecting that increase about 1.13 which is only a 0.3% increase over the prior year.

>> Kitchen: All right. I wanted to explain that. As you said before, the headline, the bottom line, for this is the -- the savings. That -- that people will see. That's -- this is non-senior, right? So this doesn't account for the senior exemption.

>> Correct. This is our typical homeowner which is described as the median value of a

[9:45:03 AM]

homestead not receiving the senior disabled exemption.

>> Kitchen: Okay. I think that you had another slide that showed that if you did have a senior exemption, you might expect to see more.

>> Yes. Significantly more and that's because in addition to benefiting from the increase to the 20% general home said exemption, council also passed a \$25,000 increase to a total of \$113,000 in the senior and disabled property tax exemption.

>> Kitchen: Okay. Then did you have a slide that illustrated that? I thought you did.

>> Could we go back one more slide, please. So that second line would be the -- the revised impact to senior and disabled homestead or the typical senior and disabled homestead.

>> Kitchen: Okay. All right. Thank you. Now, then I just have one last question. Just because we kind of went past this pretty quickly and just from my understanding and also for the public's understanding. We talked about adding the 5.8 with the 3.1 with the

[9:46:06 AM]

14.4. Can you please explain the -- the source for each one of those three? 5.8, 3.1 and 14.4 so that can be clear for people.

>> Sure. The \$5.8 million would all be in additional estimated fiscal year 21 end revenue attributable to an upwardly revised sales tax projection. The -- the \$3.1 million would be the net effect of an upwardly revised fy '22 sales tax projection and a slightly downwardly revised fy '22 property tax projection. And the other figures are prospective increases in revenue which would be associated with council taking action to increase the property tax rate in excess of 3.5% effective increase.

>> Kitchen: That's where the 14.4 comes from, right?

>> Yes, yes.

>> Kitchen: Okay. And I believe that you had a slide for that.

[9:47:07 AM]

>> I think we need to go forward about three, maybe four slides.

>> If council were to do anything with regard to this, we would be thinking in terms of one-time funds?

[Indiscernible] Again. The reason --

>> Yes. So -- so as you all know, the general revenue cap limit now is a 3.5% property tax increase. In the original sb 2 in the 2019 session, the legislature did allow for the possibility of -- of municipalities being able to go to 8% in the event of disasters or emergencies -- in the event of disasters or emergency. We didn't take advantage of that last year but we do

[9:48:07 AM]

have that freedom this year. In the 2021 session the legislature revised the law, if you do -- you essentially have to back it out in the subsequent year. So it would not become a part of your base. For that reason it would be the fiscally prudent thing to do to treat any revenue associated with an increase above 3.5% as one time revenue.

>> Kitchen: All right. Thank you that helps answer my question.

>> Mayor Adler: I think just to close the loop on the question that my colleague just asked, on page 7 if you were try to calculate what it would mean for seniors, I would disable that \$2.79 number reduction, wouldn't that be the -- the 184.33 divided by 12.

>> Yeah, that would essentially be what we would do.

[9:49:07 AM]

You know, offhand I don't know if any of those other ones would need to be adjusted if there are meaningful differences in what seniors pay in their energy or water bills or any of the other fees. But essentially that's what you would do to replace that property tax line with the senior value from the prior slide.

>> Mayor Adler: Which I think would be a negative of about 15.36 if you just do that math. So -- so it would result in a net -- net reduction for seniors and disabled. Even considering all fees plus property taxes.

>> Absolutely.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Councilmember pool and then councilmember tovo.

>> Pool: Thanks. I wanted to just confirm on Tuesday when we were talking about the combined fiscal '22 impact the increase was 0.8%, but with these new numbers coming through and the updates, now looking at 0.3.

>> That's exactly right.

>> Pool: That is the

[9:50:07 AM]

specific baseline for the additional reductions you've been talking about here, great, thank you. I think that's really pretty significant. I wanted to highlight that. Then I just wanted to go back to some of the confusing elements about -- the tax revenue increase that we are permitted with the cap and it's complicated by the two disasters. Like year two that we thought that we would be in from -- from the pandemic disaster, actually now year one because -- because ever the winter storm Yuri disaster declaration, I think that's right.

>> I think we're in year one for both of them because -- because Yuri obviously happened this year. But the governor renewed the disaster declaration associated with the pandemic every month at least through March if not later, but certainly into this calendar year.

>> Pool: Okay. Still in year one from pandemic and also a new year one -- or a year one for the new disaster declaration.

>> That's my understanding, yes.

>> Okay then how. My understanding is that an

[9:51:09 AM]

increase -- does that one have to go to the voters if we go above 3.5.

>> It does not. We just have to be careful to realize that we are going to have to back it out in a prior year. So we would want it to be one-time. But no, you can -- because of -- because of another action that you took in June, you gave yourself the freedom to go up to an 8% increase this year. And so that would not need to be approved by the voters.

>> Okay. And so -- so the additional wrinkle was -- it's not a new baseline.

>> That's right.

>> And -- and with the numbers that you are showing us here on -- on page -- we looked at it earlier, the 6%, 0 -- effective property tax increase of 6% is zero impact on the typical homeowner property tax bill compared to fiscal '21, which gives us an additional one-time moneys of a little bit over [indiscernible]

[9:52:10 AM]

Million --

>> Correct.

>> Okay. Thanks so much.

>> Councilmember tovo and then councilmember Ellis.

>> Tovo: Thank you. Back on the slide that councilmember kitchen asked to have replayed, there's also a note -- a notation that shows [indiscernible] Community fee by going up by 55 cents. I'm trying to determine where that increase is going. Where I think it's going based on the page 233 in our budget book is to additional ftes. But I would like to get some additional information about it if we have any staff who can speak to where those -- where those increases are. I see some increases in transfers and debt service that I would like to better understand and I would also like to understand the -- for purpose of those new officers. And let me just give a heads up. I know that we have been asked to get our amendments together by tomorrow and -- and, you know, my -- I'm

[9:53:10 AM]

prepared to do that. On some scores. But I'm going to continue to work over the weekend and there may be amendments that I want to bring forward next week as well. It's my understanding that legally we can bring amendments up until the time that we have voted. So -- so -- so a couple of the areas -- this is one of the areas that I am looking at more closely.

>> As far as the --

[multiple voices]

>> Tovo: I'm sorry, I was going to say while I was waiting for you all to come back up. As we know, you know, fees hit people as well. Those increases and so we need to be really mindful of it and anyway --

>> As far as the clean community fee, I'm not sure if we have anyone available in the chambers from code compliance, but we can work on getting someone down here to address at that some later point in this session.

>> Tovo: That would be super. Looks like there are six new

[9:54:12 AM]

ftes and about a half million in transfers and debt service then decrease in areas that I would like to also better understand, including a decrease in involuntary code enforcements. So -- so that's the -- that's the upshot. I also just want to say, you know, almost year after year we've added code officers. I remember not that terribly long ago, I mean, there was something like six for the whole city. Now we have, you know, many, many, obviously six is too few. But I am seeing year after year our adding -- our adding officers yet I continue to hear the same concerns from some of our constituents about -- about, you know, especially in the area of short term rental enforcement and our real challenges in enforcing our codes on the books. In substandard housing and some other areas.

[9:55:12 AM]

So I really -- I really need to understand why we are adding additional code officers when we still seem to have challenges enforcing our code. I'm continuing to get emails from my constituents and some of y'all's that when they call code on the weekend during some of those evening weekend hours where some of these violations are taking place, there aren't any officers on staff. That's another question that I would like to hear addressed when we have somebody from Austin code. What are the hours, especially on weekends and evening, where some of the violations are taking place. And what's -- what's the rationale for adding additional personnel at this point. So thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember tovo, I want to confirm that you are right. People could offer amendments right up to the very end. You know, as just allowed you can do that. We will probably try to keep the practice that says that we will consider those first that are earliest that people have had a chance to review.

[9:56:12 AM]

I appreciate you working over the weekend. As soon as you can post anything that you have so people can prepare for it that would be really, really helpful.

>> Tovo: Mayor, I certainly intend to do that. But I think we also need to recognize we have been all on the dais for two full days and we are also getting information back from the question and answer throughout this week and then -- then the answers to my questions, the answers to -- to your questions, sometimes prompt additional questions, sometimes they prompt additional areas of explore recognition. So I certainly am going -- exploration. So I certainly am going to support my colleagues' need for more time and space to think about amendments that might come forward late. I'm going to do my best to get them up. I'm going to -- most of you all do the same thing, too. But there may be -- there may be some things that we need to continue to think about and deliberate next week.

>> Mayor Adler: Sounds good.

[9:57:13 AM]

The -- the -- when you have the -- the screen that's facing, I can't see what's on atxn, but when you have that extra 6th box, that probably should be the entire dais if you could do that rather than repeating the individual frames of the people that are there. I just don't know what's happening on atxn. Councilmember Ellis, I think was next and then councilmember Renteria.

>> Ellis: Thank you, mayor. I want to make sure that I'm understanding when we say that if we were to go over 3.5, we have to back it out next year. What -- what would that number look like? Would that mean -- 2-point something? We -- can we kind of get an understanding of what that exactly means financially?

>> So I don't know if you recall, I think it was fy '20, we went up to the 8% and devoted some of the funds to one-time, but one positive effect of doing that is all of that money sort of became part of our

[9:58:13 AM]

base for the next year that we got to add 3.5% to. And what this would do is it would take any revenue that we are adding in excess of the 3.5% and then next year it would back it out of your base so that you are only calculating next year's, let's say, 3.5% increase from that lower base. So there's no compounding effect. There's no carry through effect from any of the revenue that you raise above the 3.5% this year.

>> Ellis: Okay. That makes sense, thank you. It might be helpful for us to have some sort of reference of - what was that would mean in subsequent years to back it back down, just in case anyone is thinking about that not at this point, but I just think as we progress in this conversation, it would be helpful to have some of those numbers. For reference. Then -- as far as one-time versus ongoing funding, it seems pretty straightforward. Obviously one-time means that it's not going to be something that we can do in

[9:59:13 AM]

the following year. But there are any legal stipulations around what you can and cannot use those for? You know, like for staffing, obviously, you would want to be ongoing. Costs that goes over from year to year so that person still has that position throughout the next fiscal years. But are there any other things besides just hard fixed costs or maintenance projects versus staffing or other types of projects? Is there any gray area between what is one-time and what is ongoing?

>> I don't want to step on the law department's toes. Mine, there's certainly gray areas. I think in the past one thing that comes to mind is council has funded new programs on a pilot or, you know, one-year basis with no commitment of continuing funding. That might be something that has fallen into a gray12345 okay, thank you, that's helpful.

[10:00:29 AM]

>> Go ahead.

>> I want clarification, if we are to raise the tax 0%, all that is saying is they're not getting, they're not having to pay less taxes otherwise. We still, once you key in all the formula into it, including the fee, that means, that mean the fees are going to go up. There's no minus to deduct the fee. Is that correct?

>> Yes. So if you went at that 6% level, you would lose that \$2.50, 79 cent savings on that combined fee chart so that \$1.13 would increase to 3.\$92 a month.

>> This might be a legal question, you know, there's sometimes we do a one-time fee but we but the three years and set that money just knowing that that program is going to last for three years and after that there is not going to be any

[10:01:29 AM]

funding source for it. Can we do those kind of things, do those kind of projects, with just one-time money and will there be a penalty if we try to do it that way?

>> Again, I'll defer to the law department. They can stop me at any time. All I can say is we have done something like that in the past, and I don't think we would be running afoul of state law, but we may be starting to run afoul of some of our own financial policies in extreme cases against the requirement we have with a balanced budget.

>> Okay, thank you.

>> Mayor, can I ask my colleague to repeat his question? I heard the response but didn't hear all of the question from councilmember Renteria.

>> Renteria: In the past, we



[10:02:30 AM]

will money for three years and we just rolled it off. I was asking if we could do that with this kind of money, the 3.5, knowing we will go back to the base of 3.5. If we set enough money for this program to finance it for three years, can we do that, if it is legal.

Kathleen: Thanks for asking that question. I have a follow up question about that when it is my turn.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay, I think all of those questions are not legal questions, they're policy questions for us. Councilmember alter and then councilmember kitchen and back to councilmember tovo.

>> Alter: Thank you, so I'm understanding the sheets right, then there is about 8.9 million of one-time money. Is that correct? So we're adding the fiscal year fy '21 budget with the fy '22

[10:03:33 AM]

budget.

>> Yes with no change to the tax rate.

>> Alter: Yes. I want to understand, there are questions submitted to explore the opportunity to provide an additional stipend to staff, and I believe that, for the most part, at least the 500 that's in the base budget does not apply to our first responders who have contracts with us?

>> That's correct.

>> Alter: So, I would like to add to the questions that you have, if you could provide the numbers, if we were able to provide a \$500 stipend for those first responders who are on contract, whether that is something that we could consider that might be part and parcel of a proposal that we're talking about with respect to increasing the \$500 to 1,000 but just sort of looking at that, if we did

[10:04:33 AM]

that, I would want us to consider doing that for the first responders, as well. So I would like to know what that costs there. I think, you know, as I understand it, part of the design of the stipend that's in the base budget is to recognize the hardships of the last year and the extreme effort and all of the hard work that our employees have delivered to our community and I certainly think that contract or no contracts, if we have this amount of money to consider, that we should also consider looking at increases there on this one-time basis so I would like to know what that costs.

>> We can look into that.

>> Alter: Thank you. You know, when I first read this, I was thinking we had 3.1 million with 8.9 million. I'm not sure about the value of going above the 3.5%.

[10:05:38 AM]

You know, I do think we did the homestead exemptions for a reason and we negate the success of that if we go too far beyond that, but certainly that will be part of our discussions.

>> Councilmember kitchen was next. Can't hear you.

>> Okay, sorry. Can you hear me now?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Kitchen: I wanted to go back to the process question, how we will procedure with our procedure, you started to talk about that, mayor. I would like a little more clarity, or if we need to discuss it just to know we will discuss it today. Because you had mentioned that, you know, we're getting our amendments in and you mentioned taking amendments in the order

[10:06:39 AM]

which they were, you know, submitted. I think in years past, one of the things --

>> Mayor Adler: I didn't mean to say we would take them up in that order.

>> Kitchen: This one, I'm sorry. I was trying to repeat what you said. My further question on that is, the way we've done it in the past is we have had a running total where we have taken up, you know in whatever order, amendments to -- amendments that involved, you know, additional revenue and we've included them on a page. And then we have come back separately, and I'm trying to recall, I think this is the way we've done it, we've come back separately with amendments related to areas we've identified perhaps for some changes that allow for additional revenue. In other words, we've gone through and done, here's what we

[10:07:39 AM]

think might be an additional cost, here's what we think might be reduction. We put them all on the sheet and then we've worked to balance it.

>> Mayor Adler: It would be my intent to do it the way we've done it in the past. We will post it to the message board and people with propose changes to it, but it is to get all the ideas out that people had in the beginning before we start making choices so someone with defend their eat whether it is the first

one we discussed or the 15th we discussed before making choices. Then people can talk about their relative priorities and then to go back to the beginning kind of work our way through in an order leeway with that running number, recognizing that any decision we make at any point in time is subject to be changed later on in the conversation.

>> Kitchen: So, in other words, we're not balancing it as we go and requiring, running out of

[10:08:40 AM]

ability to balance funds. The reason for this detail is we have new members on our dais and we do change our, you know, we do change our process some every year but it is important, or at least I would like to know before we go into this process how we're going to handle it. And so that's why I'm just bringing that up so we can refer, and today is our last day to actually talk about -- well, I'm actually not sure. When is our last day to talk as a group before we start voting. Is it today.

>> Mayor Adler: Today is our last chance to do that and we will start talking as a group. We have 1-3 days to do that. We also have the message board. But we will go ahead, it is a very good point, councilmember kitchen, we will post something so people have something they can look at our proposed changes to or whatever, and to the best of our ability we will do something that kind of tracks the process we've used in the recent past.

[10:09:40 AM]

>> Kitchen: Mayor, I appreciate that. That doesn't give us the chance to talk about it as a group before we actually go into the process, so, you know, I should have asked this on Tuesday. I apologize, because we could have used the time today. Maybe my ask would just be, if you're planning on posting on the message board the same kind of process we did last time, I don't know if it is possible for your staff to get that up-to-date. It may not be possible but if it is that would be great. If people had any essence of a change to that process, we can talk about it later this afternoon. It may than everyone is comfortable proceeding the way we have in the past but it hasn't been spelled out for our new members and I would also lake it spelled out for myself so I can make sure we are all on be the same page.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Councilmember alter. I'm sorry, wait a second.

[10:10:41 AM]

Councilmember tovo, I think I had recognized you next.

>> Tovo: You had, thank you. Quickly, councilmember Renteria mentioned something, as I said I was talking about with another colleague this morning and that was the year that we did, we did one-time funding into something that we called, I don't know, the community fund, to allow for that to be paid out over a series of years, and I think the time period was, as you said, councilmember Renteria, for three years. And I am thinking through ways to do that again. I know that our staff, our financial staff, when I met with them, indicated that fund had just been closed. I wanted to just ask our financial staff whether it was closed because we had used all the funding or whether there was some reason why, well, if you could just explain why it was closed and if you have any reservations about our recreating such a thing. I see this in particular as a real good strategy for those

[10:11:42 AM]

organizations who might need mini grants to support resilience work or other kinds of small scale community projects that aren't at a level where they're competing in our rfp processes or our public health rfp or some of our other kinds of programs. So that question, I guess is for Mr. Nelson.

>> The name is escaping me, as well. The new initiatives fund. Exactly, we deposited a bunch of one-time revenue to expend it over two or three years. There is a precedent for doing that. The reason we are closing it down because it was 2-3 years ago it was established and those funds are expended and we didn't want to keep publishing a fund that is showing all zeros.

>> Tovo: Got it. I'm going to be bringing forward an amendment to establish that with some seed money in it

[10:12:43 AM]

probably for the resilience work, and as well likely some other possibilities.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Any others before we go to the next headline? Councilmember alter.

>> Alter: Thank you whether it is the 8.9 or folks want to consider the other taxes I would like to know from our city staff or city manager if there were investments that were choices that were not funded at the level that would have been ideal to get those projects done that will have a big impact on our city. If there is a pot of money that would be needed that could round those projects out so they could speed up their timeline but be impactful for the community. The pay sheets, capital management or the website or some of our investments in cybersecurity or other things where, if we could accelerate

[10:13:44 AM]

some of that funding, we could have an important impact on the enterprise and free up funding in future years for greater flexibility, I would welcome understanding if there is a list of what those things might be rather than creating a whole laundry list of new programs that we're going to have trouble funding in the future. I think that would allow us to smooth things out a little bit over time, and I think we ought to know that information as we make our decisions.

>> Thank you, councilmember. I will give that some thought and come back with any recommendations we may have.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember Casar.

>> Casar: Trying to put together a spread sheet of folks, looking at what we have on the message board and what it is that is presented today, there is, I think, the real

[10:14:45 AM]

potential for us to fund many of these community priorities without -- while still having a property tax reduction. I am interested in the budget office's answer to councilmember alter's question around, to her question around how we can keep to a similar reduction and what that level would be. But just looking at the message board and sitting here now, I wanted to type something up for illustrative purposes since budget is coming up. Everybody's priorities this year have lined up and are strong so I wanted to take a look at what \$20 million would look like and I've posted this on the message board. But, while still reducing property taxes for the average homeowner we could do \$3 million for parks, for both the child care programs listed by councilmember pool and grounds keeping and maintenance programs listed by councilmember Ellis.

[10:15:46 AM]

We could easily have \$3 million for some of the fire and EMS and mental health needs listed. The homeless strategy office, we have them coming up at about \$1 million for need but we could fund. They for all three years during the summit plan if we set aside \$3 million, \$1 million for each year worth of need. We will have an anti-displacement funding. The right to stay and right to return is important. We had some discussion today about the real important need to recognize and retain our staff. I appreciate what the manager has listed in the budget with the 2% and the stipend, by getting stipends for temp employees who are getting zero rate now and increasing the stipend for people who have been on the front line, scrubbing toilets and picking up trash and fixing power lines, doing something for them. We know that violence has increased in the city and we had

[10:16:46 AM]

presentation on ovp, we could add a million dollars there. A million dollars for community health workers in addition to the budget and as councilmember tovo just mentioned, community resiliency is so important and we could do multiyear funding, a million dollars towards that and not have this spread out over multiple years and that leaves 17 million that would still leave 3 million, I've heard folks talk about music venues and that with a put us at 20 million still, reducing the tax bill for the average homeowner. There is 23.3 million so where you're talking about 17 or 18 or \$20 million, you would still be reducing that bill while potentially meeting the needs on the message board for this year but meeting those needs over the course of the next two this isn't a propose AI but between the

[10:17:47 AM]

time of the meeting this morning and review my notes I think for illustration purposes many of the needs brought up by the community and councilmembers raised, we could get that done next week. I wanted to hand this out. Again, many of these are not things that I support but were raised by creightons here and I've posted on the message board for those at home but there is a real ability for us to recognize and retain our staff, do something more for our staff while investing in parks, homelessness, ems, workforce first, community health workers, all the things people have raised.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Anything else on this issue?

>> Yes. So I do believe we have someone from code available to answer councilmember tovo's questions. If we can just get a moment to have them move over into the

[10:18:49 AM]

meeting.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay.

>> Mayor, when it is time, I have another question.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. I'll just mark as I decide one thing that I've suggested that we consider as we're in the -- you know, the place in the community now with respect to the covid virus and we're asking employers in the city to help. And certainly employers have the ability to require masking in their businesses. Employers have the ability to say we really only want people who are vaccinated to come. In we have tea also had conversations over the last couple weeks about additional incentives or incentives toward people that are getting vaccinated. When we talk about stipend for city employees, we can consider additional stipend that speaks to giving employees an incentive, if they get vaccinated. If we were going to offer that to employees that are to be vaccinated, maybe we also give it to employees that have been vaccinated because they've

[10:19:50 AM]

already stepped up so that's something, given the situation with available one-time funding, I would like you to think about or consider and colleagues, as well. Are we ready with code? If not, we will go to Ann and then come back to code.

>> Kitchen: I will be quick.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay.

>> Kitchen: Should I go ahead?

>> Mayor Adler: Go ahead, Ann.

>> Kitchen: So I'm going to bring this up because I plan to raise this during economic development discussion, so since that is not happening today, I need raise it for my colleagues. He will be putting an item on the message board related to, you know, related to the iconic venue fund. The council passed a resolution in December to fund the -- which put initial dollar into the iconic venue fund of 2.4 but then committed or directed the

[10:20:50 AM]

city manager to come up with a plan to fund additional amount over the next five years. There's no additional amount in our budget this time. This is one-team funds. I'm going to propose that we put some dollar amount. This is an example of something the council passed that has not been funded, so I just want to let everybody know that I was going to put that on the message board. I appreciate councilmember alter's question and city manager, when you bring back your response to that, I think it would be important you also look at items that the council has passed that directed funding that did not end up in the budget so we can see that list, also.

[10:21:52 AM]

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember Fuentes.

>> Fuentes: Thank you. I want to echo support four your comments around incentives for our workforce for those who have been vaccinated and those who haven't been vaccinated to take the shot. I also want to give a tonight in councilmember Casar's post, thank you, I appreciate your leadership. This is super helpful to have our priorities that we vocalized, wanting support for, laid out in this format, especially wanted to note that additional funding for live music and iconic venues in our creative second, I know we're not getting a presentation from the economic development department, but I believe we are still owed a memo memo on a resolution we passed in late may that called for

investment in our creative second up to 15 for creative arts, up to 10 million for the music and the memo is supposed to outline the different pathways of funding

[10:22:53 AM]

available at different levels of government, so I would like an outline on that before the end of the day. Getting back to this priority list, I want to echo support for it. I strongly support us considering these one-time uses to fund these priorities to meet the needs of our community so welcome further conversation on it.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. You'll let me know when code is available.

>> They are available whenever you're ready. Garrett has joined the meeting.

>> Mayor Adler: Let's go ahead and get to councilmember tovo's question.

>> Tovo: Thank you, mayor. I will ask those questions again while we're getting Elaine Garrett on the line. I want to say we have some additional, as we've all been talking about, we have some additional one-time funding that we did not know we had. It is -- I'm going to have to really mull over how quickly we spend it because we have some

[10:23:54 AM]

opportunities here to make some

-- to potentially make some sustainable change. We have an economic development corporation that potentially could use some of this as seed funding to actually acquire buildings that would help us sustain some of those live music venues and other spaces, other art spaces, over the long-term. We have, as well as potentially acquiring some structures for other kinds of uses we have. So I hope, it is a little hard on Tuesday knowing that we're going to be voting on this Wednesday to have the kind of thoughtful conversation around what we do with that additional one-time funding. I agree it certainly makes sense to fund the priorities councilmembers have identified but there is also the option of taking a little bit more time with some of it and coming back and doing that as a budget amendment. I want to throw out there I appreciate the continuing of the live music venue fund.

[10:24:56 AM]

I've also sponsored resolutions trying to assist this second and it is important. We had several areas that took hits when the hotel occupancy revenue dropped. One was historic preservation. I believe some of our city projects are on hold. It's also to some extent, well, to an extent, impaired our ability to be



success wonderful several acquisitions that have been priorities of this council for some time now. And that is not a conversation I want to have openly on the dais but it is a conversation relevant to this, if we're looking at how best to invest those one-time dollars. So just a few points to think about. My questions for code, miss Garrett, if you could address some of the intended increases, and these are covered on both

[10:25:56 AM]

page 233 of our budget book but also in, I have a couple question about the answers I received to question number 2 in the budget q&a. So perhaps first we could address the contractual increase so in budget question two, there is a contemplated 220,000-ish dollar increase proposed for contractals. You could explain what that's for, please.

>> Yes. Elaine Garrett with the Austin code department. The contractals that we are asking for relate to six positions that we're requesting and additional support for the repeat offender programs overtime budget. Our enterprise fund relies on revenues from the clean community fee so we to have to charge individual businesses through the utility building for

[10:26:56 AM]

this. This would inbe crease the rate to assist with compensating for the 220,000 disease that's requested.

-- \$22,000 that's requested.

>> Tovo: I'm sorry, I need drill into those details blitz. The specific \$220,000 worth of contractals are what, exactly.

>> The additional positions that would be supporting to the staff. What we did was, when we had increased our uniformed staff, our field staff, two years ago or a little bit over two years ago, it left us with having to compensate on the support system so we had temporary staff members working those positions and so now we're asking for that to be covered.

>> Tovo: I'm really sorry, I'm still not following. I'm looking at budget question number two there is a line for personnel, I assume a line for

[10:27:57 AM]

personnel that is almost a million dollars so I'm assuming that's where the additional staff are happening. Then, there is a allina for contractuals of 220. I'm working my way back to personnel but I wanted to start with the contractuals. Are you suggesting the 220 --

>> I'm sorry, I would have to consult with our finance to give you that answer.

>> Tovo: Okay that sounds good. Commodities are also increasing by about \$54,000. I'm interested to know what that increase is covering is proposed to cover. The same with the non-cip capital, that's increasing about \$103,000 from 84,000 to 197, so that's quite an increase and I would like to understand that. And, then, it sounds as if we might need more, we might need some additional staff to answer those questions, but perhaps you

[10:28:58 AM]

could address the proposed \$1 million increase in personnel costs, please.

>> And I'm sorry, ma'am, you could repeat which one we're talking about? Which number was it?

>> Tovo: Sure, it's budget question number two. So when we get some financial staff from Austin code, I would like to ask them to address contractuals, commodities and the capital increases that are proposed.

>> Okay.

>> Tovo: But if you could please address the almost \$1 million worth of increased personnel that are proposed. Is it just for six positions? I noticed in the budget page, it's an increase of six positions and again, almost a million dollars so that equivalent six positions?

>> Yes, six positions and one was a request for the additional overtime money for the repeat

[10:30:00 AM]

offender program.

>> Tovo: So I would be interested in how that breaks down. How much of that almost 1 million is overtime dollars and how much of it equates to the ftes, I might be able to figure that out from the budget itself.

>> I really -- I'm sorry I'm not able to answer some of your questions.

>> Tovo: That's okay. You could just address the general -- from a general perspective, could you address why we're adding why you're requesting, I should say, six ING adecisional ftes. If you could also address the hours for our code officers because we have had, as I was mentioning before you were on the call, I have received feed pack from constituents and some I hear are not my constituents

[10:31:01 AM]

but they are experiencing a situation where the code officers are not available to respond in the evenings and on the weekends when actually the code violations are happening. You could give us an update on what our code officer hours are and why you're proposing the increase of six.

>> Mayor Adler: Ed, were you trying to speak?

>> I was just going to offer, I think Elaine can respond to the question about what the six new code officers would do, but I was going to suggest that staff could post a revised response to budget question number two. I think we can quickly provide all those details, perhaps even by the end of the day. I can tell you for the personnel line item, six positions, overtime, pay, benefits, including the proposed wage increase and one-time stipend that would all be in the labor item but we would be happy to break out those details and get that budget question reposted today.

>> Tovo: Ed, appreciate that.

[10:32:02 AM]

I definitely, as you described it, thing that works to have the personnel ftes separated out from the over time but I would like that to be paired with a written response to the hours. I'm not sure if we're paying over time for things, having that as a contingency for things, the code, so many of our other staff employees incurred over time charges or why the overtime is skyrocketing for those evening and weekend hours. If she can respond.

>> Mayor Adler: I'm going to need step off the dais. He was going to give the chair to the mayor pro tem shelf suggested sense this is a hybrid meeting councilmember alter would take the helm, which is fine by me so councilmember

[10:33:03 AM]

alter, if you would take that over, I'll be right back.

>> Sure. Councilmember tovo, were you finished?

>> Tovo: I was just waiting for a response.

>> Mayor Adler: Mayor pro tem, you did want to say something? Okay, thanks.

>> I didn't want to interrupt but I have an additional question along the lines of what councilmember tovo is asking so if I could just be considered after.

>> Sure.

>> Thank you, councilmember alter.

>> So in response to the six positions, really five of the six positions are not scheduled to be part of -- they're supports positions, not field positions. What happened, as I said, when we increased the field positions, I believe it was in 2017, we had to hire temporary positions to assist with the administrative portion of the

[10:34:04 AM]

work that we intaked, that was intaked. So this proposal has one field position included into this. The over time is for the repeat offender program that needed additional funds to assist with them to be able to work extended hours or extended into sometimes weekends or after hours. The hours of the staff vary. They do run 7:00 A.M. To 4:00 P.M. We do have an extended hours team that works until 8:00 P.M., and then of course the short-term rental team that has a different set of hours.

>> Tovo: I'm interested in knowing exactly what the short-term rental hours are and I'm really concerned that we have code that we have set a standard where our code officers who need to be available in some cases in the evenings, because many people know when the code

[10:35:05 AM]

officers stop, right, and so that's one of the reasons why we have some of those code violations happening in the evenings. People cutting down trees or doing other kinds of things after the code hours. And I don't -- I'm not sure why that is not being handled through scheduling verses through overtime so I need to understand better the dollars being allocated to the -- the dollars that are being allocated to over time, as indicated, but also the number of positions we have in each of these areas. The number of field officers we have and their hours, by program. The number of overtime dollars this information, I guess I need an answer as to why we have scheduled code officers for hours where those violations aren't always happening and are rely on overtime cover those

[10:36:08 AM]

hours where we really need them. As we continue to put more and more and more funding into our code department and add more and more officers, I had assumed, and maybe I was the only one, but I had really assumed we will doing so to get more coverage. If business back to the earlier counsel deliberations I'm pretty sure we had that conversation on the dais, coverage on evenings and weekends and the additional staff was supposed to handle that. I'm going -- handle that. I'm going to have to

understand this is the right approach before we have a 50 cent increase for everyone who has a utility accounts budget, given some of the challenges I'm raising and some of the choices that I think are making this necessary.

[10:37:10 AM]

I will do my best to come up with some of those question bus you could raise the ones I've raised here as q&a questions that would be super helpful. Thank you.

>> Yes, ma'am.

>> Alter: Thank you for those important questions.

>> I would like to say as an additional member, folks that paid attention to what I raised about code uniforms, the cost of uniforms, and so I would like very much to know, along the lines of what -- excuse me, you guys, I'm sorry. Councilmember tovo is asking, I would like very much to nose know if there's some particular information around may uniform questions as we are discussing this additional measure of investment. So if we can just add that to

[10:38:11 AM]

the list, that would be great. Thank you.

>> Alter: May, councilmember pro tem. Councilmember Fuentes.

>> Fuentes: Thank you. Councilmember tovo, thank you for your question. I want to make sure I'm following here. I brought forward a resolution related to code winter storm and part of the memo we received back from staff included the dedication of more personnel to serve as community service coordinators to ensure that we increase our staff capacity to be able to handle an increase call volume, especially during times of emergency and to help individuals navigate tenant resources and assistance and we're happy to see this included in the proposed budget. He I wanted to ask councilmember tovo, we need additional staff

[10:39:12 AM]

included in Austin code or is your line of questions more towards having the right personnel or the right type of roles in the department?

>> I'm really trying to understand how we're using our existing resources before we add to them. You know, I'm looking and seeing a department that just in the years I've been watching it has increased

tremendously. And now has 151 officers. What I think I'm hearing is when we want them to work over time and weekends, largely that is being handled through overtime than scheduling. I have also sponsored resolutions, several, including one that really did some of the same work that yours did in asking our staff to really look carefully at how we respond to sub standard housing issues and repeat offenders and some of the

[10:40:13 AM]

other issues we know are of concern for our constituents and I don't understand with 150 officers we dome already have that capacity so thank you for asking that question. I think it's really important to clarify that the work that needs to be done by Austin code is critical. I've stood outside an apartment where the balconies had collapsed and saw the families trying to figure out where they were going to sleep that night and how their kids were going to get to school and have personally done some work on this dais to advertise to to try to make sure we were doing our work but I'm not understanding why, with this budget and this personnel, we aren't able to cover those areas. Because those are the reasons year after year that we've added to their budget, to address the issue of the need for repeat -- to support our repeat offender

[10:41:13 AM]

program, to support our renters who may be in unsafe situations, to support our short-term rental program so those should be the areas where we've shored up the spore year support year after year. Does that help? I hope that was clear.

>> Yes, no, that was definitely helpful and I'm glad we both are champions in this area and continue the collaborative work together. Certainly, I echo councilmember tovo's concerns that she has raised and would love to hear from staff on the need that we have and just to make sure that we're doing the best that we can with the resources we have and wand to be mindful of any new additions, if it is a critical need. Certainly during the winter storm, hearing from tenants and residents alike and also

[10:42:14 AM]

visiting apartment complexes in the direct, I've seen first hand the impact that happens during times of disaster. So, staff shared with me that they united increased support, so I would welcome a further conversation on learning more about the needs and to get to councilmember tovo's questions that she raised, so I look forward to those responses, as well.

>> Thank you, councilmember Fuentes. Are there any other comments on this section? I have one that I wanted to just make. First of awful, I wanted to second councilmember kitchen's request to see what

we've already funded or requested in ifcs that we're not able to fund things that might be one-time funding. I want to thank councilmember Casar for putting together this illustration but I want to say we still haven't figured out what

[10:43:17 AM]

the pot of money is and we feel comfortable putting forward. To think about one-time funding, we haven't heard from the city manager if there are one-time expenses that would help us smooth our financial challenges and structural deficit in time, over ways, and it is important for us to take into conversation. As we approach none we have many, many outstanding q&a questions, which is understandable at this point in time, but I would be hesitant to say what we are funding and what we are taxing folks at this point in time when this is relatively new information and it is good information but it's

-- and positive information, but there is a host of questions and that's an interesting illustration but I think there is a lot we as a council need to answer as think about active we move forward.

[10:44:22 AM]

>> On the budget forecast we listed the unfunded resolutions but we will update that based on this conversation and put that into the q&a.

>> Thank you.

>> If there are no other questions --

>> I have a question.

>> Thank you for calling it out for me. Councilmember kitchen.

>> Sorry, I didn't know if you could see me.

>> I couldn't, so thank you.

>> City manager, I think you just said that but I want to be sure. If you don't mind resending out that list that would be helpful. The list you just referenced in terms of items you had passed that weren't funded yet, that would be helpful. And then just another housekeeping question, I apologize, I should know this. But the format for our budget direction and budget amendments, I had thought that the budget office had sent that out and I'm not seeing it. So is there a particular format

[10:45:22 AM]

that we are to be using with our amendments and direction?

>> Yes, ma'am. We sent an e-mail with the actual amendment document included, but we can get that sent out again if you need us to. We can get that tonight your office.

>> Kitchen: Aapologize, I can't find it. The relates question there is, can you explain to the public what will be done with those in terms of where the public can see them all? I know your request for was us to submit those and we will all be sunshine missing them and we are all posting on the message board but the actual amendments we're submit to your office, will those be posted some place for the public to see?

>> Yes what we will do is when those amendments are submitted to the budget office, we will compile them by district and then provide that information to

[10:46:24 AM]

the council prior to the budget readings on Wednesday.

>> Okay. And then, finally, I would say I do want to say that I appreciate your efforts, councilmember Casar, putting together that illustration. We're at the point in the budget cycle we're starting to kind of come together and understand what people's interests are and putting it on a list like that is helpful, so thank you.

>> We're ready to go to the next topic.

>> Thank you. Great. If you can pull up the slides again, the next department would be the parks and recreation department responding to the Austin parks foundation recommendations.

[10:47:37 AM]

>> George councilmember. It just took a moment for me to move over. As point of clarification, please know that the Austin parks foundation have sub mitted different things they wanted to advocate for. Of this specific proposal you were interested in hearing about, please note there were a number of items that have already been budgeted through the manager's budget proposal and in forms that are allowing us to fulfill some of their advocacy requests. Next slide. These are some specific things us asked us about. One question is a park ranger program. By way of a history, please note I think park rangers have been

[10:48:37 AM]



top of mind for many individuals because they are the individuals that help us patrol the park system, provide interpreting information with flora and fauna so individuals dedicated to help us address things associated with individuals experiencing homelessness. This particular proposal you see in front of that you the parks foundation advocated for is specific to what we are calling a trail side park ranger expansion is it means it would be individuals to be part of a unit, two separate units that would help us patrol parks and seek voluntary compliance and help individuals understand how to safely and appropriately use the park system so we're talking about things like how to use our trail system in a way that people leave no trace and that the trails are utilized safely for everyone. It's dogs on leash, it's being able to help people understand why smoking is not appropriate, where parking is appropriate.

[10:49:38 AM]

And when able to provide some educational opportunity being about things that are happening within the park system. That includes funding for 12 ftes, that is inclusive of a supervisory staff person which would be needed in this particular situation in order for us not to extend the span of control too far. And then one-time funding. Please let me just tell you, I got a little clue you are interested in some of the details so when we talk about the on going funding, we're talking about approximately 400 and -- I beg your pardon. 847,000,932 -- no. Yeah, \$847,932, and that is for over time, uniform updates, office supplies, educational supplies and it also included \$200,000 for a temporary staffing so we can staff up at teams our park system is used heavily. And then it also includes

[10:50:41 AM]

\$490,000, which would just be one-time funding and that is associated with vehicles, radios that allow us to have communication, bikes, the initial set of uniforms, computers and safety supplies. The initial set of safety supplies. Just so that you know why this is important is because we have

-- or why it is important to our advocates is there is 21 ranger right now that cover approximately 300 parks in approximately 17,000 acres of land. I wanted to you to know the number of parks we have is ever-evolving as we bring new -- we acquire new land and bring new spaces online. Ability second thing that our advocates contacted you about was a park development services position, and this position is to help us, a technician that would help us with drafting different things that support projects within our system related to building renovations

[10:51:43 AM]

and Ada accessibility, and it would reduce the reliance on consultants. 75% of the money would likely and salary for this person to be able to charge to the capital program, our cip program and the other 30,

about \$30,000, would be approximately for the general fund. I do want you to know that we have been able to, within the proposed budget, the city manager has been able to help the parks and recreation department reallocate fund so we could do things just like, this however we had to prioritize positions. While this one is important, I want you to know in the proposed budget there are other things the parks and recreation department prioritized as being the things we wanted to try to resolve this budget year so this is in addition to those that have already been submitted and are already in the proposed budget. Next slide, please.

[10:52:45 AM]

This is about the increase in after school programs. You all might remember, I believe this council had a conversation about after school programs and summer camp programs last year, and I apologize, we use the word out of school team programming, so when we talk about out of school time programming we're talking about after school programs and summer camp programs. So the funding being requested here is for us to be able to expand programs at key locations where we know that we have physical capacity but we've lacked the financial capacity to be able to increase the programming. We know that we have an increased demand because we believe that our program is a quality program and people are interested in participating. And we just didn't have the resources at this time to be able to expand beyond what we've already been -- a number of individuals that we've already been serving. So this isn't a new thing. I don't think the council, this is new to the council, this is something you all have heard about probably for the last few

[10:53:46 AM]

years. And this is just a reiteration of that continued, our advocacy for this particular program. Next slide. Operations and maintenance is another item that I don't believe that is new to you. This is something you probably hear about our advocates come to you on an annual basis and talk about operations and maintenance would cover 7.5 ftes. The reason I believe our advocates are interested in having something considered this year for additional funding outside of what the proposed budget provided to operations and maintenance was just because we have 107 acres of parkland that we're scheduled to acquire in the future and we also have renovating through the 2018 bond program, we've been renovating a number of buildings and a number of spaces have been developed that we want to be able to -- we

[10:54:46 AM]

will be able to continue to take care of those by having the Abe decisional ftes, certainly make that work a little bit easier and will also help us meet the expectations and respond to things more quickly than

perhaps we're responding right now. You will see there is a list of different projects and programs coming onboard our advocates are aware and make them particularly interested in advocating for and bringing this particular proposal forward. And, with that, I am happy to answer any questions.

>> Alter: Colleagues, any questions?

>> I've got a few.

>> Councilmember Ellis.

>> Ellis: Thank you for recognizing people really appreciate that update, director.

>> Councilmember Ellis, can you speak up a little bit, fleece it is a little hard to hear you.

>> Thank you, is that better?

>> Alter: Much better, thank

[10:55:47 AM]

you.

>> Ellis: Great. I really appreciate you going through this presentation with us. I did have a few questions just because I'm trying to understand which of these items are already included in the city manager's proposal and which ones are additional. My understanding is the cad technician is not included, but I do know some of the capital improvements projects are so I'm still trying to understand which ones are.

>> None of these proposals that are here are currently included in the current budget. I ails apologize if I caused confuse. The point I was making in the beginning of the presentation is you probably received a list of offered a very cassie of those advocacy items, they've been included. If we're looking specifically at the budget, number 37 in the

[10:56:48 AM]

slide deck that talks about operations and maintenance, we were simply trying to help the council understand why the advocates may have brought forward the increase is because of these projects that are being completed and brought on board. I apologize for the miscommunication.

>> Ellis: That's all right there are quite a few details in here so I appreciate you running through these. I asked budget office Llanes submit into the official q&a some of the capital improvements projects. It is hard for me to tell, based on the list I'm working on and the wade it's listed in the budget if some of these projects are the same. There's some that may be for the same recreation center and it is hard for me to tell if what is being asked for here is the seam as what is in your five-year plan or if there is additional work that needs to be done we need to identify.

[10:57:49 AM]

Do you have an idea on this list which of those --

>> So in this list, we're not asking for any -- this list is not asking for any additional funding for cip. This is specifically asking for on going funding that would help to maintain and/or operate those things brute brought on board. If there are specific questions about cip, we're happy to take that answer and we did answer before, perhaps we could expand on it or providing details, we will get often that right away and get those anticipates to you. There is nothing this -- those answers to you. There is nothing being brought forward that has anything to do with cip, it is simply a listing of the cip projects being brought onboard which then prompted our advocates to think about why they would want us to have more facility ISES and maintenance folks available.

[10:58:52 AM]

I think those are two different questions. Happy teen the cip questions but that is not part of this presentation. Value the funding parks has, none of that is reflected in the cip plan.

>> Are you talking about the presentation I just -- talking about the piece of paper the Austin parks foundation provided you. I think we might be talking about two different documents.

>> Ellis: I'm talking about the parks foundation recommendation.

>> If you could just give me one second, I will find that piece of paper and specifically let you know the items in that particular document that are taken

>> One of those things was the restroom rehabilitation, it is included. Another thing was the turner Roberts annex route that was a cip and we are investigating that. It was not in the fy2022 budget because we don't know that it needs to be because we're investigating

[10:59:52 AM]

particular funding sources, not associated with cip. Another part of that conversation that was specific to cip was ball field maintenance, that has been included in the manager's proposal. Another is court resurfacing that has been included in the manager's proposal. I'm only reading to you the cip-funded projects. Another cip-funded project was school funding equipment and furnishing replacement and court resurfacing and that's for our school park relationship with aid that has been selected and is part of the '22 -- the manager's fy222 budget. Another is the millennium youth entertain am complex for the roof and the hvac replacement which is a total of approximately \$750,000. That has been included in the

manager's proposal. And last but not least -- that was last but not least, there are no other cip projects that they have listed. So of the number that they

[11:00:54 AM]

listed, there was only one that was not included and it wasn't included because the parks and recreation department believes it has another opportunity to be able to look at that -- at making that repair.

>> Okay, that's really great. I'm grateful to you for going through that with me. I have one other question and that is just about some of the unexpected damages through winter storm uri. I know there is quite a few pools that you're working through trying to get those repaired. Can you tell me the 1259 us status of those or if this needs to be in the q&a to have a more detailed answer? I'm curious just to make sure you have the resources you need given that that was unexpected on many levels. We want to make sure you have the tools and resources you into Ed to get those back online in a timely fashion. Do you have any idea of the scope and cost of working through those repairs?

>> To be able to give thank you specifics of the scope and cost, I will need a

[11:01:55 AM]

little more time to be able to find that for you. But what I can assure you and the rest of the council is that we have sufficient funding to be able to address those. Our repair issues this year were not about not having sufficient be funding, it was about supply chain issues. It was about having available contractors for specialty repairs. It was about lead and a bests to abatement and the supply chain or the availability of individuals who -- lots of individuals who are come pelting for those exacts same services and so therefore it was how we were lining up in the prioritization of getting those things done. So we do have -- I want to assure everybody we do have sufficient funding. The issues were more about supply chain or more about availability of contractors and then lead and asbestos testing.

>> Okay, that's helpful. Thank you. I really hope these extra items that we can find a way to appropriate the dollars to make some of these other things happen.

[11:02:55 AM]

I know we all know and love our park system very much and you and your teamwork extremely hard to make these spaces great for everyone. So we want to make sure we take care of that for you. We obviously have funding through parkland dedication and we want too make sure these spaces can be expanded and programmed and available for people all across town.

>> Thank you.

>> Alter: Thank you. Sow council member Kelley. Council member pool, mayor pro tem.

>> Thank you, and thank you for that informative presentation. I did have a question on one of your slides you had mentioned that there is an increasing demand for summer camp attendance. I think that's great. Our systems need to be utilized more. My question was related to how staff was measuring that increase over what time, and if covid from last year may be a factor and the reason for the increase now? Thank you.

[11:03:56 AM]

>> So, council member Kelly, I could absolutely provide you some very specific statistics which I don't have in front of me, but in general, we have -- we keep track of waiting lists for each year. So we understand year over year how many individuals are on a waiting list that are unable to make it into a particular camp due to the fact that we have more of a demand than we do have available slots. So I don't have that sitting in front of me, but I can absolutely make that available to you, and we can give you year over year probably for the last three years at a minimum. So that's how we know that we're in demand. And the second question about covid is that admittedly this year we were not able to take as many children into our program for summer camp based upon our covid protocols and working with aph and making sure we were providing a safe and healthy environment to offer summer camp that was consistent with the CDC

[11:04:57 AM]

and the public health department. However, we're going to take this as an anomaly this year and the figures and information I would provide you would be for regular years and not for this particular covid year.

>> Kelly: Thank you so much for collaring that. I would be interested in seeing the documents and looking at the numbers as a whole. Thank you again.

>> Alter: Council member pool.

>> Pool: Thanks, and thanks director Mcneely for all the additional information. I wanted to ask a question about an item that I had been interested in seeing the parks department acquire in the past, and that was the equipment that would read chlorine levels remotely and allow them to be adjusted. Can you catch me up on the status have that? I just can't remember where we left it back in 2019.

>> Council member, I will have to -- the answer to that question is that we do have those systems in certain swimming pools, but

[11:05:59 AM]

I cannot tell you exactly which swimming pools, and I won't be able to tell you the exact number. So if you'll allow me to provide you that information in the future, I'll be happy to do that. I have just written that down to give that you detail.

>> Pool: That's great. And you can share it with everybody. Maybe give us a report on the acquisition of the equipment, how it's performing, whether it has had -- what kind of impacts it's had across the board and whether if it's working whether that's something we can expand. I appreciate the 1.2 million for added child care capacity at the city recreation centers, the out of school time. I'm bringing that as one of my budget riders as well, so I think -- I just wanted to make sure that that is the same item that we're both talking about, is that right?

>> To my knowledge, the answer is yes, that your budget rider is consistent or at least what you've communicated to me is consistent with this

[11:07:00 AM]

particular advocacy ask.

>> Pool: Right. Yeah, from the parks foundation. Thank you for bringing that also. I also wanted to draw everybody's attention to the additional need of six vans in order to move the students around the city and that, I think we had talked with you and Ms. Lang about using certificates of obligation for that purchase. The 300,000. And these items are on this kind of gray colored sheet of paper that I passed out on the dais, but it is also up on the message board, both of my riders are posted up there if anybody wants to pull those up. So the certificates of obligation.

>> If I am correct it will be contractual obligations.

>> KO's, thought co's. Great. I wanted to make sure that everybody understands if we buy those vans, we actually end up saving money because the rental on them exceeds

[11:08:00 AM]

the 300,000 after just like two to two and a half years. So we would be well ahead of the game if we were able to purchase those. So looking forward to that. And then I'll also draw everybody's attention to the four specific rec centers that in my mind would see the uptick in child care capacity. It's Delores Duffy rec center in district 1, the Turner Roberts center in district 1. Dove Springs center in district 2 and the rec center in district 4. We had this last year and expanded the program in those areas and it has been super successful and in retrospect given the pandemic I think it was a really wise investment for

the council in the past. And then the last thing I would just point to the last bullet on this page, it talks about the learning loss that we're seeing in our students and it will be

[11:09:01 AM]

pernicious I think and expand across the board and anything and everything we can do along these lines to help stave that off and restore the learning capacity for our students will really pay massive dividends in the future. So thank you, everybody, for your support on this particular rider. And thank you, director Mcneely.

>> Council member pool, this is an amendment, not a rider, correct?

>> Pool: I'm using the terms interchangeably, but yes.

>> Alter: Just for new colleagues so we don't add additional confusion to a confusing process. I just wanted to clarify. Thank you so much. Was mayor pro tem I think was next and then council member Fuentes.

>> Harper-madison: Turns out council member pool said half of the things that I was interested in saying. The two things that I'd like to add are, number one, where is the opportunity for hour economic development cooperation -- I still don't

[11:10:04 AM]

quite understand like how the mechanism works. How do people contribute money to and how can it benefit some of these pard opportunities. I still don't quite get it. And honestly, I don't think my constituents get it either because there are people who are like, hey, I would like very much to, by way of my altruistic pursuits, I would love to contribute, but I wanted to go to this specific thing. In which case I would like director Mcneely, if you can help me with that. Then I'd just like to say thank you, by the way, for this last couple of months you and I have had to have a lot of conversations, and I just really, really appreciate you and your staff being so attentive. But that part is a question I have, and then once we get

[11:11:04 AM]

through that part, then I have an additional question.

>> So mayor pro tem, I'm unable to answer specifically about the EdD corporation, but -- and the budget office may be able to add a little bit to what I'm about to say, but there is a mechanism that we have in the past called trust in agency and we may call it a different name, and that is the ability for a



department to take a donation, place it into our budget as a donation and earmark it for a very specific purchase. And then, therefore, be able to offer either a program or be able to offer -- buy something like by way of example, something that council member pool mentioned, a vehicle, right, something of that nature. I'm going to talk up -- I assume you can hear me. One -- if we don't receive a donation of equal amount in the following year, then we would have to then

[11:12:05 AM]

further -- we would have to -- we would increase our program and unfortunately we would reduce our program. If that money was not available the following year, then it just becomes -- so usually when we have trust in agency, we do purchase things that individuals are saying are important to them, but we usually do them as one time purchases as to not increase expectations and then unfortunately decrease them the following year. So I hope that answers your Q uestion and I also give it up to the budget office if they would like to provide any additional information or if I misspoke about trust in agency.

>> And if I may real quick, just to make sure that I'm being real clear. So, for example, the millennium, there are people who recognize like this is one of the last vestiges of old black Austin. Like this is one of our last things. We have to make the investment and do what needs to be done from an infrastructure perspective. So there are people who are saying, hey, I'll give you money, but how do I do it?

[11:13:07 AM]

You know, council member pool mentioned turner Roberts. Like there are people who would like to make investments, personal, private philanthropic dollars investments, but I don't know how to tell them to do it.

>> So the trust in agency, again, I'm going to give it up to our budget office. That is a mechanism. When we're talking about the millennium, there is a little bit of a difference, right, because we do have a local government corporation -- I'm sorry, a community development corporation and actually the chair, Courtney Robinson -- Dr. Courtney Robinson and myself are actually talking through how can donations be accepted and so we're looking at the opportunity of creating or reestablishing a 501(c)(3) As part of that community development corporation. And we're working with the law department and we are halfway through that process, but we continue those conversations. In the meantime, it's the other mechanism that I believe I explained, but the millennium may have a

[11:14:08 AM]

different option in the future as we work through that process.

>> Council member, chief financial officer, the only thing I would add to that is the Austin economic development corporation is getting stood up. The new board is meeting regularly. Recruitment for key staff are currently underway and so absolutely anticipate that in the near future the Austin economic development corporation, likewise, will be an opportunity for public/private partnerships and for people to donate funds to that agency and support of specific initiatives across the city. But everything director Mcneely said about trust in agency accounts is accurate. We can certainly follow up with your office if you have folks that are interested in donating to parks, we'd be happy to get it set up so we can accept their funds.

>> Alter: Thank you. Mayor pro tem, if I can also just add the Austin parks foundation has many, many friends of particular parks

[11:15:08 AM]

or centers that do raise funds. That's a good option if someone wants to donate a smaller amount where a trust in agency approach might not make sense. We're very fortunate to have an organization like the parks foundation that facilitates groups that want to raise money for a particular project in a park. They work very closely in turn with our city staff in the parks department so that is another route that's already set up for many opportunities and if anyone is trying to raise money for a particular group, that is another way to do it if you're going to be looking at smaller donations. Council member Fuentes.

>> Fuentes: Thank you. Director Mcneely, thank you for -- colleagues, I asked a question on our q&a regarding the cip spending plan for the health environment portion. And I just wanted to make sure that I am reading this right and also understanding

[11:16:09 AM]

this spending framework and the overall view of the parks department budget for this upcoming year. So of the 32.5 million that's dedicated to the planned health and environment cip, there is not a single district 2 park listed out of the 50 projects that have been identified for cip funding from the parks & rec department. And then per your presentation, when it comes to the operations and maintenance budget, it also does not have a d-2 park identified for land acquisition for this budget. So I just want to know -- I'm just unclear if the investments in parks in d-2 or another part of the budget or if you could speak to the disparity in investments.

>> Yes, so council members, please know I'm going to need to look over at a different screen. So you're going to see the

[11:17:09 AM]

side of my face because I have all that information calculated or put somewhere else and I just need to read my computer screen. So council member Fuentes, we sent the answer to this question over I believe yesterday. So you probably have not yet to receive that. But the first thing that it talks about is that parkland acquisitions are not part of the cip budget. And so pard continues to acquire landed and infill parks that a connections to green belts along d2. Recent investments in 2020, 2021 and Williamson creek green belt, the brook crest neighborhood park and the cooper neighborhood park. So both of those have just recently happened, one in 2020 and the other two in 2021. And then we are pursuing and looking at significant acquisitions along the Colorado river and Williamson creek. We don't typically talk about what we're negotiating or who we are talking with

[11:18:12 AM]

because that could -- that could impact the integrity of our acquisition. So it's not -- because we don't want to tell you, it's because we want to make sure if we're going to make a real estate investment, that we keep the integrity of that conversation. Also when we talk about new acquisitions that are coming through pld -- so the question -- the things that are in the budget that the manager brought forward are specific to the cip program; which is usually about the 2018 bond, but there is also pld money. So just please know that we acquire meadow Lee park in 2021 and vistas park in 2018 that was a later acquisition. And we're also injects on some other subdivisions which I'm happy you'll see that in the budget response, but those include east end park, Bradshaw crossing, Colton black and then parks within good night ranch and the [indiscernible]. So those are all things that

[11:19:13 AM]

are actively being considered. And then another part of your question was how about those investments -- how come we don't see any cip projects this year in the 2018 bond? So please know that we have an active project that's on board that's coming forward that you'll actually see in the Austin public health budget, and that is for the dove springs park and it's going to include a playscape and some field improvement, but it's not attributed to the parks and recreation department because it's about a project that's being built there. I know you're familiar with that. And then we're also investing in to dove springs bath house, that project has been delayed. It was to have been done this year, but it will be completed in the next few months, right, and it is for the back hafts dove springs recreation center. Other projects that have happened in dove springs -- I'm sorry -- in d-2, not in dove springs -- include the metro park, the rv bend that

[11:20:14 AM]

was completed in 2019 and 2020 we have the onion creek metro park, the dove springs recreation center expansion, the dove springs gym floor and hvac was replaced. In 2020. In 2019 we also had a neighborhood park that was redeveloped. We have the golf course that we're invest something funding in and then when we talk about school parks, please know that the Williams school button park has some investments in 2021 and the Williamson creek green belt in partnership with American youth works is being taken care of through clearing and -- was taken care of through clearing in 2021 that made that accessible. Also we have a spending plan that is including projects that are funded by partners. So they are in d-2. It's just that we're working with our partners to fund that. Armadillo nature park and Kendra page park and development and trail.

[11:21:15 AM]

I hope that provides you -- that's a lot, but it's all will be forwarded to you that will help you distinguish how investments have been made in d-2 in the past and what's happening now.

>> Super. Thank you, director. Having that kind of historical breakdown and also the timeline as well -- I realize, you know, now knowing that the cip is from the 2018 bond, that's helpful. Any other context you could provide, that wols be helpful because I want to be sure that I'm able to -- when I'm meeting with constituents, I can talk about how their tax money is being invested in this upcoming budget cycle as relates to parks. So I would appreciate that information. Thank you for that context.

>> You're very wu78.

Welcome. >> Alter: Any other questions? Council member tovo and then I have a question.

>> Tovo: Thank you, chair.

[11:22:17 AM]

Sorry, I got a little confused how to refer to you. Pool, thank you so much for your amendments or your intended amendments. I'm certainly supportive -- I have to look over exactly what they are -- but I want to talk about the out of school time amendment for a moment. In past budget cycles, we've been able to provide additional for some of our out of school programs, after school programs in particular that happen through some of our community partners at different school campuses. And I think that's important work and those are great programs and that's really an important need and it was especially an important need in those years where those programs were going to be cut and we knew students at those schools were not going to have that after school option were we not to come forward with that additional funding. I feel great about that work. I did always think about the fact that we haven't been adding money to our own parks programs in these past

[11:23:17 AM]

years. And so thank you for bringing forward that budget amendment as I indicated in my priorities, that's a priority to me to support. So you have my support and I'm glad to see it. And council member Kelly, I think that's a really good question to see how that -- how the pandemic has shifted things, but I just wanted to say anecdotally, you know, I am not the only parent in this town who has --

[indiscernible] Before we went to digital online registration through our city of Austin park system, it used to be awaiting system and when I got there at 8 in the morning outside the door of the art center, there would be a huge line of parents and we would wait in line sometimes for hours to try to get a slot. The programs at the city of Austin through our parks department are terrific. They are really well priced and they are just fun and very high quality programs. We have a lot to be proud of in terms of our out of school programming at the city of Austin from the Daugherty art center to the nature and science center to the free summer recreation

[11:24:17 AM]

programs that take place as well as the camps and they are really popular and they are huge waiting lists. The last time we tried to get in through the online one, one daughter got in and the other daughter was like 182 on the waiting list. So they have been hugely popular for years and I'm so glad we're going to continue to invest in them because you know for so many families in our community, camp programming and after school programming is a huge expense and our city programs provide a really good value and it's just an important -- a very important program that we can offer. Director Mcneely, I assume that we are still doing -- that we still have in place a system that provides different levels of cost for out of city residents who do not support these programs with their tax dollars as well as providing scholarships? And I just wanted you to confirm that those differential pricings are still in place, and if you could speak to

[11:25:18 AM]

prioritization of city residents over out of city residents, whether that -- I can't remember anymore. I know that we did -- we did make some changes, some policy changes as a council to the pricing structure, but I can't remember if city residents have a pry for the in terms of -- priority in terms of admission to those popular programs which is just about all of them.

>> You're absolutely right. There is a pricing differential. I'd have to look at the schedule. I don't have it. There is a pricing differential and when we you sign up for programs associated with after school and summer camp, first of all, we do not open summer camp to non-residents. We have -- let me rephrase that. We open up registration for residents at a certain point in time. We do not allow non-residents to register until after a designated amount of time that our city residents are able to.

[11:26:19 AM]

And we monitor that through addresses and we're able to put that into our system to help us distinguish the difference between someone who is in city versus someone who is out of city. And with regards to pricing structure, we already have a subsidized program and so I'm happy to share with the council at a different time, but many of you might remember we have a scale or a slide that we explained when a program is for the greater good of the community or a beginning level program, it is already highly subsidized by the department because we believe that that's important service to the community. And then on top of that, individuals who have free or reduced lunch are able to apply for scholarships and there is even other opportunities for the swim program and things like that. So I just want to let you know that the scholarship program is across the board and it's based upon free or reduced lunch. You don't have to sign up another application, you just have to be able to

[11:27:19 AM]

bring us the free or reduced lunch information. However, if you happen to be home schooled, we do have a mechanism by which individuals can apply and be able to be accepted into the scholarship program. The Austin parks foundation regularly contributes to that, and also you might -- if you are an ae customer, you might see on the ae bill that individuals are able to donate to that scholarship program and that money goes directly to be able to serve those kids. And we don't put a cap on our scholarships. We make it work. If somebody needs to be able to have additional subsidization to participate in our program, we figure out how to make it work.

>> That's really terrific and I think that's important word to get out to the community. Again, colleagues, this is an important area to increase our investments in and director Mcneely I appreciate you getting all of those changes in and reminding us about the prioritization. I had forgotten about the

[11:28:20 AM]

registration. So thank you for that. I suggest we had a conversation, but I think it preceded some of our colleagues -- our newer colleagues on the dais about the new site that the parks department rolled out recently. I'm not sure if it's new or really enhanced and it looks -- it allows members -- any members of the public to look at where the bond investments have been with regard to parkland, where there are parkland dedication fees and others, and manager and this is directed to the mayor, but I don't think he's back on the dais. I think it might be useful, some of us have had individual presentations with going through that website, but we've never had a full council conversation about it, about how it works and its features. And I'd like to suggest that once we get past budget, that that might be an appropriate work session briefing to just have a 20 minute presentation about how that site works and the amount of information that's

[11:29:21 AM]

available on it. It really is a good resource for the public.

>> That's a great suggestion, council member, and we'll work on scheduling that.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. I think that's a good idea, too.

>> Mayor, I was going to speak and then I'll hand it over to you.

>> Alter: I had two questions. First I really appreciate the advocacy of our Austin parks foundation. I came on council in part because I wanted to advocate for parks. So I really do appreciate their support in increasing resources to our parks. I did though want to ask director Mcneely if she had to choose among these, because we don't have ongoing funding for all of these from a department budget perspective where your priorities might be?

>> So this is like asking me which child do I love more? So I would have to say that

[11:30:24 AM]

if I'm pressed for this, after school and park rangers really are the top two. After school because of my love and my background of taking care of children as a preface my undergrad as a teacher. I think that's a great service to the community. Knowing that children have a place to be able to go and to be safe and to be mentored and we have a very quality program. I believe that we do. I would say that would be 1a and 1b would be our park ranger program because I recognize the use 6 of our system and that individuals -- the more and more that people use our system, the more and more that they take liberties in those uses and that it's impeding the enjoyment of others to be able to use a park system in a way that is conducive to relaxing recreation. And our park rangers are about voluntary compliance and they are about education

[11:31:24 AM]

and they are about being able to help people understand why it's important for them to use the space in a different way, and why it's environmentally important and why it's important socially and how it benefits the community as a whole. So I would put that as 1b. And then our maintenance. We can always use more maintenance folks to be able to help meet the expectations of how people want to see our parks. If you do take a look at the community survey, we do have pretty consistently response rates in the 70% for all of those things. So if you're asking me to choose which kid I love the best, I just gave you the top three in order.

>> Thank you. I know it's a difficult decision. We have a lot of parks needs and I would love for us to be able to fund all of them. I know on the maintenance, you know, we have fields that have big holes in them that people are twisting their an can also in.

[11:32:25 AM]

There are serious issues there on basic maintenance that I hope we can continue to make investments in addressing moving forward for the health of our community as well as our parks.

>> Alter: The second is a little bit more of a request to the city manager and the budget office. We had a conversation -- we had opportunity to go over the pard budget in detail with director Mcneely and I believe Ms. Lang you were there as well. One of the things we talked about is ways that we could improve the interface between the cip process and the maintenance needs for pard in the budget process. So we have a lot of things that are coming online that have been investing in with respect to our bond and our pld expenses, but the o&m pieces of that are not necessarily reflected fast enough within our regular budget. So our general practice has been if we bond purchase something, that we plan in our budget moving forward

[11:33:25 AM]

for the programming staff, for the operations and maintenance, I think that could be much improved for the parks department and that would relieve some of the tension and allow us to renovate and create these wonderful park amenities with the confidence that they will be maintained moving forward. So that I would ask that as you're looking ahead for the next budget, that you really think hard about how we improve that cip planning process particularly with respect to this department. I think there are many real opportunities for some improvement. That would really reflect the kind of investments that our community has asked us to make and voted to make in those bonds that we need to make sure that we are funding.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay, colleagues, you ready to let Diana lead on the next presentation? Let's see if we can get the presentation in before we break for lunch.

[11:34:26 AM]

We're going to stop -- hard stop at 11:55. There is a press conference that starts at noon to speak to [indiscernible]. So we'll stop at 11:55. We can make a decision right before that whether we want to do executive session and lunch together or whether we want to take a break and come back at 1, probably back out here to continue the budget conversation.



>> Did you say the press conference --

>> Mayor Adler: I'm sure any what did you say the press conference was on?

>> Mayor Adler: On risk charts. Risk levels. Austin public health. Press conference. Sorry.

>> Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Diana, you with us?

>> I am. Good afternoon. Mayor, mayor pro tem, council members, while we are bringing up the slides, I'll simply say that we'll be giving a quick overview of the current staffing

[11:35:28 AM]

levels of the homeless strategy division as well as what we are proposing for an adequate staffing pattern for the division. The coming year and I know there are other items that council may wish to discuss related to that. But the presentation itself will focus narrowly on the budget items. Go ahead and move to the next slide.

>> Mayor Adler: Please speak up.

>> All right. So can you hear me adequately now?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Excellent. So the fiscal year 22 proposed budget for the general fund is just over \$800,000. That is a slight change, but sit no change in the number of ftes for the division. At the division is currently equipped with six full time regular positions. We do have vacancies in those. The positions were left vacant until I joined the

[11:36:28 AM]

city in January. And so we've been going through some process around reclassification of the three vacant positions. One of those planner positions is currently posted and then we are still looking at potential reclassification of a planner senior position, and an administrative position which are vacant. While we have those vacancies, we also are working with temporary staff at present. And so we have a community engagement specialist, a public health program manager 1, who has come on board both to help us with heal and with the mobilization of the bridge shelters that we are currently have stood up and are standing up presently. We have -- I believe that is 3.5 fte's for the covid-19 response in the pro-lodges and the associated

[11:37:29 AM]

administrative support. That number has decreased significantly as we have consolidated the pro lodges but I'll also say that we now are pending the hire of about seven additional temporary fte's related to the bridge shelter. So that is a more fluid number that we can talk a little bit about temporary employees when I talk about the staffing pattern going forward. The public information function for the division has been historically handled through cpio. At present that is covered through one fte temporary position within cpio. And we'll talk a little bit about the potential -- what we are proposing is to transfer that function to within aph. Next slide. So we are proposing a total

[11:38:30 AM]

of seven new positions, and these are largely covering functions that are currently happening for the division. With temporary staff, but also really to adequately respond to the demands and needs of the city more broadly in terms of planning and strategy and program management. So of those three -- excuse me -- of the seven positions, the bottom section here is that communications and community engagement function that is so critical. We would be proposing to bring the public information specialist position within aph rather than sitting within cpio. And then both -- we have had a temporary community engagement specialist. She's done a fantastic job, but is now really absorbed in program work and I think in relation to many of the

[11:39:30 AM]

conversations we've had with council and community are proposing two additional -- or two permanent community engagement positions. That leaves four other positions, and they are split between essentially daily project management program delivery. So as an example, managing the heal initiative, coordinating daily with other city departments around clean ups, around needs for outreach, and issues as they may arise, and this division would also be responsible for did unit within the division for managing those temporary employees that I referred to previously. So when we need to mobilize on a project such as standing up the bridge shelter as we're doing now, these two positions would be charged with overseeing that staff and that process. Then we are asking for two positions which really would

[11:40:31 AM]

respond to the ongoing planning at a high level within the community as relates to initiatives like the summit, but also to the many requests from council and other departments for analysis and planning, thinking stray teg you cannily about how we as the city can sustain our effective services long-term and

ensuring the services we do provide are both effective and efficient. So the total cost -- loaded cost of those seven positions would be an additional \$842,000 per year. Then I think the final piece that I'll close with is that we are of course having this conversation in the context of the general fund budget for fiscal year 22. These positions could be covered via the American rescue plan act funds

[11:41:31 AM]

dedicated to homelessness, but wanted to respond to the request from council to talk about the overall staffing of the division and resource resourcing thereof. With that I'll pause and take any questions you have.

>> Mayor Adler: Colleagues, this is -- obviously this is the budget issues with respect to the homeless strategy office, but the conversation we can have on homelessness and the budget obviously extends beyond this to the other conversations that concern this. There were a lot of other issues associated with this than just this budget. Council member tovo.

>> Tovo: Mayor, I have a lot of questions, but I want to just be mindful of our time. Did you say we're breaking at 11:55? So is there -- can we -- we

[11:42:31 AM]

can have this conversation with Ms. Gray after we come back as well?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, when we come back this is where we'll begin again.

>> Tovo: So should we focus our conversation right now on just what we were presented? And then bridge beyond it?

>> Mayor Adler: It would be good. Two things would be in order right now, things talked about in this presentation would be fine. If you also wanted to daylight in particular an issue you wanted to talk about right after lunch, daylight them. We're not going to talk about those other issues until after lunch, but daylight it and that way Diane Al know they are coming and the council will know it's coming.

>> Tovo: It seems like most of the presentation talked about staffing and I don't have any questions about that. And my colleagues might. I'm going to defer my questions -- I do have questions I want to address after lunch about the relationship between the arpa funding and the general fund proposed expenditures. I'd like to talk more specifically about what elements of arpa funding have already been allocated.

[11:43:34 AM]

We are -- you noaa we have gotten some feedback about -- well, I just want to know how much you have already allocated from the arpa funding and then I want to talk, colleagues, about the different elements that several of us have brought forward. Mayor, you brought forward, you mentioned staffing. I know council member kitchen has worked on an amendment related to staffing. I have one about mental health resources and so if we could pencil in some time to talk about the allocations of arpa funding, how our budget amendments relate to that. Are we contemplating doing it through arpa funding or through general fund, and then I would like to reengage the conversation we had about general strategies and encampments. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Diana, you want to address the question of budget source for this? Since it relates to this.

>> Yes, although I want to make sure because as I understood council member

[11:44:34 AM]

tovo's question, her question about budget source was not only about staffing, but it was about generally services that we might contract out or deliver.

>> Tovo: That's right.

>> Do you want me to respond to the question around staffing or is that something we would discuss after lunch from your perspective, council member tovo?

>> Tovo: I would probably delay -- if it were up to me, I would delay that conversation about sources until after lunch and just right now -- focus right now on the staffing questions.

>> Mayor Adler: Let's hold on to that then. I do appreciate -- I know both you and council member kitchen and others expressed an interest to support and help with the staffing of this issue as well as those other items you mentioned, council member tovo, and I would want the opportunity to be able to join with you and other colleagues on that as well. Council member kitchen and then the mayor pro tem.

>> Kitchen: Yes, I'll keep my questions specifically to the presentation right now on the staffing. Thank you, mayor, I

[11:45:34 AM]

appreciate your posting on the message board in support of staffing and look forward to working together on that as well as with council member tovo and others. So specifically on this staffing question, is the -- I just want to make sure I'm understanding. So the current budget, is this funding in the current budget or not?

>> No, council member. We are at level funding in the current budget. So that first slide that shows the existing fte's is unchanged for fiscal year 22.

>> Kitchen: So what's in the current budget is the 806 -- or the 734? I'm sorry, I'm just wanting to clear.

>> I may need to pull the slide up.

>> Kitchen: The slide says six fte's.

[11:46:34 AM]

>> Correct.

>> Kitchen: That's in the current budget, right?

>> That's right.

>> Kitchen: And so what's being proposed is an additional seven?

>> That's accurate. And the 806,000 is simply a slight salary adjustment or change in costs related to the same fte's. But yes, the 840 plus is for an additional seven ftes.

>> Kitchen: Got you. And then does this account for taking your -- I know you had some temporary employees that we want to make permanent. Is that in the existing budget or does that need to occur as part of the seven fte's additional?

>> So the roles that are currently temporary that we would create permanent positions around would include the public information specialist, the community -- we have one community engagement specialist, and I would say we currently have a program

[11:47:36 AM]

manager 1 that is dedicated in part to supporting the heal initiative and we certainly feel that if we continue along both the lines of the heal initiative and similar, we need a permanent program manager on that front?

>> Kitchen: Okay. So, mayor, the rest of my questions I can wait until after lunch and just to surface what they'll be about, I do want to have the conversation about the source of funding and just to let y'all know I think it's very important that the funding for the homeless strategy officer be permanent over time and so I'm going to be inclined in existing budget et. And I also really, really appreciate the suggestion -- or not suggestion, proposal that the public information specialist in the homeless strategy office. I think that's really important. And then finally, more broadly speaking -- I know we have a number of things to talk about homelessness more broadly speaking -- I'm going to want to understand

[11:48:37 AM]

the timeline for talking about the next steps on the arpa funding and the budget related to that. And also I am -- depending on how we sus out these conversations, it is my intent to request that we now take the next steps or we begin the next steps on the phase II for the heal initiative, and so I'm going to want to understand if there is additional funding or what additional might need to happen, if there is anything additional that needs to happen to make that occur. You know, we've already shown quite a bit of success from the heal initiative and I just want to set us up so we don't have a gap between completing the four pilot locations and starting additional heal initiatives. So -- and then of course I want to hear the conversation that others have about the other aspects of homelessness that I know we want to discuss. So thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Mayor pro tem.

>> Harper-madison: Thank

[11:49:37 AM]

you. I think my colleagues really touched on everything that I otherwise would have said.

However, I will say this: I still -- like I expressed during the course of our committee meeting yesterday, I would like very much -- and I look forward to seeing what council member tovo is going to bring forward -- but I think us having a conversation around unsheltered homelessness that doesn't have a very distinct and robust conversation that is addressing the distinct nature of mental health issues as it pertains to unsheltered homelessness. I just -- I hope -- my soap that something gets produced and I'm looking forward to seeing what council member tovo is producing, but my hope is that we are fully

[11:50:38 AM]

prepared to have a bigger more robust conversation around that. So just wanted to put it out there. I know it's not necessarily a part of this budget conversation necessarily, but I wonder if it should be. So, yeah. That's all. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Council member pool.

>> Pool: Thanks, mayor. I wanted to point everybody to the second amendment that I passed out. This one would fund an additional staffing team, a crew, to help the other one's foundation in the good work they are doing with clean-ups and encampment clean ups, vegetative management and it's all under -- this is done throughout the city under the supervision of pard staff and the other one's foundation. So you will see on, again this is also for those virtual, it is up on the message board the second amendment for workforce first program for people

[11:51:38 AM]

experiencing homelessness. You will see that the funding that we received in the past from parks & rec, public health, watershed protection and Austin resource recovery will continue with the reel I am press I have added support from watershed protection this year. They are nearly doubling the amount of investment in this program and it comes out to an additional \$316,000 and a little bit of change. So I wanted to thank our staff for digging deep on that, recognizing the immensity of the need and their ability to help with rotating crews and also to the other one's foundation for their continued excellent service to our community. So this is the second -- I have two budget amendments and this is the second one I'm bringing. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay, thank you. Council member alter.

>> Alter: Thank you.

>> I have a question, too.

[11:52:39 AM]

>> Alter: I wanted to ask about what you're using the vacant money for right now? Is that funding the temporary positions?

>> That's accurate.

>> Alter: And then this proposal, combined with the vacancy would require you to hire 11 people on top of everything else that you're doing. How quickly would you be able to get those folks on board?

>> So the proposal would require us to hire I guess nine plus one that is in process. We certainly have some candidates among the team that has been working with us as temporary employees. And have been putting feelers out. We'll need some support, but I think this would be a huge priority and so my hope would be that we could -- if given the nod to move ahead with these positions, that we would be hiring out

[11:53:40 AM]

pretty consistently over the next three months.

>> So you think you'd be able to fill all of those 11 positions by October 1st or within that month? I'm just trying to understand if we need to budget for the full year for those positions or not. And you can tell me after --

>> I do. And if not -- again, we have temporaries in place who are utilizing some of our existing vacancy money. So we can provide an analysis of that if we need to, council member alter, but I believe we are positioned to move forward quickly. And with the arpa, depending on the source of funds, the arp is one time money.

>> So I would like to chime in a little bit. So the funding that would be available wouldn't available until October 1, the new fiscal year and so we would probably do three months beyond that in order to make sure that they were able to go through the hiring process, but we wouldn't

[11:54:41 AM]

even have the positions available until October 1.

>> Alter: Thank you. I like the proposal that we would have this over multiple years lining that up perhaps with our summit plan. But I appreciate the additional input. And then finally, just wanted to ask the city manager to help facilitate the reclassification process. I've spoken with several departments at various times when they had to deal with that process, it can take a really long time. This is the no. 1 priority for this council and I would like to see you help expedite that reclassification process for Ms. Gray so that she can get the folks hired that she needs to into the right positions to get the work done that we've committed to.

>> Cronk: Absolutely, council member.

>> Mayor Adler: I would just add to that, that if the need is there and if she is able to fill those positions, there is not a reason to rate for October because we can move on it. That would be great. All right, colleagues, it's 11:55 --

>> Mayor, I still have a question.

>> Mayor Adler: I'm sorry,

[11:55:41 AM]

go ahead council member Ellis of it's 11:55. Make it quick.

>> Ellis: I'll be fast. I did want to make sure we put a flag on the conversation around encampments that council member tovo had brought up. It's my understanding I believe that we had dedicated some arpa funding to do those and so I think the homeless strategy officer may need our policy direction and if we still want to appropriate that money and what that pathway would look like. I know a couple of us have voiced concerns over that process and that strategy as has city staff in previous years. So I want to make sure that we don't forget to have that conversation at some point soon. But I also just wanted to echo what my colleague, council member pool, was saying. We obviously know and love the other one's



foundation which has its roots in district 8 and I'm very excited to have led in previous years on the clean community fee work that

[11:56:42 AM]

resource recovery and watershed protection are doing, which works very much hand in hand with public health and parks & recreation's use of the other one's foundation workforce first as well. So I just wanted to echo my continued appreciation for everyone involved in that conversation as well. And just a reminder as we move into our lunch break, a couple of us want to travel to city hall. So I want to make sure we make sure we have time for to us get there and have lunch as well.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay, bring all those things up afterwards. Remind colleagues there was a presentation that Ms. Gray presented last week on some of these questions in case you want to take a look at that before we come back. We're going to begin again at one o'clock with Ms. Gray answering these questions. My question is do you want to break for lunch now and come back at 1 or do you want to try to double up lunch and executive session? I'm seeing no the answer to that. So here -- did you have questions before we break?

>> I just wanted council to

[11:57:44 AM]

know that I need to leave at 4:30 today. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Colleagues, at 11:57 we're going to recess the city council meeting. We'll be back here at one o'clock. See you then.

[12:25:23 PM]

>>> We know this because they worked last year to keep the infection rates in Austin much lower than the community at large. With the first day of school right around the corner, it's crucially important that students wear masks at school, especially in an elementary school where children are not yet eligible for vaccinations, this is in guidance with the American academy of pediatrics. Every parent, especially the parent of a school aged child has the right to insist that their child wear a mask at school. If we are live, this school

[12:26:23 PM]

should wear a mask, that will be honored, that child will wear a mask and have a great school year. Our goal is to protect our community's health. We need your help to do that. Get fully vaccinated, wear a mask, wash your hands, stay home if you are sick. We can do that, we have done it before and we need to protect our children.

>> At this time, we will turn it over to interim aph director Adrian Sturup.

>> Thank you, Matt, thank you, Dr. . For sharing all of that information. There isn't much more for me to add, but just to reinforce vaccination is the long game, the way we protect our children and how we establish our legacy,

[12:27:24 PM]

what did we do during the pandemic. The more people that are vaccinated the less likely that we will have to do with the variants. The way to protect ourselves from this surge is to get community compliance with the recommendations associated with stage 5. We can do this. We know how to be collectively responsible, we are our brother's keeper. Thank you.

>> Just to kind of wrap in a few items that I think are important, vaccine availability is in abundant supply. We have vaccine in lots of different locations, also public health has a lot of public vaccine available, also the Travis county collaborative, they are providing a lot of vaccine across the community. We also have mobile operations. If you are unable to leave your home or if you know someone who has limitations on getting to a vaccine site, we have vaccine

[12:28:26 PM]

available. And in addition, in addition to that, there are many, many providers. So if you are in HEB, if you are in a pharmacy, they've got vaccine. It's an opportunity to get a vaccine if you are doing your normal shopping, take that vaccine. Unfortunately, because of this surge, we also have to mobilize testing again. We are seeing lots of needs for testing and so Austin public health has -- has stood up two different testing sites. We also have mobile testing so if you are feeling ill and you need to you are considering getting tested we have those options available for you, please go ahead and get tested. We do want to advice, if you are sick or if you feel like you've been exposed to covid, it's important that you think about protecting all of the others around you and you stay home and follow those protective measures until you get the confirmatory whether or not the test was negative or positive and then follow the appropriate next steps to protect yourself and others. As they said and the Dr. Said we can get through

[12:29:26 PM]

this, the vaccine is our way out. This is an important time for us to really think about how we would protect ourselves, protect our family, our children, our mothers, our fathers, our grandparents, and the rest of our community. With that, I will open this up for questions.

>> Thank you very much, at this time, we will turn it over to our poll reporter from CBS Austin. Just as a reminder, we do have a hard stop at 1:00, if we do not answer your questions, please send them to the media in box after and we will get to those. Over to you.

>> Thank you. What I'm going to do, just for the other members of the press, I'm just going to go through everybody's first questions first and then I'll get to the second questions if I can. So let's start with KVUE news.

Her question is: Current projections show that icu patients in our area will spike to nearly 300 by the end of the month. How many staffed icu beds does our area have?

[12:30:27 PM]

Do we have enough beds to handle that potential surge but not enough staff?

>> [Indiscernible] Beds still available, staffed up and we -- we are working together in collaboration with our partners to make sure that we take the steps that are needed to have beds available to take care of our patients. Next question from Kut. Are you preparing alternate care sites given the possibility of hospitals and icus reaching capacity. What level of care can people with non-covid emergencies expect if

[12:31:28 PM]

non-icu units become -- basically are we looking at the field hospitals at the convention center like earlier in the pandemic.

>> At this point we have surge plans that include all of those options that have been asked about. And as the situation evolves, we will -- we will pull the plan that's -- that's appropriate to -- to -- to be a solution for that situation. But our -- our emergency management coordinators from the hospital systems, the county and the city and cat rac are minute by minute monitoring the situation and making and planning accordingly. Olivia Aldridge, are there efforts to help boost our icu capacity, why are hospitals experiencing these staffing shortages?

>> Yes. There are efforts to recruit more staff.

[12:32:29 PM]

These shortages are occurring because -- because our medical community has been responding to this crisis for the last 19 months and some people have -- have taken leave, some have retired, so -- so this is -- this has been a long road of response. And -- and we are making -- putting a call out to our medical society members who are retirees and asking them to step up to help in this situation. Once again we are having -- having a lot of people heeding that call [sound cutting out]. I'm confident that we as a community will get through this. But it's really important that our community does its part to be vaccinated and to wear masks and to take measures that will decrease

[12:33:30 PM]

the number of cases happening each day. We know if we do those things we can flatten this curve and we can get to the other side of it.

>> Nadia of eater Austin. Would the city attempt to pass a vaccination requirement for indoor dining/activities ala new York?

>> We're looking at all of the options that are available to us to help in this situation. Today we are asking our community to make that personal choice to be vaccinated. We are asking our business community to stand with us and encouraging and supporting [indiscernible] In that call to arms. Caitlynn of KXAN, will you be involved in approving permits for big events like acl and do you anticipate any changes in those

[12:34:31 PM]

processes?

>> Aph works closely with event organizers and historically has done so and the process will continue as always to address any issues with safety and preserving and protecting the public health and that will continue in this instance going forward as we -- we respond to this pandemic and move into stage 5.

>> Rudy of fox 7. Has the authority considered activating the reverse 911 call system [indiscernible]

[Sound cutting out] Vaccination and walkup locations?

>> We have used that -- that measure in other instances and we are still in -- in conversation about the frequency with which to do

[12:35:31 PM]

that. As you know, you lose the effect of something if you do it too frequently so we are assessing that situation and making some determinations on how to best utilize that service.

>> Heather Osborne with the Austin american-statesman: Dr. Walkes what do you recommend business owners do to help reduce the spread of covid-19 in the community. Should restaurants close up indoor dining, should shops require masks?

>> Absolutely requiring and recommending masks is what we would really ask that everybody in our community do. As to vaccinations, we are asking that -- that we -- that we urge our patrons and customers to be vaccinated. And businesses can make a personal or business decision to require

[12:36:33 PM]

vaccinations of their patrons and members and we would support those that do so.

>> Betty cross at -- nationally the 17 to 12-year-olds have the --

[indiscernible], how big is the gap between teens and older age groups.

>> I'm going to let either cassie or Adrian answer that question.

>> We do see that the total eligible population, which is at 12 year and older population were at a -- over 70% first dose and we're at about 63% second dose fully vaccinated. However, that -- that 12 to 17-year-old population is definitely trailing behind. We are seeing that they are right at about 50% getting that first dose. So this is an important time, particularly as they are planning to go into school, to -- to use this as

[12:37:36 PM]

an opportunity to get them vaccinated, so that they are protected. Also thinking about all of their other back to school vaccines, this is an important time to use this as an -- all of those things can be done at the same time. So as you are thinking about getting your back to school supplies ready, getting your school clothes ready, getting your masks ready, also thinking about getting that vaccine to those 12 to 17-year-olds.

>> Univision, what are local authorities doing to reach communities with low vaccination separates?

-- Vaccination rates, is door to door working?

>> We were -- we had the opportunity to be in the conversation this morning with -- with -- um -- the vaccine coordinator for the white house. What we are seeing nationally is that -- is that community based approaches are making incremental changes with great rewards.

[12:38:36 PM]

So while we're not at a point in the pandemic where we are seeing large numbers of folks or large numbers of vaccinations being recorded weekly, the measures that we are taking to ensure that our hard to reach populations have access in information to help them make good choices will be key. Travis county and constable George morales kind of started this charge with canvassing in areas in the eastern crescent and also public health is going to partner alongside them to augment those areas in the top zip codes that we've identified that need additional help and assistance.

>> Greg of Koop radio. Do you expect another -- and another surge caused by another and another mutation besides the lambda variety, there's also a Colombian

[12:39:36 PM]

strain now active in Florida?

>> It is possible that we will have another variant that arrives on the scene. But we can make that a different scenario. We can take steps right now to make it so that a variant of covid-19 is not able to infect someone in our population and for that variant and the infection in that person be spread to other people. The way we get that kind of herd immunity is by everyone that's unvaccinated or partially vaccinated going ahead and getting their full vaccination series or starting that vaccination series. That's the most important message of this. We have to get everybody vaccinated that's eligible for vaccine. And until we have vaccine availability for those children who are under the age of 12, we must wear a mask so that we can protect

[12:40:37 PM]

our children from becoming sick. And becoming severely ill requiring hospitalization.

>> Beth Sullivan from the Austin chronicle. How, if at all, does stage 5 of aph's covid-19 risk based guidelines inform the city's guidelines for large in-person events, whether they are indoors or outdoors?

>> The -- the guidance that we are providing is -- is essentially using what we know is going to be effective. At combating the spread between people. And that is social distancing, wearing a mask to prevent aerosolized infected particles from entering our respiratory tracts and vaccinations and our risk-based guidance

[12:41:38 PM]

takes into account what the risk is based upon the level of community transmission at any given stage and what is assumed as the -- as the density or the proximity that people have with one another. Based upon whether they are vaccinated, unvaccinated or -- or partially vaccinated. Or high risk in either of those categories.

>> My question, CBS Austin, what role did mass gatherings a month ago, like the fourth of July, play into the current surge?

>> At this point we are still evaluating the data. In surges past, there have been -- there's been a lot of spread that occurs actually in -- in settings that are not necessarily large gatherings.

[12:42:39 PM]

But in -- in settings where -- where people are meeting with people that they know and love. We've had clusters that have occurred in -- at birthday parties and we've had some clusters that have occurred in strength and conditioning camps and volleyball camps and so -- so it's -- it's hard to say that it's all because of any one thing, but it's a combination of all of those opportunities where people are gathering together and someone is infected and there's somebody that is able to be infected in the crowd of people that they are associating with.

>> We go back to KVUE news. The [indiscernible] Request for more hospital staffs to help with the surge, how many staff members are requested and how do you plan to to fund more staff?

[12:43:51 PM]

>> That is an ever-evolving consideration.

-- That is an ever-evolving conversation. While I do not have the statistics of the staff requested in front of me, from what I understand each hospital individually submitted their requests directly to the city, it is at the top of my of Dr. Walkes, myself, the leaders of this city to figure out how to support our hospitals, whether it be looking into ways to use the FEMA reimbursement process or availing the hospital partners to special contracted rates to make it more affordable for them. Right now we are looking at a variety of options to help support their needs.

>> From Kut, do you have any advice you would like to share with people planning to go shopping this tax-free weekend?

>> Being ahead.

>> I think we're -- go

[12:44:52 PM]

ahead.

>> I think we're going to say the same thing. Mask up, mask up. That's the best thing that you can do to keep yourself safe during this tax-free weekend.

>> From community impact, has there been progress to create more access to testing for the delta variant should people feel concerned about which strain of covid they might have?

>> So I'll jump in. We've expanded testing, the covid test is the -- there's very -- varieties of covid tests. That they are all are testing for whether or not you have covid. To get tested for delta -- for delta variant would not be any of the tests that are available in our community. You would have to -- you would get tested first and then -- then the process of identifying whether or not that's a delta strain or not is that whole separate process. So our message is, if you think that you have covid, get tested. The way that you would be treated, the way that your treatment process and the -- and the infection control

[12:45:53 PM]

measures that you would need to take on after the tests or before the tests if you think that you have covid are the same. And so our -- it's very important that if you think that you have covid, you need to get tested.

>> Should vaccinated austinites still dine indoors or should restaurants shut-down indoor spaces voluntarily?

>> Vaccinated austinites should consider their risk and assess where they are going to be in the indoor setting. They can make an assessment of whether or not an establishment is using best practices regarding covid mitigation with -- with distancing and availability of hand sanitizers, whether

[12:46:53 PM]

[indiscernible] Some establishments may be inquiring about vaccination status. All of these things would be ways that you can assess whether or not you're in a place where they are taking heed of what is being asked, which is that we do what we can to stop the spread of covid. The most -- the most -- the least risky scenario is going to be one where those things are taken into account and -- and ultimately if there's good ventilation, and -- outdoors, would be the -- if you are assessing ventilation, being outdoors is where ventilation would be best. However, if there are those measures being taken, in an indoor venue and you are fully vaccinated, wearing a mask except while eating and drinking, you can make that

[12:47:54 PM]



assessment on a personal basis.

>> Fox 7: Will the authority consider a door to door campaign to reach out to people in areas where low vaccination numbers or high infections?

>> At this point we are already doing door to door -- information campaigns. Most -- a lot of it has been led by constable morales and others and other esds in our community and I'm sure that cassie can speak more to that.

>> Definitely we are trying to employ every avenue we have to promote the availability of vaccines. It's very important that -- that people know and -- at the neighborhood level where they can get access to vaccine. It's also really important as we reach out that we

[12:48:55 PM]

tailor or message to address some of those concerns, working with key community leaders, those that are more attuned to individual needs to make sure that we are addressing their concerns so that we can assist individuals in making that individual decision to make the vaccine and also that they understand the importance of getting the vaccines.

>> Are unvaccinated teens more likely to spread covid-19 than other age groups, what is the danger to families from unvaccinated 12 to 17-year-olds?

>> If -- if -- if an individual is not practicing those things that mitigate spread, social distancing, mask wearing, hand washing and avoiding crowds staying home when they are sick, that -- that's going to be - going to be what is -- what is causing more spread

[12:50:01 PM]

and question of seen that in our adolescent population that -- that when we go back and do case investigations, more often than not, not identifying a place in -- in class setting where -- where there's been transmission between students, it's usually off campus, extracurricular, because the schools have done a good job of trying to enforce that and those measures. Having said that, if they are going to -- to be a part of this solution and this effort, it's going to be really key for us to -- to engage them as -- as ambassadors for that age group and -- and those that know what -- what -- what their part is, those that -- those adolescents, teenagers that are leaders in their

[12:51:02 PM]

groups and their schools, I think can be -- can be a really important part of us -- of us getting the message out and -- and making model and being examples. For -- for other people in their age group. With regard to --

>> [Multiple voices]

>> Sorry, go ahead.

>> Who was going to speak, I'm sorry, I interrupted somebody.

>> That was me. But I'm good, I'm done.

>> Sorry. It was a question about school buses. How -- as far as I know, schools -- school buses will be at full capacity. How likely is transmission/dangerous is that to unvaccinated kids? We know that transition is increased with proximity

[12:52:03 PM]

between individuals and situations where ventilation is not as good. So -- so there are guidances that have been posted by the CDC and that are being followed by -- by our school districts. There are will masks required on buses and windows cracked to improve ventilation and spacing will be made between the riders to the bus to help mitigate spread in buses that our children are using to get to and from school.

>> What are aph's plans, new ideas, potentially to meet the coming challenges without the power of mandates?

>> Well, our biggest asset is our community. Our community has proven time and time again that

[12:53:03 PM]

they understand that if we follow the science, that we will -- that we will be able to decrease the number of cases. And -- and that's what we have done before and that's what we are calling for right now. Again, I understand the frustration of having to put a mask back on. But we have a variant of covid-19 that requires us to do so. We are seeing viral loads in both vaccinated and unvaccinated people that are high. And we can transmit this virus between individuals and spread to one another at the rate that we spread chicken pox, for instance. So masking will stop the spread and vaccinations will stop people from becoming sick and developing severe illness requiring hospitalization and icu care. We know that vaccines have

[12:54:04 PM]

worked. We have senior citizens in our nursing homes who have gotten sick who have been vaccinated. And they are experiencing, for the most part, very mild illness, not requiring hospitalization. And they are recovering from this illness. If we can continue what we know has worked before and really step up our vaccination efforts, we can -- we can get the curve flattened and continue on with rebuilding our economy and letting our children have an in-person classroom instruction during the next year.

>> We have five -- time for one more question, sorry about that.

>> That's all right. Both pfizer and modern this morning are talking about the booster shots that they are testing.

[12:55:04 PM]

How quickly could aph roll-out booster shots if they are given eua and what would that look like, how do you discern between the people who have gotten their full doses and who haven't, who are eligible for what dose?

>> I absolutely can answer that. We have plans to address boosters. It's an ongoing process. When vaccine started rolling out, boosters were already part of the conversation. And so we've done a lot of practice in rolling out boosters. We have ways of considering if an individual is eligible for a booster or not because we would have access to their vaccine record and we could verify which vaccine they had. Based on the recommendations from CDC, we would be able to follow whatever those recommendations are. At this point from the booster guidance we don't have yet whether or not if you received modern or pfizer, so we don't have the guidance yet if we can have

[12:56:07 PM]

one or the other. When the booster recommendations come out we would be applying that to our operations.

>> Thank you very much. I appreciate having our pool reporter from CBS Austin. We are going to have to cut this a little short. I know we didn't quite get to everyone's question. I would like to give everyone a chance with closing remarks. Very briefly. We have that 1:00 hard stop. So Dr. Walkes, any closing comments?

>> I would just like to say this is our olympic moment as a community. Earlier this week we saw a time when a runner got distracted, fell, caused another runner to fall and instead of going on and trying to finish the race, the runner that was tripped paused for a moment, thought about what a superhero would do, and picked the person that tripped him up and together they ran arm in arm

[12:57:07 PM]

to the finish line. We have to do this. We have to pick each other up, get vaccinated and work together so that our businesses with thrive, the music can play and our children can play and go to school in person safely. Thank you.

>> Covid changes the game. But we can, too. We can beat a single cell organism. We can survive. Wash your hands, wear your masks, watch your distance, get vaccinated.

>> I will just round it out again, the vaccine works. It is the best tool that we have in our toolbox to combat this vaccine -- to combat this disease. And if you haven't been vaccinated, think about this

[12:58:10 PM]

opportunity to take to protect your family, protect your children who cannot get vaccinated yet and protect others. Again, this is -- this is a personal decision, but a fernal decision that affect -- but a personal decision that affects so many more people. So this is an opportunity for us to stand up, like Dr. Walkes said, this can be our Travis county, city of Austin olympic moment, let's get this done.

>> Thank you very much, everyone. This concludes our press conference. I want to thank Dr. Walkes, interim director stirrup and interim director for talking with us today. For the media, please send those to us or reach out. Please stay safe, get vaccinated, wear a mask.

[1:18:08 PM]

>> Reconvene the Austin budget work session on August 5, 2021. Sometime 1:17. We will go ahead and procedure. Manager.

>> Thank you, mayor and council. Where we left off before break was a discussion around homelessness, so we had our homeless strategy officer available for questions along with our budget staff. Again, I'll just note that we have a full agenda today. We want to get through as many topics as possible. We want to spend considerable time on this topic but the more we can focus on budget 46 related items the better we will be to manage our time today with that, I will turn it back to the council for questions.

>> Mayor Adler: Do we want to start with specific questions? Councilmember tovo do you want to start us off?

[1:19:09 PM]

>> Tovo: Thank you, mayor. I think it might be good just to get a schedule. I could probably ask about four hours worth of questions, which would likely throw off the rest of our day, so I wonder if we could just -- what is our -- I don't have the agenda up in front of us to know how many more topics and how long, at what time we want to break for executive session.

>> Mayor Adler: I think we should plan on trying to break for executive session around 3:00 to see if that is something we can do. And we have, at the pace we're going, more topics than we're going to be able to hit. Because we didn't move through very many this morning.

>> So we have about 40 minutes?

>> For today, we went through homeless, displace division and funding overview and financial policy changes. Let's see if we can move expeditiously and get to the three. This one may be the one that

[1:20:09 PM]

generates the most so let's see if we can do this in an hour and see how that works.

>> Great. So, I think that what I would like to talk about as we talk through all of our amendments is where the funding should be allocated from. So I do have some questions, miss Garrett, about your proposal. I just want to be sure id into, first quickly, be sure id understood something you said. You have quite a few temporary staff working with you now and as I understand, those staff, the three vacancies, you have needs even beyond the three vacancies.

>> That's accurate, councilmember.

>> Tovo: Okay, thank you. It is also my understanding the pilot program the city funded at the beginning of this year to provide additional mental health resources through the downtown Austin community court, this was

[1:21:11 PM]

program the downtown Austin alliance proposed. We have, at that time, there were quite a large number of individuals, more than 100 individuals, possibly a lot more than 100, I don't have the number up front of me work were on the wait list for mental health resources and the city of Austin provided funding which was supported by the daa's investment. The downtown Austin alliance has allocated funding for next year but it is my understanding we don't have that additional funding in this year's budget. I've talked about it in our meetings but I don't think I posted it in my June budget prior list but it is an amendment I plan to bring. Can you just confirm my understanding, miss gray that additional funding is not in this year's proposed budget.

>> I'm going to turn to budget to speak to that because it doesn't sit within and so I will let her and.

>> Tovo: Thank you.

>> We have Pete Valdez here from the downtown Austin community court so he can speak to it

[1:22:14 PM]

directly.

>> Tovo: That's great, because I have a question for him, too, about the dak funding.

>> It looks like my video not working so I'm going to turn 60. I'm sorry.

>> Tovo: It was working, you were just upside down. Which I've never seen happen in all this time so it was surprising and a good change of pace.

>> Sorry about that.

>> So, actually, perhaps while Pete gets right side up, I can give a little bit of context. So, and this actually relates to some of the comments and questions that mayor pro tem proposed earlier around mental health and the work that is contemplated under the summit. Within the overall summit spending plan, in addition to the core housing services, many of which are case management that might be provided by interval care or another

[1:23:15 PM]

provider tailors to people experiencing chronic behavioral health conditions. There's a separate line item, if you will, for behavioral health services to include mental health and substance use disorder services of about \$9 million over the three years. So we do have some flexibility built into that over all strategy to get specific about some of these more crisis-oriented services outside of that core housing stabilization case management. So I just want to have that as context and we'll see now whether Pete is done with his acrobatics and ready to respond.

>> But that highlights kind of the question and the deliberation process I think before us. So we know we have approved, and we approved the framework with the big core categories. We don't yet have that more specific plan that is coming back to talk about exactly where those investments would be so in making this amendment to provide

[1:24:15 PM]

for this funding, because I believe Mr. Valdez is going to validate that it is not currently in the budget it seems appropriate to come from the American rescue act plan funding and though we're approving the general budget, I look you colleagues, to the extent that we are making some decisions about how we want to spend arpa funding, it is my expectation that that would be funded through the ar rpa funding because it supports that framework.

>> About the program the daa is funding together with us?

>> Tovo: Yes, so it is my

[1:25:15 PM]

understanding that it is not fully funded. It is not funded at the same level in this proposed budget is that accurate?

>> It is not in the proposed budget, that's correct. What we did in the current fiscal year was, we found the money to fund the current fiscal year. I don't know if we will be able to do that on going, but it did not make it into the proposed budget.

>> Tovo: Okay. I regard that as a real critical funding strategy and hope, colleagues, that you all will, too. Mr. Valdez, can you talk a bit about, we had submitted a question number six in the portal, so I don't believe it has been anticipated yet. I don't think it is number six. Let's see. There is a question in the portal about the downtown Austin community court positions. It looked as if you have some grant-funded positions that are set to expire.

[1:26:17 PM]

Are there staffing needs that have not been -- is that accurate? Are there staffing needs at the dak that are not fully met in this year's proproposol?

>> So, again, those six positions that you referring to are related to the covid esg program which is grant-funded program for case managers housed at the current pro lodges to provide housing and support to the individuals living at the pro lodge being. Those positions will go away after July 2022 in the next fiscal year because they are not funded through the entirety of the fiscal year.

>> Tovo: So let's share last year we had talked about some of the proposed expansion for the downtown Austin community court,

[1:27:20 PM]

and this year, we are asking even more of you this year, because this year, as I understand it, all individuals who are camping in public places via the tent, as I understand the manager's direction, is that those individuals would be brought to the downtown Austin community court so does the proposed budget take into account that potential increase in case loads?

>> So, no, we did not get any increase in the proposed budget so, to that, we still have a wait list for our on going case management, which is at this point a little bit over 300 people. But, I also want to make sure that you understand that the people that are supporting individuals at the pro lodges and getting them into housing

[1:28:21 PM]

not being able to continue to provide that support is going to be difficult, most importantly to the individuals that they are serving. Because what will happen, once those case managers go away in July is we will have to absorb those case loads into our regular case management program that is not grant funded, and that would mean that that wait list continues to go unaddressed.

>> Tovo: So, colleagues, I'll regard these as real priority needs, so thank you Mr. Valdez. I think I need to get some more information from you. I know my staff has additional information that is not necessarily in front of me here today but perhaps in conversation we can talk. I know the budget, we have talked about a variety of ways in which we could continue to

[1:29:22 PM]

use and enhance the services of the dak, including through host. There were some expansion estimates that I believe your staff worked with host to provide us with, and as I'm understanding, those have not been -- those have not been included within this year's budget. And, colleagues, it is sort of outside of scope of today's conversation, but as the dak prepares to move from the terasus library to yet another temporary place, the manager has announced that that would be 1 Texas center, I have asked for a variety of things to come forward, and we haven't yet received those. So I'm preparing an ifc for our next council meeting, though some of it will be incorporated as budget flexion our budget next week, if you all pass it. It strikes me that we really need to think about how the dak will function in this next year, year or two ahead, as proposition B is enforced.

[1:30:23 PM]

We have individuals who will now be coming from all over the city, downtown to the dak for services and I think we need to ask the manager to really provide us with a plan on multiple levels shall including how those individuals, where those individuals will be transported to once they're done seeking services



at 1 Texas center and how they will -- whether we've provided for additional funding for the staff and the resources that will be necessary for all of those elements that are now going to be additional to the work that the dak was already doing and frankly already under funded. So just highlighting that need. Not all of which will be we'll be able to make appropriate decisions about this weak but certainly the conversation I just had with Mr. Valdez highlights there are immediate needs we can provide for in this budget and I believe we should. So I'll leave it there for now. I think there was something else

[1:31:23 PM]

I wanted to say about the dak that now slips my mind, but I'll leave it there for the moment. Also just to say that I believe, you know, the dak has been operating in a temporary fashion for a while. The other part of my resolution will ask the manager to commit to a timetable very quickly so we can embark on constructing that permanent home. 1 Texas center, which the manager has decided will be the next please, the next temporary place for the dak, was contemplated. We all passed a resolution that I brought to create, redevelop that site for affordable housing. That should still be the fan and manager, we need you to provide us with that timetable for identifying within very short notice, identifying the permanent location for the dak and then beginning the work of constructing it. So we're redeveloping a site to be appropriate. So I'm not sure whether that will require additional budget,

[1:32:25 PM]

additional funding in this next fiscal year, I know we had some set aside for that purpose. But I'll just note it as a moving part because, you know, as we talk about what to do with this additional one-time funding, you know, that is yet another -- it's another example of a need that we may be facing that is not currently accounted for in this year's budget. Thank you Mr. Valdez and thanks for the work you do. It is always challenging work and even more so during this pandemic so thanks to you and your staff.

>> Thank you very much.

>> Manager.

>> Thank you, councilmember. We are working on an update for you and your cliques for the future of the dak so we will be looking to provide that update as soon as we can. But I will provide you with an update for that additional timeline information.

>> Mayor Adler: Mayor pro tem.

>> Thank you for the recognition, chair. Just very briefly, I've been doing a lot of really hard work getting people who otherwise are

[1:33:29 PM]

not -- in municipal politics to get them to say, hey, this is your city, get to be a part of these conversations. And I think sometimes, you know, much like my predecessor said, we do a disservice to our community when we say things like the dak. They don't know what we're talking about so if we could just be clear and I think councilmember tovo might be able to most eloquently speak to it. What are we talking about? At, like, if we cannot use the acronym and say what we're talking about. Just and for no other reason, I know for a fact that there are 19 young people who dialed in today, encouraged them to do so, and I want them to know exactly what we're talking about.

>> Tovo: Sure, mayor pro tem thank you for that reminder not to use acronyms, and I apologize for doing so. The downtown Austin community

[1:34:30 PM]

court is the dac. What I'm talking about multiple different areas where I think the downtown Austin community court is going to need additional support. One is for the program the dac, the downtown Austin community court was able to find additional funding for to put additional resource into the mental health case services. Mr. Valdez, might be able to -- you might be able to articulate this better, but there are also several, as Mr. Valdez said there's several grant-funded positions currently connecting individuals in our protective lodges to housing and ore services that are set to expire in July so that is yet another need. And I highlighted a few others, all of which relate to the really important work that the downtown Austin community court does and they work, well, I'll let Mr. Valdez explain its

[1:35:32 PM]

mission.

>> Yes, mayor pro tem. What councilmember tovo is referring to, the covid esg covid program, that's the emergency solutions grant, that was established in July of last year, specifically to house individuals that are living at the pro lombs because of covid-19. And those positions, those six positions, will go away after July of 2022 when the grant expires. The second request, or the second question was related to the health care homelessness health care and wellness center program out of integral care who we are jointly funding with the downtown Austin alliance. And that program is addressing individuals with high acuity from the mental health

[1:36:34 PM]

perspective who are also often our wait list. Because we're not able to address their needs because the wait list exists, we created this contract together with integral care so we can work through our wait list, specifically aiming at serving individuals with a high acuity. And that funding for that program has only existed through the end of this current fiscal year.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is there any possibility -- that was a matched grant, wasn't it?

>> Yes, sir. The emergency grant for covid did not require matching from the federal government. It was part of the cares act. And, so it is one-time funding but no match is required.

[1:37:40 PM]

R. Dac is part of the overall funds in the community so not only is the downtown Austin community court social work staff providing services, we have services being provided via a number of nonprofits in the community, as well.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Councilmember he will less. Ellis.

>> Ellis: Thank you. Do you happen to know how much funding those six positions would cost if we were to continue that work?

>> I do. So, to get from the end of July to the end of that fiscal year, it would be \$174,000. But then those individuals would need to be converted to full-time employees to be able to do that.

>> Ellis: And then if you're saying end of July to end of fiscal year, are you saying less

[1:38:42 PM]

than one year or more than one year?

>> So what I'm saying sergeant I'm saying sergeant grant ends July of 2022 so we would have to have funding to get them through the rest of that fiscal year, but on top of that they would have to be converted to become full-time employees.

>> Ellis: And they would need to be part of recurring budgets on top of that to keep them on staff.

>> That's correct.

>> Ellis: That is helpful. I appreciate you running down the ins and outs of this program and the benefits that come from. I appreciate councilmember Tovo bringing up the idea of do we need to do any sort of fine-tuning with the framework for the rescue plan act funding, try to spell it out so we know what we're talking about. I've had people reach out asking, how do we know what is moving forward on encampments or not and is there going to be a vote and how can people understand how that money is going to be used and what the

[1:39:43 PM]

council's policy directives are going to be. So I think, if it's the will of the dais that could be some money that hopefully could be allotted to other projects as we see fits it seems amongst a few of thus is a desire to look at more of what is the best use of our dollars and if it is not going to be temporary encampments we have to pay to move again and again over the years would it make more sense to tie this into mental health resources, housing placement and things of that nature. So I'm supportive of that, but I know we haven't had a chance to really all talk about that together very often, so I just wanted to voice my favor for that and I think this could be the type of funding that is appropriate. As long as we can figure out the mechanisms for one-time funding and trying to get employees on full-time and future years. I know that would be a longer commitment than what the rescue plan dollars would allow for us to do.

[1:40:49 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Councilmember Fuentes and then councilmember kitchen.

>> Fuentes: Thank you. And thank you councilmember Ellis. A related follow up question I have, part of the resolution we passed at the June 10 meeting related to the American rescue plan dollars included direction called for a funding plan for the goal of rehousing 3,000 individuals within three years and for a fundraising plan from the summit. I just wanted to see if we had any update on those two critical pieces from that resolution. And also wanted to flag, it did also lay out direction for two community meetings by September 1.

>> Yes, I can provide an undate, councilmember. So we provided a memo on or around July 1, I believe, that actually recommended that we combine the report back on the overall spending plan, as well as the fundraising plan from the

[1:41:50 PM]

summit leadership, and that fundraising plan was requested by acm Gonzalez on July 15, asking for a return, a response by August 15. So that is the time frame that we are working under currently. And, I think I've forgotten the second piece, oh the piece around the community engagement by September 1 so we could not have dates for that yet but we will be looking forward to it. I think just in terms of process, as we've said, council is anticipating a more detailed spending plan of the overall \$515 million investment in the summit community wide. In addition to that, as we have that, then we also have the job as the city of determining how we utilize our roughly \$106 million within that. So we are currently at aph working with the contracting

[1:42:52 PM]

division to set out an rfp or potentially a series of requests for proposal that would begin to give shape to what those investments would look like. I will remind you that in the guidance and the direction that was given on June 6, council explicitly asked us to invest \$2 million in workforce so that is something that councilmember pool brought up earlier that those dollars, he excuse me, were appropriated and available in this fiscal year so we are moving forward and planning on that front and 500,000 Derr in capacity building. One of the things we want to make sure do we well while we balance the urgency of getting the dollars into the community is we're doing this in a collaborative way with our service providers, with community members, with echo,

[1:43:53 PM]

et cetera, so we're making most strategic use of the dollars over all and specifically of the city's direct investment in the work.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Councilmember kitchen goes next. Then councilmember Kelly.

>> Kitchen: Thank you, I have a couple of questions. Let me follow up first on councilmember Fuentes' question related to the arpa timeline. Is the thinking at some point the council will be presented with a more detailed budget of the use of those dollars, particularly the city-directed dollars?

>> That's accurate. So we have asked for summit leadership to provide a fundraising plan, as well as I think one of the asks was around their governance by August 15. We hope to do -- complete the spending plan report to council in tandem with that work so they are consistent. We have not set a hard date for

[1:44:54 PM]

the response. I don't believe. But I would anticipate that would be by end of August or early September. And, at that point, then, I think we would be positioned as staff to lay out how we intend to procure for these services through one or more rfps, for the priority areas. And I think I would also say, I think this is relevant to some of the conversations we have been having. We have identified and council has identified through their conversations with verse stakeholders and providers certain projects where funding may be running out or it was up with-time funding. We are doing any Zahn of the recommendations made -- cognizant of the recommendations made in last year's report as well as feedback from procurement, where we need to move forward with a contract on a one-off basis we want to move for a more orderly and

[1:45:55 PM]

transparent process to get the best value for city resources.

>> Okay, as follow up, then, so I think, my question has to do, I'm trying to figure out the next step for the heal initiative. So, I think it is important to designate funding for the heal initiative, because we are -- and thank you very much, you and the entire team, everybody that's been working on this, we're now working on the third location and it's been a huge success so far. So, you all will be finishing the third location in the not-too-distant future and I would like to avoid a gap between completing the initial locations and starting with the, you know, keeping the project going. Keeping the program going. So I'm wanting to designate dollars for that. I don't, you know, I don't have a preference whether they are budget dollars or arpa dollars

[1:46:57 PM]

but I want to avoid a gap. Do you have a thought at this point about whether we have dollars within our budget to designate to that or whether we need to be clear we want to use arpa dollars for that? What's your thinking?

>> I do have thoughts, councilmember. I'm sure we will have some options but I will tell you the most obvious route forward. Within the \$515 million of the summit plan, 42 million of that corresponds to rapid rehousing, which is the primary vehicle we've been using to rehouse folks through the heal initiative so I think it would be wholly appropriate for the city, the council to contemplate utilizing some portion of that 106 million for the rapid rehousing resources needed to continue to rehouse folks through the heal initiative. Of course there some other costs associated with the initiative, but that is the lion's share of it and so I would imagine that

[1:47:57 PM]

that would be one of the things that we would prioritize within the city's investment of the 106 million.

>> Okay so is it your thought that the heal initiative should come out of arpa opposed to the city budget?

>> I could not believe we have identified any available dollar in the general fund so I think that is accurate, yes.

>> Kitchen: That's fine. So what is the -- I don't know if we know yet, mayor, what the process is. I'm understanding that we will get back, I don't know, mid August, early September, the budget related to

heal, I mean related to the arpa funds, right? I am still concerned about a gap, so I'm wanting -- so colleagues, I may go ahead and bring forward a budget direction for some level of dollars for the next phase of heal out of

[1:48:59 PM]

arpa. As miss gray noted, we already did that to some extent with arpa, we designated 2 million for a workforce. We know with some part of that arpa funds we've already done some designation so for the council to consider, I'll bring something forward related to heal. I don't want to wait. I don't want there to be a gap so that answered that question. .

>> Mayor Adler: And to that question, I think it would be helpful because I think councilmember tovo asked a similar question, about the interrelationship between the arpa funding and what we're doing here now. If you and the staff could talk to us about that interplay before we do the budget on the 11th, 12th and 13th that would be helpful.

>> Kitchen: Okay. The last question I have is about staffing for your office, miss gray. I have some questions about taking that staffing out of

[1:50:00 PM]

arpaen my questions relate to, I'm wanting to make certain that the staffing that we have is -- allowed us to have permanent employees rather than temporary employees so that leads me to conclude the staffing for your office should come out of the budget opposed to arpa. Do you have any thoughts on that?

>> I think that, we would of course follow the will of the council on that front and the arpa funds are available. There would be some staffing that would increase over the course of the three years that the activity will be very enhance this might not be needed long-term but certainly we would anticipate on going needs.

>> Kitchen: So it might be a combination of on going needs and temporary needs, okay. I would like to explore that with you later. We can think through that. So colleagues and mayor, I know you've been interested in this, as has councilmember tovo and

[1:51:02 PM]

others, everybody on the dais, really. I want to make sure we craft the staffing for the homeless strategy office in a way that makes it clear that we can keep good -- keep our staff so that they know they've got

a job going forward so that we have permanent staffing. If there are -- if there is a certain amount of that we think could be temporaries, I would be open to some arpa funding for that, but I want to make sure we think about that carefully because my concern is taking all of the additional staffing that is needed out of arpa. Donald sent the right signal to the folks that we are employing, and it also kicks the can down the road in terms of an issue of making sure we've got the staffing we need.

>> Mayor Adler: I would like to work with you, I have several ideas that help us work through

[1:52:04 PM]

that so I would like to work with you on that.

>> Kitchen: Okay.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember Kelly and then councilmember Casar.

>> Kelly: I want to thank you and your office for the work you've done to make the heal initiative become a reality. On the lunch break, I went to the Cesar Chavez location and talked to some members of city staff down there and I'm really pleased with how humane and dignified that process is. I know it is not easy at all to put something like that together but the results are life-changing for these people who are experiencing homelessness. So I very much look forward to see the scale and for different phases to come through and move forward. My question is about staffing, though. I'm wondering if, because the homeless situation is always evolving, if we convert those employees to full time employees, to envision them as long-term, it is kind of difficult to try and understand from a 30,000-foot view the sort

[1:53:04 PM]

of permanent infrastructure we need to address homelessness if the goal is to end it, and if there's flexibility in those rules should things change we can retain and keep those employees on staff. Can you maybe speak to that?

>> Absolutely.

>> Kelly: Thank you.

>> Councilmembers have mentioned the regular permanent positions and temporary and the possibility of regular but grant-funded positions so I think some combination is viable for us and at your direction we're happy to provide a proposal through city manager about what we think could be a viable approach.

>> Could you get as you copy of that proposal when it is ready.

>> Yes.



>> Thank you very much. And thank you and to all your staff. It is not an easy lift and to see it in motion was really incredible.

>> I really appreciate that and particularly want to just reiterate that the staff, including temporary staff, are

[1:54:04 PM]

doing incredible work and working very hard in behalf of our city. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Councilmember Casar.

>> Casar: Thank you. I wanted to comment on the same as we welcome those folks coming off the street into the hotel up in my neck of the woods, so I appreciate that. I'm interested in whatever ideas you come up with councilmember kitchen and mayor, et cetera. I had an idea on the piece of paper I had handed out was we could use one-time dollars and multiply the request by three to at least cover the three years of the summit. And while it could be kicking the can down the road, it also could provide us the two or three years necessary to come up with which ones should be full-time employees and later budgets, we may have more flexibility on the m&o side or determine which could be full-time employees verses temporary so if we took one

[1:55:06 PM]

potential path, again, I'm very open to what the dais and miss gray think, but one potential path would be to take your ask here, multiply it by three to cover at Lee the three years. Anybody we hire would know they're for sure in for the time period of the summit plan and then we could, I'm sure, within those three years figure out what we need to figure out.

>> I'm sorry. I would say it would have a substantial impact on our recruiting and our ability to attract the best folks.

>> Mayor Adler: Some of the folks asking to contribute to the over all effort has to do it in the nature of a grant, so we are asking other funders to come in and fund things that are recurring expenses without an obligation to fund past the three years. I'm not saying we should do this here because there are multiple options, but there are multiple options.

>> And I have worked with that model in other cities previously.

>> Mayor Adler: All right. While we have Dianna here, any questions about encampments or

[1:56:08 PM]

other kinds of things. Yes, councilmember alter and then councilmember tovo.

>> Alter: I had to step out for a minute but was still listening. I was curious councilmember kitchen or miss gray, if that is more appropriate, what additional money is needed for what you have in mind.

>> Kitchen: I'll let miss gray speak to the component being of the costs for heal.

>> Right. I think the primary incremental costs for heal is it is probably about \$30,000 a year per person. Rehoused. And so \$3 million per 100 people is a rough estimate. We, of course, right now, as of the end of this week, we will have two operating shelters which can serve as bridge shelter. At a full capacity of 140 people, one person per room, if we are rehousing folks at the rate of one every three months they might have a brief stay there and be rehoused, by my

[1:57:09 PM]

math that gives us 400, I believe, 560. I have to make sure that is correct. It could be that we would be constrained by the shelter capacity but right now I don't think that's accurate. We really just need to make a decision about how far we want to scale the heal initiative in relation to the other kinds of investments around supported employment, permanent supportive housing, mental health, he had set et cetera, within the city's investment in this area.

>> Alter: Didn't we have \$84 million, that was one of the things covered with that.

>> I'm not sure if I fully understood but the 106-point -- excuse me, 7 million, minus the 11.4, which was the housing and manning division and the 4.2 set aside for crisis housing in response prop B left us with

[1:58:11 PM]

91.1.

>> I may have the wrong number.

>> It was absolutely different, right. Within that, I think we look at how much of that would be count sill's will to direct towards -- council's will to direct towards the scaling heal initiative in tandem with the other efforts you would like found.

>> So I'm correct there is a pot of money from which this could be drawn for arpa.

>> Correct.

>> Okay, thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, councilmember kitchen.

>> Kitchen: Just to clarify, that's what I'm talk about phase two of heal, arpa dollars. And looking to work with miss gray and my colleagues in terms of the scope of the next phase for heal.

>> Thank you. I just wanted to mention and share may support for also using arpa funds for the extend of heal for phase two or however you want to frame it. I think it is a successful

[1:59:11 PM]

initiative, thank you councilmember kitchen for your leadership on it and I would like our community to learn more about this success and how we've been able to rehouse individuals in a compassion ate eat and humane way. I want to share and reiterate my support for using those dollars for the expansion of heal.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember tovo is next.

>> Tovo: There's definitely it's my intent, and I just want to run it through -- run it against what you just said. I appreciate, you know, that staff is still working on the funding plan and will come back to us with that additional information. But as -- so I understand what you're saying about not funding -- about maybe not moving forward with additional contracts at this point, given

[2:00:13 PM]

the investing and results report. As I see it, it is -- several of these would be appropriate expenditures through the American rescue act plan dollars. Of those, you know, for the homeless program, that I indicated would be in the funding plan that we approved, the dak grant funded positions, the workforce element that councilmember pool intends to bring forward as an amendment. You know, it was squarely mentioned within that framework. Are you saying -- do you have any comments on that?

>> What I would say --

>> I'm sorry, one more thing. Maybe some of the other dak needs that are not met yet. Last year I had brought forward budget direction related to host

[2:01:14 PM]

and issues related to dak, and we got back a useful memo, and I just had -- that also, I think, might be appropriate expenditures for arpa funding. I'm sorry. Miss gray?

>> Some of the things we discussed absolutely fit within the framework and spirit and intent of the summit and what you are dedicating. I think what I would like to suggest is that we be really clear about

establishing a clear process that's transparent and keeps procurement and legal satisfied, that we are managing our risk appropriately. And that when we move forward on those exceptions, they are truly that, they are exceptions, and we understand that as, you know, identifying opportunities where we need to move more quickly. I think it's appropriate in some cases, but really attempting to move our homeless contracting system to a place where we can be very transparent, very clear

[2:02:15 PM]

about the services we're purchasing in the community, and what we're getting for those dollars.

>> Okay. Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember Ellis.

>> Thank you. I think this fits well in line with what I would see is a better use of our dollars than doing temporary encampments that are going to have to be moved around. If we're looking at reallocating some of the arpa rescue plant act dollars, I would certainly be supportive of us focusing more of our financial resources in the H.E.A.L. Initiative than other things that have to be moved around and managed a lot more often than something like the H.E.A.L. Initiative that seems to be getting off the ground quickly. It's showing early success already. So I would be supporting that effort financially instead.

>> Mayor Adler: So as I

[2:03:15 PM]

understand it, the work in H.E.A.L. Is, as with a lot of work -- the summit wasn't inventing new stuff, the summit was making new plans, it was identified what needed to be done to set up that system. And part of that response that we're trying to ask the community to scale up is exactly the work that the council ordered earlier in the year with H.E.A.L. Is that right?

>> Yes, sir.

>> Mayor Adler: So it all dovetails. So sometime, if you could help us order that, or frame that as we get into the next budget, I think that would be helpful. We want to make sure the work gets done. And it's consistent with what it is that lots of people in the community are calling to have happen. Councilmember kitchen?

>> Kitchen: I forgot, there is another issue I wanted to clarify. And that is, the encampments,

[2:04:17 PM]

temporary encampments, I don't know what our path is for making a decision there. Because we have two on the table, I understand. And I understand there's been some conversation about not moving forward with those, but there's also been some conversation about maybe we should move forward with those. So I don't know what the process is for making a decision there. And I think we need to have a conversation about it. So what's the thinking? Or does anybody -- I mean, let me back up. Did the staff make a recommendation? I tonight know if you all actually made a recommendation, or what.

>> So last week, we did the cliff's notes version of the briefing as you call because we ran out of time. And our communication to council was that because of the time from now until we might be successful in rezoning and placing people in the encampment, with the significant

[2:05:18 PM]

resources, et cetera, we asked for a direction if you would like us to continue that work.

>> Kitchen: Okay. So we need to have a conversation to determine what our direction is. And what is our process for that, mayor?

>> Mayor Adler: We set it this time to be able to talk about this issue today.

>> Kitchen: Okay. All right. Well, then I don't know -- I think we should talk about it. My perspective I that I am interested in continuing with camping sites. We've got them down to two. I think that might be appropriate given the fact that our -- we're adding to our bridge shelter and proceeding with that, but we still have some additional needs. So I want to know what my colleagues think. But I am -- I'm not ready to totally take it off the table.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember Kelly?

>> Kelly: Thank you for that, councilwoman kitchen.

[2:06:19 PM]

I'm not ready to take it off the table either, but I think we should give councilmember tovo the ability to join in on this, and I don't see her on the screen. I think it's something that she should be here for. I don't know if somebody needs to --

>> Mayor Adler: She's here.

>> Tovo: I'm here. I'm just trying to put more paper in the printer, so I had you all on my phone when I was doing that. Thank you. I absolutely want to participate in the conversation. So thanks for the courtesy of making sure I was here.

>> Mayor Adler: So this came up in conversation, the health committee, council committee yesterday. If we're looking for direction, or sentiment on that.

>> Kitchen: Yeah.

>> Mayor Adler: The kind of immediate sheltering for a community, I mean, there's a place for that, and we need that in our city, too. The same way we need permanent supportive housing.

[2:07:19 PM]

If I understand how you've educated me over the last period of time, miss gray. My understanding is, as you build out the system, all the parts need to be built out in scale to one another. I don't know what that is, or what that looks like. That would also fit with the overall system that the community's been working on, and has been repeated again in the summit work. So I would support doing that component of immediate sheltering in scale to the system that we would have. And I recognize what that means is that there's not emergency sheltering to be built now for 2,000 people, or for everyone that has been tenting in our city, which means that some people will be doing what they did two years ago when the

[2:08:21 PM]

ordinances were last in effect. I would ask that we take a look at those people that are most vulnerable, or most at risk, if we get there, to make sure that they would get prioritized within whatever system they identify would fit in that work to scale. But I would only support doing that kind of emergency sheltering to the appropriate scale of the system, because I wouldn't want to take dollars away from the elements of that system that actually keep people off the street, in housing, put them in a place where they're most efficiently and effectively be able to take advantage of the wrap-around services. So for what it's worth, that would be the direction that I would support. Anybody else want to talk about

[2:09:23 PM]

this? Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: Thank you. And thank you again, councilmember Kelly. I appreciate you making sure the conversation didn't happen without me. I have -- I think this is definitely part of the larger conversation. I know the couple of times it's come up, and here on the dais, it's almost been framed as, you know, we don't want to -- there may not -- that we would be continuing to pursue designated camping at the expense of other areas for funding. I said almost every time we've had this conversation, almost every single time, this is clearly not ideal in terms of the housing solution. It is not a housing solution. It is a

stop-gap solution. But it is a solution and strategy that I continue to believe we need to have within our portfolio of strategies. You know, as I look at the time it's taken to secure hotels,

[2:10:24 PM]

motels for ak acquisitions for use, it's taken some time. I know we'll not be able to bring on additional ones very quickly. It's challenging to find them, it's challenging to find them at an appropriate price. It is challenging to find them, and to get universal community support for them. So all of these issues are going to be challenging and are going to take time. So I continue to support -- I support continuing the conversation around designated camping areas. However, knowing we're very close to the September 1st deadline by state law, I'm not sure what happens to our process of even having that option beginning on September 1st. As I understand it, miss gray, maybe you can jump in here, it would require getting permission from the state in locating those. Perhaps you can just answer that question for me. And as I indicated yesterday, I

[2:11:24 PM]

do have some questions about the actual costs that go into the

(indiscernible) That you provided us with. I think the -- but it seems a little bit too much of a deep dive to do it here today. So perhaps I'll just leave it for now. But can you tell us what the process would be with the new state law?

>> That's accurate. So house bill 1925, which instituted a state-wide camping band for public lands, requires that any designated encampment or sanctioned encampment on public land established after September 1st of this year acquire approval from the Texas department of housing and community affairs. They have draft guidelines out of what that application process might look like. It's not finalized yet. We're currently working with igro to look through that. But it is certainly another step we would have to go to.

[2:12:26 PM]

We, of course, the two sites that we have currently identified as the most viable out of the city properties we analyzed, would need to be rezoned for an appropriate use. So I don't know that it is feasible for us to move on those properties absent some broader measure, and put them into place by September 1st, not to mention the need to engage the community.

>> Tovo: Sure, I understand that. And I want to be really clear that my support of continuing to think about an encampment strategy -- a strategy that has designated encampments is those two sites. If I

understand the conversation that transpired on the dais, it was really about the strategy itself. And as I understand my colleague's press release, that they sent out, it was really about the strategy itself,

[2:13:27 PM]

rather than -- it may have also been in addition to those sites. But I'm talking about whether within our portfolio of strategies, we have an encampment strategy, or if you use the language of haven for hope, a courtyard strategy. And I continue to think it's necessary. But certainly I'm open to the options that my colleagues bring forward. Obviously we all consider permanent housing the best option, but we need other shorter term strategies, too. And I'm going to say again, we need them in every part of the city, and we currently don't have them. We have districts where we have very few resources, if any resources in terms of emergency shelter, in terms of bridge shelter, in terms of any of the new assets we're bringing online. There are whole districts within our city that don't have any of those assets, or very few of those assets. And we know we have individuals experiencing homelessness throughout the city. We've made a commitment on this

[2:14:28 PM]

dais to make sure that we're providing resources throughout the city. And, you know, I'm very interested in that map that I hope will be forthcoming in the weeks ahead that show us where those assets are. I don't believe they're going to show us very geographically diversified array of resources in everyone's district. So I hope that that will -- whether they are designated encampments or bridge shelter or temporary emergency shelter, or other kinds of short-term strategies, I hope they will be geographically dispersed. And I hope there are some in there that are truly immediate. And if those are not, you know, the 5,000 to \$10,000 individual homes that can go up quickly, with some temporary restrooms and temporary showers, again, understanding that that is not the way we want to have our neighbors living over time, but they are our better options than having people in creekbeds and

[2:15:29 PM]

far-away wooded places. You know, I hope we'll continue to work forward. In terms of the next steps, I don't know what those are. Because we're now facing a state process that is cumbersome. I don't know where we go from here. Anyway, thank you, staff, for having explored this option, and all of the other work that you're doing.

>> So, in terms of thinking through those next steps, and how council engages in this decision-making, I just want to provide a little bit of framing. Out of the arpa funds, in addition to the money that was sort of attached to the summit concept, council set aside \$4.2 million for response, immediate response to



the unsheltered issue, in the context of the camping ordinance coming into effect. We calculated that amount based on the assumption that we

[2:16:30 PM]

believed we could get a bridge -- another bridge shelter up and running. As we now are doing, even tea. Today. We initially imagined, or are looking at an option that involved a lease facility. But eventually decided that utilizing the country inn which we already owned was a better choice. Because of that, we believe there will be some savings, that the cost will be slightly under that \$4.2 million, leaving us potentially just, as an example, and we will certainly confirm with you, \$1 million or so. Those are the only dollars at present set aside by council that would be available for either a designated encampment or other shelter strategies. One of the things that we have previously mentioned, which I think is one way forward, is issuing from aph a request for

[2:17:32 PM]

interest to the community for partnerships on this front. I think we may really be leaving some goodwill and resources in the community on the table by moving forward with a totally city-driven approach. So I think it's important to note that were we to do something like that, that does not obviate the possibility of a designated encampment on other private land being a solution that could emerge. So staff's response to the resolution was really about the feasibility, the costs, the process on those explicit city-owned properties. I think there remain some possibilities within the community.

>> Mayor Adler: Miss Kelly?

>> Thank you. And I do appreciate that you like the public/private partnership there, because I think that's a component to fix

[2:18:33 PM]

some of the issues for these people experiencing homelessness. I was wondering a couple things just out of what you had mentioned. You had mentioned that there's a draft form of the application to have those sanctioned encampments put up. Could you send that to council, just so we can review it, so we know what we're looking at in regards to hb 1925? I'm also wondering if you would need additional direction after council after September 1st, if that requires a revision of the resolution that councilmember tovo brought forward.

>> So, I will want to look closely at the resolution, but my sense is that with the information and analysis that staff has provided to date, we've actually completed the direction in the resolution. Any further

work would require, you know, either a recommendation coming from staff, or as I have mentioned, direction from council to continue. So I'm not sure if we would need to change the resolution, but if council has explicitly, for

[2:19:34 PM]

example, wants us to pursue any of the city-owned properties, that is something I think we would like communication on.

>> Kelly: Thank you for clarity on that. Can you explain what a typical timeline would be for setting up a sanctioned campsite? The days involved? I just want to know what we're looking at as far as a time investment goes.

>> So I think that, you know, at the end, the establishment of the microshelters or structures can be quite rapid. So we can have mobile hygiene, trailers, for example, there are any number of small shelters, whether they are soft-sided or hard-sided that can go up in 30 days. The lead time is really what is time-consuming. We have to ensure that there are utilities, of course, to the site. If there's utility work to be done, that can be time-consuming. And I think what staff identified, and I will say that

[2:20:36 PM]

Jerry rusthoven as well as director mcneily, if you have specific questions, if we have to rezone, site planning, really that entitlement process is what we identify was likely to take at least six months for these particular sites.

>> Kelly: Thank you for providing that background. I want to say that I do agree with councilmember tovo, the strategy here is one that I would like to pursue, the individual sites are definitely we need to take consideration for here on council, especially the impact it would have for the community that surrounds it. I believe we need an in-term solution, but I want the community to bring forth their ideas, because any input is better than no input and the more community buy-in, the better in this situation. And sometimes the best ideas come out of the community. So thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember Casar?

>> Casar: And I would -- I'll

[2:21:38 PM]

just kind of reiterate what I said during the last discussion on this topic, which is, I really want our staff's time to go to those things that are going to help as many people as long-term as we can. And if tiny

houses and those things can help them be a part of it, I would like to see that. And see opportunities there. At the same time, I think that there are ways for us to move faster with the hotel strategy, than we have sometimes in the past. In this case, the country inn suites, you were able to mobilize that for the H.E.A.L. Initiative in a matter of days. And so if we are able to -- whether that is an existing shelter, as we see the curve of covid cases hopefully be brought back down, whether it's opening up new rooms there, whether it is leased facilities, whether it is purchases, whether it is rapidly rehousing people out of those hotels to immediately create a new room to house someone, I think for me it's less a commitment to a

[2:22:39 PM]

particular type of shelter, I want us to be as successful as we can be with understanding that we only have one homeless strategy officer, and you don't have that many staff. So I want things that we can get done and that will get people housed. And I think an example of what is going on this week, if we open up some rooms and rapidly rehouse people, we have space and we can move people more quickly through. Whether that million dollars is in an rfi, or getting the 65 people out of the hotel into housing, you've got yourself 65 more rooms, I would follow your advice and your recommendation on, with your limited time, how it is we can help the most people.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember Ellis, then councilmember Fuentes.

>> Ellis: Thank you, mayor. All of these ideas have sat well with me. I know everybody's trying to get

[2:23:41 PM]

to a place that we have a robust enough system to be able to help anyone who has a certain need at a certain time. What's really difficult, until we have this system better sized for what we're trying to do, is that we're being asked to tell people that this is a temporary encampment, for a short period of time, and we can't commit to that. We don't know in two years we'll have what the next step is. I would be much more comfortable with spending our limited finances and resources in the meantime on things we know are going to get people into housing, and then try to figure out some of the smaller steps along the way to make sure that everybody has what they need. And everybody has what they need while they're there. As I said earlier, we have a number of non-profit groups we've even talked about today, and what great work they're doing in our community. We've been able to do fee waivers, and other sorts of things that we can do at the city level to help those nonprofits. I really think we need to let

[2:24:41 PM]

them do what they do best and let us focus on some of the bigger items right now. I know especially with the site that was identified in my district, I'm not sure how much it was on folks' radar, that there were two schools and three day cares nearby. It was very early in the vetting process. We know the information was given out. But it wasn't confirmed that these would be locations. And so we are trying to make sure people understand what this process would look like. But it obviously has a lot of angles and assessments that need to be done and we don't have all the time and money in the world to be able to do this. Our home strategy office works very hard, as you can see, and we want to make sure that their use and the dollars we can allot to it are used responsibly and used in ways that are actually going to help connect people into housing rather than ending up with a preliminary step that just gets stuck. That's what I'm uncomfortable with at this point in time.

[2:25:41 PM]

But I certainly know we all have different angles. We all have people experiencing homelessness in our districts, whether we already have a lot of resources or not. It is a complex problem. I just want to make sure we're not doing a band-aid tactic that stalls out and we don't know what the next step is. I think we owe it to the community, and when they're able to step up and support something near them and come out and identify whether it's a private business that wants to step up, whether it's a neighborhood that says, hey, we've identified something we're comfortable with, we should be listening to that. We just don't have enough of the steps along the way right now to really know that what we're telling people it would look like, is actually going to pan out that way, or that those locations would even end up being selected. So I think we just really need to look at this comprehensively and use our time and money wisely. For me, I don't see a quick setup of temporary encampments is something that will ultimately end up cost effective

[2:26:42 PM]

and temporary. So I really need to be confident of that before anything moves forward, in my opinion.

>> Mayor Adler: Great. Thank you. Councilmember Fuentes?

>> Fuentes: Thank you. To build off of what councilmember Ellis is saying, I, too, have some reservations for a sanctioned encampment site strategy. I think even if we went through an rfi process to see if there are any members of our community who would like to step forward and offer their piece of property, their piece of land, and we go through the community engagement process, we still might have neighborhoods who either don't want that in their area, or the property that is offered might be near schools or near a day care, and it's almost like we're back here at the same place. Right? So I wonder if our time and investment is better spent on other types of strategies that are proven and effective.

[2:27:42 PM]

An example that I would love for us to consider is the community first village expansion that is happening outside of my district, phase 4. That will be in southeast in the etj portion on county land. But I would love for us to consider investing in that model to see if we can help accelerate the construction of the tiny homes, and the services that they provide. I think those are other strategies that we should also lay out on the table for us to consider. And should be part of the conversation as well.

>> Mayor Adler: So, I would also add, miss gray, that the direction from the council, and we are looking to and your professional staff, that there's an indicated action all variables considered that you think we should follow, please make sure that we know that. I think you talked a little bit

[2:28:43 PM]

more at the committee here yesterday in terms of what your suggested direction would be. But I think that that's something that council should also have. Other than just presenting the facts to us, and asking us to give you guidance. We want direction. Councilmember Renteria, then councilmember tovo.

>> Renteria: Thank you, mayor. Diane, you know, before we went through a covid shutdown, we were discussing with the downtown commission about building in a barrack type housing close to 300 people. Has that gone anywhere? Or is that something that we lost that opportunity because of what happened with covid?

>> Councilmember, I want to reach out to daa to make sure that's accurate. Obviously they elected to not

[2:29:43 PM]

move in that direction because of covid. I believe some of the dollars they fund-raised for that purpose may be part of what they utilized to support the expansion of the intercare and dak intervention, that mobile mental health team. But we can certainly check in with them to see where they are on that front.

>> Renteria: Yeah, I would recommend that. There was a great opportunity. And a lot of the homeless people were downtown. So they were, you know, working with us on trying to find a solution to the homeless problem in the downtown area. And I'm very interested to see if that's still an option, because it was only going to cost about \$3.5 million to build up a barrack type shelter. And if we could do that, that would be really great.

>> Mayor Adler: Kathie tovo.

>> Tovo: Yeah, thank you. Thank you, councilmember

[2:30:43 PM]

Renteria, I appreciate you raising that. And I think it is -- I think it certainly is important to continue to look for various options. Also prior to the pandemic, we had talked about creating an emergency shelter. While I continue to follow the best practice advice, and understanding of the need to not overly invest in those emergency solutions, what we've learned in this community is that that doesn't always provide the right balance. I know that we need those emergency options. And apologies to those of you who were in yesterday's public health meeting, because I'm probably going to repeat myself, but you know, as a district that had -- I mean, there were a couple districts that had very large designated -- undesignated encampments as a result of this council's policy decision, and so I know firsthand that there are not enough identified places for those individuals to go. And what we are now faced with

[2:31:45 PM]

is a situation where thousands of individuals, several thousand individuals likely are moving to other parts of the city, and we're now tasking APD and the dak with managing that response. So I hope that we will also keep track of what those expenses are, because the costs of those -- you know, those have a real cost as well. And it's not just a financial cost, but it's obviously a real emotional cost and probably a physical cost on the individuals that are going to need to be moved from one place to another. So, you know, at the end of the day, I appreciate the reservations about having designated encampments, from a cost perspective, as well as some of the other issues that have been raised, but we can't -- we must also acknowledge that there's a cost to not providing them as well, because we know we have several thousand individuals who do not have a place to go right now.

[2:32:47 PM]

So again, I appreciate staff -- I know you're working as hard as you can to create those permanent housing options and bridge options, and I think the question before us really is, do we need those emergency options right away and do we want to invest in them. And if so, what do those look like. Do we have the right tools in our toolbox, or do we need to consider some of those others. I certainly support continuing to do the work that this council has done, and investing in community first. I know many, many in our community support that. And I just want to remind the public that we have sponsored fee waivers, that is primarily built through private support, and other support that community first has garnered, but we have as a city provided some fee waivers. And then our staff came forward and provided more fee waivers. So that's absolutely a model that we're supporting. We're supporting a lot of good models here at the city of

[2:33:49 PM]

Austin. The question is whether we need to look to other emergency options and invest in them.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. We have to get to some of the other items. Mayor pro tem?

>> Mayor Pro Tem: I'll be brief. Unless my -- we covered a lot of this yesterday. In our meeting. I will reiterate, unless somebody is open to being candid enough to say otherwise, I'm pretty sure I'm the only councilmember that sits on this dais that's experienced homelessness. On multiple occasions throughout the course of my life. That said, I cannot be more passionate about this subject matter. Unfortunately, I'm not feeling well, y'all. So that said, as much as I would like to say about the subject matter, I'm going to be more reserved. I would like to say this.

[2:34:53 PM]

Like we discussed during the course of our conversation, both yesterday during the course of our health and human services committee meeting, and throughout the course of the conversation today, I just cannot be more deliberate about saying, if we're not talking about the mental health component, I honestly think we're missing the mark. So I just wanted to make sure to reiterate that. And there are several things, but I can do so offline. But if we're not talking about that part, we're missing the mark. That's all. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Thank you. So, I don't know if you need more direction from us? You started out asking for direction. If you have all the direction you need, but if not, you need to come back with a specific request, if it's different than the direction you got, or if

[2:35:56 PM]

you're -- or if your advice or suggestions would be in any way different from what you heard here today, please get back to us with your opinions and direction, otherwise we'll assume your opinion today mirrors ours.

>> Thank you very much.

>> Kitchen: I'm not sure I heard clarity on what our direction is. Perhaps -- well, I'd just ask the ske manager, if it's not clear, let us know, and tell us what our direction was. Because I'm not sure we all heard the same thing in terms of what our direction is.

>> Mayor Adler: That's a good point. If you could just let us know what direction you're following, or if you don't have sufficient direction, come back to us. Otherwise, let us know, and the community know, what it is that we're doing.

>> We'll do.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you, manager. All right, guys, let's go to the next element here, the displacement prevention division.

[2:36:58 PM]

>> So I believe rosy truelove and her team will be joining us. If we could put up the slides for the displacement prevention unit. And I see Rosie on the line, so she should be joining us.

>> I don't mean to cut you off. Chair, could I please?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Apparently somebody called it the Jumbotron. So I can't imagine what y'all see on your end. But apparently me sneezing and wiping my nose, it's disgusting, so I am here, I'm present, but I am going to mute my camera.

>> Mayor Adler: Understood. Thank you, mayor pro tem. >>Harper-madison: Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Rosie, do you want to take us through the

[2:38:01 PM]

presentation? You're muted.

>> We can't hear you, Rosie, if you're trying to talk.

[2:39:17 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Rosie, you might be going off and coming back on.

>> Yeah, Rosie is going to return -- I believe she was going to begin the first portion. Miss Jackson is also on.

>> I want to make sure you can hear me.

>> Yes, we can hear you.

>> Mayor Adler: You have to speak up, though.

>> Okay. I'll make sure I do that. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: I see Rosie's box.



>> Okay, can you hear me now?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, we can.

>> I'm sorry, my other computer froze so I switched devices so here I am starting again. So my apologies for that. Can I get the next slide on the presentation, please?

>> Mayor?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes?

>> So I wanted --

[2:40:20 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: People have trouble hearing you on the dais. Can you get close to the mic?

>> I am as close as I can get to this particular microphone.

>> Mayor Adler: Can we turn up that volume?

>> Is that any better?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Okay. So I'm here today to go over some of our displacement prevention strategies we have. In the interest of time, we certainly won't go through the -- all of the different, 15 different priorities that we have, but I would like to share them with you so you can see the progress we've been making. These were adopted back in 2019, resulting from the work of the anti-displacement task force that occurred in 2018, and working with the innovation office where we consolidated 600-plus applications for multiple efforts, including the

[2:41:21 PM]

mayor's task force on systemic inequities, the people's plan, and the anti-displacement task force. In 2019-2020, we created our first-ever displacement division and have been able to hire miss Jackson. Our covid-19 focused efforts have been on tenant stabilization through our rent program. Next slide, please. So this continues our 15 strategic priorities. If I could get the next slide after that. So this is specifically in response to questions that have come up about project connect, and our anti-displacement funding. As authorized in the contract with the voters back in November, we have \$300 million in anti-displacement funding associated with project connect. This, of course, presents a unique opportunity for the city to address displacement issues that result from transit

[2:42:24 PM]

investment. The city's intentions are that it will guide the displacement prevention investment. We have worked with the community, specifically people impacted by displacement, to create the equity tool, and this tool is now completed and we're in the process of rolling it out to the public, to council and to city offices. The equity tool guide or investment into programs in real estate over the 13-year period, or time frame of the project connect project, priority uses in the process I include a range of potential programs such as investing black and indigenous people of businesses, strengthening tenants, investment in affordable housing along transit lines. In fiscal year '22, we'll deploy our first fupsing in consultation with the community. But to do this, we will

[2:43:26 PM]

require -- we hope to have additional staff to deploy this funding efficiently, effectively and transparently as has been outlined in the project connect contract with the voters. Can I get the next slide, please? So currently within our anti-displacement or displacement prevention division, we have four full-time employees and four temporary staff. The four temporary staff, one is a fellow, and three are funded temporarily out of the housing trust fund to supplement their salaries. Really specifically providing program support and engagement along the lines of implementation of our rec program which is federally funded. We have put together a staffing proposal to add an additional 11 full-time employees within the department to help implement the project connect work for displacement prevention. We have worked collaboratively with the law department and finance department, and the

[2:44:26 PM]

current recommended source of funding for that -- for those ftes will be the 300 million anti-displacement dollars, based on how the language of the contract with the voters, and how that language is being interpreted, that is the most appropriate funding source for those ftes. We're working collaboratively with the budget office to prepare an amendment to be considered with the adoption of the budget to allow us to bring in 11 additional full-time employees to help implement the work of the anti-displacement program. That's the end of the short presentation. I know there are questions, so I would turn it back to the dais to pose those questions.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember kitchen?

>> Kitchen: Thank you, miss truelove. Yes, I do have a couple of questions. First, let me just ask you, this

[2:45:26 PM]

is a bit of an aside to the budget, so you can just tell me the timing and setting to get this information. I had asked a while back for the timeline for the implementation of the anti-displacement strategies, and I wanted to ask to see that timeline lined up with the project connect timeline for the different projects. And I apologize if I've missed it, but I haven't seen that yet. So if you could -- you know, you can tell me offline, but I think it's really important for us to understand the process and rollout for the development of the neighborhood level strategies, with the neighborhoods. And which neighborhoods.

>> Mm-hmm.

>> Kitchen: Because as we all know, project connect -- they're already doing a lot of planning along the Orange line. And the blue line. I suspect there are areas along both of those lines that would be appropriate for anti-displacement strategies.

[2:46:28 PM]

So I think I'd like to see -- I've asked for this before -- I need to see a timeline so I can understand how we're in sync so we won't be behind the curve in terms of the anti-displacement strategies. So can you just tell me when and how we could get a briefing on that?

>> I'm happy to work with you offline on that. That is something that we are working on creating right now, having just really in the last couple of weeks completed the work on the equity tool and recognizing that the equity tool was intended to guide all of the decision-making. That is the next aspect of what we've been looking towards. So we can put together information and share that with your office.

>> Kitchen: Okay. I would like a briefing.

>> Yes, of course.

>> Kitchen: We'll get that scheduled, if anyone wants to join me. That would be fine. But I really need to see that timeline. So back on the budget then. A couple of questions. Did I get it right, is it 11

[2:47:28 PM]

additional staff that are needed for the --

>> That is correct.

>> Kitchen: Okay. City manager, I'm going to request -- and mayor -- I'm requesting an executive session to discuss from a legal perspective -- I understand that the reason that the 300 million has been -- is being looked to as the place to get the staffing is because of some interpretations from law. I have a lot of concerns about those interpretations. I also think that this is a matter for the council to have a conversation about as a whole. And for the council to conclude the extent to which we either accept or

feel like we, you know -- I think it's just an interpretation that the council needs to discuss. My concern about taking 11 staff positions over the next X number of years out of the 300 million

[2:48:30 PM]

is, what it does to that ability to have those dollars available for neighborhoods to work on anti-displacement strategies. And I would like to also -- so let me ask you this, miss truelove. What is the total dollar amount?

>> Thank you for asking that. And I apologize for not saying that earlier. What we anticipate right now, while we have not finalized the exact titles, this has been something that has come up just in the very last couple of days, where we are at a position we can move this forward, we're anticipating about \$1.1 million a year for the 11 ftes. And that that would equate to less than 5%, more like around 4.5% of the total 300 million in implementation costs.

>> Kitchen: So that's about -- are you determining that over --

[2:49:33 PM]

>> Over the life of the grant. The 13 years.

>> Kitchen: Oh, the 13 years. So that's about 13, 14 million, possibly more in the future, because that's 1.1 this year. I mean --

>> Yeah. Really, I should have said, councilmember, it's over 12 years, because year one was last year. So I'm estimating it at about 1.1 million for 12 years, which is about 4.6 right now. With escalation it would end up being around 5. But generally, when we look across program implementation, it's on the low end for expense of this nature.

>> Kitchen: It may be on the low end in terms of a percentage, but that's a lot of money for people who are living in homes along these lines. And are concerned about their ability to stay in those homes. So, you know, this is not the place to have the conversation about the interpretation, we'll do that in executive session.

>> Mm-hmm.

>> Kitchen: I think there's a

[2:50:33 PM]

reasonable interpretation that those staffing costs should come out of the total tax revenue for project connect. Which is a much bigger pot of 7-something billion dollars. So rather than taking money away from anti-displacement strategies for our neighborhoods, I think we need to look at the ability to take these dollars out of the whole project connect tax revenue. So I just want to let my colleagues know that. That that's the conversation that I would like to have, and understand what my colleagues think about that. For purposes of the budget, I don't know if we can resolve this question for purposes of the budget. So we can take it offline. We obviously need these 11 ftes. My thought is that the payment comes out of project connect tax revenue as a whole, not out of the 300 million. But we need some backup, if

[2:51:34 PM]

there's some concerns about that. So I will be considering what we need to do for this budget. Is your thinking -- can you tell us a little bit more about the ramp-up? Is this 11 ftes to hire immediately, or what's your thinking about your need for that?

>> We would want to stagger bringing on these positions. We would look through, based on the early implementation aspects that we anticipate for this coming fiscal year, and we would want to staff up accordingly. Recognizing that we wouldn't go out and hire 11 ftes in the first month of the fiscal year, that we would stagger it so that we're able to get good hiring processes, and not overwhelm even our human resources staff in that process. So it would be staggered over the course of the first half of the fiscal year.

>> Kitchen: Okay. Could you just provide me with a dollar amount? If we were to consider our budget as a backup, and what

[2:52:37 PM]

that dollar amount would be for this year?

>> I will. What I printed out cut off the dollar amount, so you could use 1.1 million as an approximate. I think it's 1.1 million and some change. I would have to get the exact dollar amount that got cut off on my spreadsheet when it was printed.

>> Kitchen: I thought it was 1.1 every year for a full year. Do you need the full year for this fiscal year?

>> I would have to go back and really look to see --

>> Kitchen: Okay.

>> -- If we were to staggering hiring. I don't have that information readily available because I would have to consult with the team.

>> Kitchen: All right. I'm not suggesting that you need to stagger hiring. You obviously want to get the folks onboard as soon as you can. But if you are thinking of spacing it, that's what I want to understand, because I would want to understand what the need is for the first year. For this year.

>> For this year, I would want to recommend bringing in all 11 ftes, just staggered over the

[2:53:38 PM]

first fiscal year.

>> Kitchen: If you stagger it over the course of the year, 1.1 is the amount that you would need?

>> 1.1 is the annualized amount. We would look for a percentage of that 1.1.

>> Kitchen: That's what I want to understand, what that percentage is.

>> Yeah. And I'll work on getting that information back to you.

>> Kitchen: Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: We'll make sure we have that conversation in executive session.

>> Kitchen: Okay.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay?

>> Kitchen: It would be good to -- well, okay. We'll figure out when. Okay.

>> Mayor Adler: All right. Colleagues -- yes, councilmember Casar?

>> Casar: Thanks for the presentation, miss truelove. As far as the funding to a good programming of the right to stay and right to return programs, that is the outreach to the community, the other staffing costs to make that really work, because I know something we've learned from other cities that have executed these programs is it's one thing to set aside units as a preference, it's another thing to make sure you reach out to the people who need

[2:54:40 PM]

the units. What estimated costs do you have for that kind of programming?

>> That would largely be costs associated with marketing and outreach, and potentially employees to really directly concentrate the focused outreach. I don't know that I have an estimate of that off the top of my head, but I will certainly get back to you by the end of the day on what that would look like.

>> Casar: That would be great. Also, obviously we've all advocated for and deeply appreciate the 300 million in the project connect anti-displacement dollars. Obviously there are projects that aren't going to

be as close to the project connect line, that I think a lot of us really want to see move forward. We don't currently have specific funding to support right-to-return and right-to-stay developments specifically. Right?

[2:55:40 PM]

Oftentimes we obviously are supporting them through our clts and housing bond, but we don't have dollars specifically set aside to say this is really to make sure that the projects got the funding that they need. We don't have something specifically set aside for that purpose, right?

>> Correct. They would be funded through our traditional programs, such as rental housing development assistance. Our community land trust properties tend to be already heavily subsidized through our existing programs, but we don't have anything that is specifically set aside for right-to-return, right-to-stay, other than a staff policy, and staff members working to help achieve that.

>> Casar: I just know there are so many projects that are searching for funding, that for the first time that I can remember, we have a backlog on tax credits that used to be this noncompetitive thing, now they do seem competitive. So I will circle back with you before the end of the day and likely post something more formal. I did put it on the sheet that I handed out, but I think having

[2:56:41 PM]

some dollars specifically set aside to support those anti-displacement projects, and really make sure they get through, because I know gndc always has projects coming up that do that kind of work, the Home Depot work, make other projects that have that, may need additional gap funds to really work, and to have the staffing and programming in your office to make sure once those projects get off the ground, we connect with those people, I think would be pre I important. So what I penciled in on the sheet is 2.5 million. Councilmember kitchen, I'll also get together with you as you look at what needs you might see in the housing department as we try to finalize something. I know that you mentioned your staff that are working the rents program. I don't want to take up too much of our time, but just want to thank them for working so hard over the summer. The numbers are really -- we just got updated online and it's really incredible. It's worth looking at the dashboard. But more than 4,000 households

[2:57:42 PM]

help, that's likely over 10,000 people. The households that have been helped are overwhelmingly households by women. Two-thirds of the households are female-headed households. The majority are with children, and the majority number of people are under 30% of the median income. You know, really struggling families. You even have industries on there, it even shows how many people in the arts

and in food service, and in entertainment, lost income, and that you were able to help. I recommend everybody check out that dashboard. Thanks to your staff's work and the council for designating those funds helping thousands of people stay in their homes. So thank you.

>> Thank you, councilmember.

>> Thank you. First, I wanted to start off by sharing my support for councilmember kitchen and what you laid out, in wanting the project connect anti-displacement ftes to come from the other pot of the budget

[2:58:43 PM]

from project connect, from the other revenue that we'll be generating. I think that's an important part of community engagement. It should be treated as part of the overall community engagement strategies and not taken from the 300 million that's been allocated for anti-displacement funds. So I welcome that conversation as well. I guess, one question I had before I have some other comments to give. Is the equity tool available? Is it ready yet? I think it was -- I know the last I heard it was going to be ready by June.

>> So, I would like to offer an opportunity for miss Jackson to respond to that. She's been working and leading this project with Ryan oaks in the fa office. This is a great opportunity for you all to meet her, if you have not met her. She is our first community displacement prevention officer. I see her unmuted. Nefertiti?

>> Yes, absolutely. Good afternoon, everybody.

[2:59:46 PM]

The equity tool is ready, and of course, when you have a new product that you want to share with the public, we understand the importance of what this tool will mean for communities as it relates to project connect. We are working on making sure that it is a process and a tool that not only the public can use, but most importantly, our city leaders. So we have been sharing the tool with capmetro. We have a schedule that we want to share both with the transportation committee and the housing committee as well. So we're sort of outlining the strategy to roll it out to the public, and there have also been requests, when we shared the tool in the cmo meetings, that other departments also want to

[3:00:47 PM]

understand how to use it, and apply it to other investments, for other structure investments throughout the city. So we're working on, what does that look like. We're developing videos, how-to videos, so we



can explain it. And then also, we have had to staff up, because we were sort of short-staffed as it relates to publicity, and how do we publicize the use of the tool. So a lot of work has gone out. It was ready in -- not quite ready in June, but in July. So we're just putting some finishing touches on the report. And you also have to keep in mind there's a translation services. So there's a lot of pieces to this, even though the tool is complete. And we certainly hope to share it with council at your request, when you're ready. And the goal is -- our goal is

[3:01:48 PM]

to have the community members who helped to inform the design of the tool, be able to provide the briefing to city council.

>> Wonderful.

>> So we are lining those things up now.

>> That's great. That's wonderful to hear. I would love to hear more about it. I've been so impressed with the amount of community engagement, and involvement in the design and creation of the tool. So I'm looking forward to learning more about it. The other thing I wanted to mention is, to my colleagues, for us to consider is the creation of a pilot displacement prevention community navigator program. These are individuals who can be part of the city of Austin team, and can help inform our community of programs that we have available within the city of Austin. Councilmember Casar, you mentioned the right-to-state and right-to-return efforts. That would be an area they could potentially work on, as well as the home repair program that we have available for homeowners.

[3:02:49 PM]

And a wide array of other displacement prevention services that we provide. It would be great for us to look into creating this type of model of having displacement prevention community navigators to help support the work that you're doing, miss Jackson, and build upon our work overall. And I believe that's -- those are the comments I have.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. I believe we have councilmember tovo, the mayor pro tem, councilmember Ellis, councilmember Casar. It's after 3:00, and we have two other presentations we want to hit so we can daylight some issues. So let's see how quickly we can work. >>Harper-madison: Mayor, you can take me out of queue.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Councilmember tovo?

>> Tovo: Thank you. The first relates to the fact that staffing, there are several staff contemplated to come out of the housing trust fund.

[3:03:51 PM]

So I think I may remember the first time this happened. And I think we had a conversation on the dais about it. I just want staff to speak to that. I had certainly hoped that the housing trust fund would really also be preserved not for staffing, but for solutions that we needed. And I don't see this. And I just also want to know that in my question, in the q&a, number 27, I specifically asked for some more detail about how the housing trust fund was going to be used. It didn't identify staffing costs. And I don't see on page 446 of the budget, the housing trust fund on that page either. Is that being used for staff salaries? Because it doesn't appear to be reflected, again, on the budget page, it doesn't appear to be reflected in the answer to my budget question. And it did show up in your presentation.

>> Yeah. We currently are funding limited

[3:04:53 PM]

temporary staffing out of the housing trust fund to help us deploy -- to help us meet the needs to deploy some of the federal programs associated with our covid response. So I can tell you for the last fiscal year, the year that we're currently in, fiscal year 2021, that was less than \$200,000, and that was sourced from our displacement prevention line items. We recognize that we do not ever intend to use the housing trust fund as a permanent source of funding for full-time employees. However, in this past year, in the time of need that we had, we did make the determination that we -- in order to bring in staff, to be able to meet the needs for deploying programs like represent and tenant stabilization services, that that was a potentially good source of funding, as we already had displacement prevention activities already earmarked for

[3:05:53 PM]

the housing trust fund.

>> Tovo: So are these [lapse in audio] Reimbursed by the federal funding, given their role in responding to the pandemic?

>> Some of the costs are associated with grants that are being reimbursed. But some of the expenses are beyond what we currently have eligible for reimbursement through those specific grants, like t-wrap is the example. So it's not necessarily the full rents program, but some of the smaller grants that we've received through the state. And the work associated with those programs.

>> Tovo: Thank you. Director truelove, [lapse in audio] Where there may be reimbursed costs for the grants, will they flow back into the affordable housing trust fund?

>> Yeah. When we have been able to, and this is as an example, earlier, probably last fiscal year, with some of the activities that we

[3:06:55 PM]

initially funded, if you recall, the first version of rent that we funded was a pilot out of the housing trust fund, and those costs were reimbursed back into the housing trust fund through available federal dollars.

>> Tovo: Okay. Thank you. That gives me some pause. Again, I just don't like to see us funding salaries through that, through the trust fund. And I also would just ask that when there are, either the budget page or asking for the breakdown of the budget, that those staffing costs be highlighted in amidst the other information. I had a question about the right-to-return policy, the preference policy. Number one, let me just say, I am so delighted to see this moving forward with the new units, with the eight homes. I just want to call out Ashley Richardson on my staff. She began working on the resolution that I brought

[3:07:55 PM]

forward to council back in 2017. She worked, and also want to call out Trish link. Trish and Ashley met for several years, and met with [lapse in audio] As well as the clinic over at UT law. So I'm very, very interested in seeing it be successful and I'm very excited to see it here. I was a little taken aback by some of the exchange on the dais about the funds needs that were identified -- or that it sounds like were identified to make this program successful. My colleague, councilmember Casar, just asked about the need for marketing dollars. It sounds as if staff have identified some needs to make that successful. And I just want to drill down and ask you, have you made us aware of those funding needs for marketing? It sounds as if there may have been some discussions that happened outside of this forum. Or are official memos about

[3:08:56 PM]

that. I would just ask you to provide some information about that, please.

>> We will certainly provide information to the full dais in response to councilmember Casar's questions. I think the program would benefit from additional funding for some strategic marketing efforts. We have found those to be helpful in working through programs like rent and that if we had funding available, we could do something that would be perhaps more impactful than what we would be able to do without targeted funding there. Additionally, as we have staff that are moving forward with implementation of these policies, it's part of a larger body of work that those staff members are working on. So any

opportunity to bring in additional staffing would be helpful as we grow this. You know, remembering, we're starting small, with implementation of the program. So we would want to see how this

[3:09:57 PM]

would grow. So we're not -- you know, we're not -- this hasn't necessarily been on a high enough radar to really have conversations about a larger need, outside of the questions that were just raised by the councilmember. But they are things that we're keeping our eye on as we hope to expand these programs further than the initial eight homes that we have identified.

>> Tovo: We had started with a much broader policy, and much broader scope as you may remember.

>> Yeah.

>> Tovo: And then staff responded and said, you wanted to start with a smaller pilot program before extending it to some of our other affordable housing programs. And so I guess that's part of my confusion, that we had lots of conversations about scaling it back and what would be required to make that scaleback successful. And these needs just didn't get identified. So yes, please do provide -- if you could please provide those estimates to the full dais, that would really be appropriate.

[3:10:57 PM]

>> Okay.

>> Tovo: Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember Ellis?

>> Ellis: Thank you. I will make this quick. I want to go back to the project connect positions. I very much agree with councilmember kitchen's line of thinking, just making sure that the 300 million stretches as far as it possibly can. Could you tell me a little more information about what exactly those staff positions would be regardless of where it's funded? Would it be stationary planning or some other aspect?

>> Think of it more, you know, less on the planning side and more on the program establishment and program delivery side. So we would look -- the way I currently have the breakdown, we're looking at, you know, five or six positions within the displacement prevention division itself to help with establishing new programs, and supporting those, and taking them into production. Recognizing that we also have a

[3:11:58 PM]

need on the real estate side, and we would benefit from solid communication support to really get these programs under way, and have the proper ability to reach the impacted communities. I think also included in there is additional staff for reporting, and things of that nature.

>> Would community outreach be included in this?

>> Yeah, that's part of my communication.

>> I think that's helpful. But the first part of the answer was a little confusing to me. Can you say it in more layman's terms?

>> Sure. We anticipate there will be a number of new programs that will need to be created, built, established, rolled out, and we're going to need staff to be able to do that. And some of them, while we expect some of them will be done in-house, some of them will be done with contracts in community-based organizations,

[3:12:58 PM]

and we will have a process for folks to express an interest in working on things of that nature. So we will need staff to help us get those contracts in place, and to work that process through as well. So staff will do the work of producing the programs. So if we need to expand, say tent stabilization services, that is beyond with what we have wrapped up with covid response, that would be an opportunity. That work is largely being done now with temporary staff. If we have something that we would want to do with homeowners, or with wanting to maybe provide an education campaign about things like homestead exemptions, then that would be another potential avenue.

>> Okay. Thank you. I understood that second round a little bit more. I appreciate you going through that with me.

[3:13:58 PM]

That's the end of my questions.

>> That was probably all me. My apologies.

>> Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: All right. Thank you. Councilmember alter?

>> Alter: Director truelove, while you're here, can you speak a little bit to the cost savings and efficiencies that we may have enjoyed by merging the planning and housing department and how we're seeing those reflected in this budget?

>> So, what you would -- what I would primarily say is, those savings were more accurately reflected in last year's budget, where through the merger of the two departments we were able to resource and reallocate five or six full-time positions to other departments, so we were able to do that without an impact to the general fund. So that primary savings was realized last year. And that was through reallocation of vacant staff from across the department.

[3:15:01 PM]

Planning titles, administrative titles. I'd have to go back and look at the complete list to know exactly what they were. But that was the primary benefit that came last year. What I would say this year, what I am excited to see is increased collaboration across the work groups and how we're able to work on projects and tackle things, you know, such as the displacement prevention division itself, that was one of the outcomes or by-products of being able to merge the departments was the ability to create this more robust staff to really focus on this really important issue that our community has been facing, and has been talking about for awhile, without the merger of these two demts we wouldn't have been able to build these teams we have today through the implementation of project connect.

[3:16:02 PM]

>> Alter: I would ask if we're going to proceed with additional dollars in this area, if we can have greater clarity on what staff is saying is needed. I'm hearing that this is perhaps premature investments, beyond we obviously need to staff the project connect, as councilmember kitchen mentioned, perhaps a legal conversation. But it's not clear to me that we at this stage need to be adding additional money in here when we have, you know, all of the project connect stuff to get off the ground, et cetera, when we add too many things for staff to get up and running at once. Some of the things we most care about, which I would say the project connect displacement work, is one of those, they don't shine as much as they can. So I just think we should be cautious about putting a lot of money into this right now, unless we have a real clear plan on what that's going to be.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember

[3:17:04 PM]

kitchen.

>> Kitchen: Just real quickly. Thank you. And thank you, councilmember Ellis, for -- and miss truelove for articulating some of the tasks that will need to happen with regard to the project connect anti-displacement strategies. I just wanted to also emphasize, which I think is inhesht in what you were saying, miss truelove, the contemplation and contract with the voters was creating with the community

the neighborhood level strategies, which is a planning component? Which is done with the neighborhoods where the anti-displacement dollars will be used. So I just wanted to emphasize that aspect of it. So there is some planning that has to be done, not in the way that we usually use the term planning, but in the sense that this is different than how we've done this in the past, where we've just created programs, and then invited people to be

[3:18:04 PM]

eligible to participate. This is specified to be done at the neighborhood level with the community, which means the people living in those neighborhoods.

>> And that is also envisioned to be part of the work that the displacement prevention staff would be undertaking.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Are we ready to move on to the police?

>> Mayor, I was in queue, but I will drop my question. I will find out from miss truelove offline whether the things that councilmember Fuentes mentioned, how much of those are overlap as far as programming side, but apart from that, just to be clear, I was also just talking about gap funding for some of the projects that we would like to fund, like as far as actual housing we would like to fund that we sometimes have to reject because we don't have enough dollars. That's not additional programmatic work. That's not new programs. That's just when we tell people, hey, we're out of money, so we can't fund your

[3:19:04 PM]

anti-displacement housing project because we're approaching the end of the 2018 bond.

>> Mayor Adler: Sounds good. Let's move on to the police section then.

>> Mayor, if I may, please. I know you can't see me, but I just want to make sure to put on public record, I have a great deal of concern about some of the conversation that just transpired around project connect, anti-displacement. I have concerns. And I will take them offline. I recognize that we have a limited finite amount of time right now, but I -- especially after our very recent equity oriented item, I have concerns about how this conversation is going. So I will take them offline. But I have concerns.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Thank you.

>> Mayor and council, our last

[3:20:04 PM]

topic for today's work session on the budget is around police staffing and funding. We have one other topic, I'll note that it was on the appendix, but it's just the financial policies. We're not going to cover that, unless you want to proactively bring that up. But they are in your backup on the slide deck. But again, this is our last topic. And then we'll stand for other questions. We have interim chief Chacon who will start us off on this topic. Chief?

>> Good afternoon, mayor, mayor pro tem, council, and interim chief of police. I'm going to present a few slides related to our police staffing, some questions that had come from council regarding the upcoming budget proposal, and some of those items were actually covered by the budget office as it kind of, you know, gets into some of the line items that were requested. So if I could get the next slide, please.

[3:21:07 PM]

So, beginning with APD emergency communications. The question came up regarding staffing shortages, and, you know, why those are occurring, and how our retention efforts are moving forward. So I'm just going to begin by telling you for fiscal year '21, we had 212 authorized positions. 75 are police dispatchers. And then we have [lapse in audio]. This graphic actually shows the number of vacancies that we currently have. And it shows that currently we have 25. Actually, that has increased slightly since this graphic was produced.

[3:22:08 PM]

We currently have 29 vacancies of the 105. It says we have 14 for dispatchers. That has improved just a little bit. We actually have 13 vacancies. We have filled one of those vacancies. We still have one vacancy in the dispatch lead category for a total of 43 vacancies. There really are a number of reasons why the vacancies exist. I want to give you just a little bit of perspective from the last few years about how many separations we've had out of emergency communications. And these all are based on calendar year, not fiscal year. So in calendar year 2019, we had a total of nine people that separated. In calendar year 2020, there were 37. This year, you know, as I stated, we've had 43 separations so far. Through the end of July. So we are on pace right now for

[3:23:10 PM]

a little over 50 total separations for the year, if this trend continues. What we've seen with regard to the reasons that people are separating, it's very similar to what we've seen in previous years. The majority of those who have separated -- I'm sorry, so I said it incorrectly. In 2021, we've had 30 separations, not



43. 43 is the number of vacancies that we have. But only 30 people have separated. So of the people who have separated, of those 30, 17 sought other employment. Some of those 17 took jobs in other city departments, and some left the city all together and found other employment. We had two individuals that retired. Because of the stress of the job, we do see a few [lapse in audio] That leave for personal reasons, including that they find out this job is really not for them. And we had five that were in that category. And finally, we had four people

[3:24:12 PM]

that went ahead and moved out of the Austin area and separated for that reason. So as we've seen in previous years, this kind of follows that trend. And I can certainly answer any questions toward the end of the presentation on this slide, but for brevity sake, I would like to move to the next slide, please. The question came up regarding APD modified cadet class. So just for, again, clarification on what a modified cadet class is, a modified class is a cadet class that we bring in current peace officers, whether that's from Texas or other law enforcement agencies that are already licensed, and we put them through a shorter and smaller cadet class. What we have been able to recruit in the past is anywhere

[3:25:13 PM]

from 25 to 30 current peace officers to make up the class. And generally, we grant away about 25. For instance, if we put 30 in the class, generally about 25 of them will go ahead and graduate and become Austin police officers. Just from a logistics standpoint, with the 16-week cadet class, the cost to put on a class is \$703,000. This is based upon the 16-week class. I want to just kind of talk a little bit about the reimagined cadet academy we have going on right now, which is going through a curriculum review, and we would think that a modified class would do the same thing, would go through a similar curriculum review. And after that curriculum review, maybe a little bit shorter, or maybe a little bit longer than 16 weeks. So right now, this is really just an estimate. Our ability to go ahead and

[3:26:14 PM]

start a modified class would be based upon the timing of the two full cadet classes that are in the manager's budget. And we would recruit for September 2022 start date. If I can go to the next slide, please. With regard to APD victim services. We had -- again, a little bit of historical background on this. The victims of crime act has provided grant funding for the Austin police department for a number of years, for grant-funded victim service positions year over year. For fiscal year '22, we were notified that APD would not be receiving any grant funding, and which is the reason we put those eight victim service grant-funded positions, that was recommended, and rolled into the new budget, that they become

[3:27:15 PM]

general fund employees, and become permanent employees of the department. We were just notified on July 30th, so just last week, that cjd had recommended that some grant funding be sent to the city of Austin, as well as some other cities, for voca grant funding, and we've been notified that we will receive \$596,000 as part of that grant funding. The proposed budget for those eight victim service positions was for a total of \$654,000. So, therefore, out of our general fund budget, we will still need \$135,000 to absorb two of the eight positions. And that will free up \$519,000 as part of the victim services budget.

[3:28:15 PM]

Again, just talking about staffing. Currently we are authorized positions for 36 victim service counselors. 27 of them are at the counselor level. We have three lead counselors, five supervisors, and one victim service manager. We currently have four vacancies at the counselor level for 4.1% overall vacancy rate at that position. Moving on to the next slide, I'm going to go ahead and turn it over to budget to go ahead and cover house bill-1900.

>> Thank you, chief Chacon, and cfo. Mayor and council, this is a new piece of legislation passed by the legislature this past session. It imposes draconian consequences on cities that reduce their police department budgets relative to the prior fiscal year. The short version of this slide the budget staff is proposing to us for fy '22 is fully compliant with the new piece of legislation. In the first year of

[3:29:28 PM]

enactment, which will be this year, not son-in-law it compared to the prior year but the fy '22 budget needs to be greater than the appreciate two-year's budget. For us that is fiscal year 20, budget was \$434.5 million. So other police department budget would need to be larger than that amount to avoid being tagged a defunding city.

[3:30:49 PM]

It's common across many other police departments. You further move the emergency communications function, the budget for that function out of the police department, and we made a stand-alone department. In complying with house bill 1900, we've had to move all of those funding sources back to the police department's budget. That's a total of \$107.4 million. So that was the biggest piece of getting

us towards the target dollar amount we needed to achieve. In fiscal year '21, you did put pause on academy classes. We have included funding not only for completion of the current class, it's already under way in the new training protocols but also funding for two additional classes that is a \$6.2 million increase in the budget. We were successful with the collaboration of the police retirement system board in getting very important reforms approved at the legislature for the police retirement system. The city's share of those fixes was \$6 million increase in this

[3:32:05 PM]

year's budget and then finally a variety of cost drivers related to administrative support. There's a lot of smaller items, radio, and annual stipend part of the line item. There was a grant that we didn't get, we moved that into the general fund. That's one of those cost drivers. Those are all your cost increases in the police department budget compared to fiscal year '21. It does get us above the fiscal year '20 budget. So we, again, are fully compliant with the new legislation. On the next slide, there's a

[3:33:05 PM]

saves Austin now ballot petition that calls for a variety of things. I'll just kind of summarize them here. It will call for the police department to be staffed with employment of at least two officers for every 1,000 residents. That would be the largest cost driver of this ballot initiative, if it were successful. Somewhat order of magnitude, is we currently have 1,809 officers in the city, of which 660 are currently filled, or getting those cadet classes going again. We would need at least 2,000 officers with a population of roughly 1 million people. So substantial costs related to that. It does call for three full-term cadet classes annually until we reach fiscal year staffing levels. And stipends that would enhance

[3:34:06 PM]

recruiting and retention. Staff is currently working on a comprehensive fiscal note for this. We're not prepared to present the numbers here publicly, but suffice it to say it would be an extremely significant budgetary implication, ongoing budgetary implication if this were approved ultimately by the voters. And there's not funding currently projected in our fiscal '22 budget for this ballot initiative. That concludes our police presentation. The chief and I and others would be happy to respond to questions.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Councilmember Alter?

>> Alter: Thank you. Can you hear me okay with the mask on? I had originally requested this, because I wanted to speak to some of the staffing challenges that we were observing in the communications department and victim services. I've had an opportunity to have

[3:35:07 PM]

several conversations, including with the head of our human resources department, and I'm pleased that we have a commitment from hrb to conduct the review for both victim services and 911 call takers and dispatchers. We're expecting to have those results in October or November, so we can address some of the pay issues and really get to the bottom of things. I think in both instances there are some comparisons that have been happening that do not necessarily reflect what the department is doing relative to who they're being compared with to date. We want to make sure that those studies address that. I may have some (indiscernible) Along with councilmember Kelly for some of the parameters in that study that we may put in, just to make sure that that's happening. I did want to ask a few questions of miss Clark, if she's on the line. I can't see.

[3:36:12 PM]

Great. So good afternoon, thank you for joining us. As my colleagues know, we have been steadily trying to invest in victim services over the last few years, because of a heavy work load, which I wish we didn't have for our victim services. I wanted to >> I wanted to ask miss Clark about the workload and the positions we gave nut past fewyears. >> Absolutely, good attorneyúall. Thank you for inviting me here.úyes, so workload is, it is high. It is increasing in certainareas. The workloads, I've seen a largeincrease in their case loads andwe had made a commitment severalyears ago for our crisisresponse team

[3:37:16 PM]

counselors torespond. For our other investigative units, some caseloads decreased during the midst of covid. But they've now -- we're now seeing an increase in many of those. Our crisis response team counselors, these are the counselors that work on the streets with patrol officers, they're responding to -- they're supporting victims of survivors immediately after something has traumatic occurred. They are pretty overwhelmed. Our overtime budget, we've gone through the entire budget, and that is mostly from them being held over. They're working really long hours. They don't have staff to relieve them. It is busy, and I know police

[3:38:17 PM]

officers are feeling it, too. So the positions that -- the new positions that were given to us in October, we have not -- so we've received four, and we received a position for a new supervisor and three counselor positions. The supervisor position we've been able to fill internally. That's been tremendously helpful, to spread the work load of the other supervisors. And the supervisors can provide guidance to counselors. The supervisors are also managing our intern program, or managing to help grow our intern program. As far as the three counselor positions, we have not been able to fill those. We may have filled those position numbers through some internal shuffling, but we're still carrying those vacancies, and have been carrying that -- at least those three vacancies through October.

[3:39:19 PM]

So we've not been able to experience the -- what we would like to have, three additional counselors. They're going to be on our crisis response teams so we can better respond to all calls, the sexual assault calls and increase our problems on domestic violence calls as well. So we've had challenges in hiring. And we -- and I -- it's likely that the pay issue, we've had applicants -- we've had to repost positions several times. We've had applicants turn down the jobs in making offers because of pay. We're also now dealing with -- we're going to have some more vacancies. We have two employees leaving because they're getting higher paying jobs. One is going into private practice, another is doing work in a hospital setting in an emergency room, and was offered \$6 more an hour. So pay is probably our biggest

[3:40:19 PM]

challenge right now. And I am -- we've had conversations about looking at our minimum requirements. We require a master's degree in the mental health field, and two years of experience in crisis trauma work. And it's just -- it feels necessary to have individuals with that clinical background, that training and education. So it would pain me to change our minimum requirements. I think it would change the way we provide services, and impact the services to survivors. I just wanted to say something about some of the funds we received for intern stipends really quickly. That has been wonderful. We were able to bring in seven interns for the spring semester, graduate student interns, because we offered a stipend. We're bringing, I think four more on next week, or the week

[3:41:20 PM]

after. And so that will help with our work load. These are graduate students that can take on, you know, in their final year of their field placement and can assist with the work load. And then the \$15,000 we received for emergency funds for victims and survivors, we got off to a late start with that. We weren't able to start using it until January, because we had to work out procedures. But that has been so incredibly helpful to have for survivors. We've been able to get people plane tickets and bus tickets so

they can get to safety. Get people food when they were displaced. Help with transportation. So very much appreciate having that funding.

>> [Lapse in audio] Is a major factor of what sets Austin's

(indiscernible) Apart from other cities. Can you provide some more

[3:42:20 PM]

information on these clinical services and their impact as well as the kind of experience or education that is required for a counselor to provide these services, and what we stand to lose if we do change our ability to provide clinical services?

>> Yeah. So the vast majority of our staff are social workers. Like I said, they're required to have a master's degree in the mental health field. Most have a master's in social work. The difference is, they receive the -- like clinical and therapeutic training in graduate school that you do not receive when you're in the undergraduate program. Undergraduate social workers do amazing work, and advocacy and case management, referrals, and the most victim services programs across the country, the victim services programs with the law enforcement agencies, victim services do not require a master's in the mental health field. We've been doing it a long time. We're one of the oldest

[3:43:21 PM]

programs, I think, in the country. Many years ago we found it was very beneficial. Mostly because we were taking interns from a graduate program. And it was very beneficial to have staff with the advanced clinical training. They're doing clinical interventions, and the office or staff that worked with clients, they worked with detectives, and they'll see clients with ongoing counseling. Our counselors are required to do psychological assessments in trauma or crisis situations. You're not able to do that unless you have that advanced education and training. So you learn about these clinical interventions when you're in graduate school. Our staff are also required to have a couple of years experience working with

[3:44:22 PM]

individuals who have experienced trauma or crisis situations prior to coming in. They're doing clinical interventions. Some are ongoing in the office, but also our crisis response team folks, or counselors are doing clinical interventions on scene. I mean, they have a one-time interaction with individuals that have experienced, you know -- oftentimes they're going through the worst situations in their lives. They can come in and help stabilize, or some techniques to help individuals get to a place where they're able to get statements. They are making assessments they are working in a very high stress situation, they are

not in an office setting, so it's not controlled and they are having to very, very quickly establish rapport and then start -- you know, assisting

[3:45:24 PM]

with -- with -- coming up with interventions to address the trauma. And -- there's some research out there that shows if you can intervene as close to the traumatic incident as possible, it will help -- it can help prevent a prolonged mental health crisis.

[Indiscernible] People having a mental health crisis at that moment. So we think that it's really important to require that advanced [indiscernible] Continue providing the clinical or therapeutic services on scene and in the office.

>> Thank you, Ms. Clark. So colleagues, you know, in my view, the victim services division is struggling on two fronts. This is a division that has been underfunded and understaffed. We have been trying to make up ground by bolstering the number of staff in the victim services to help with the workload. This is now being

[3:46:25 PM]

exacerbated by a second front which is it appears that we may be underpaying highly qualified counselors that we do have, we are seeing them leave for other positions in town that pay them much more for the work that they do. I do believe both of these issues need to be addressed. I believe we can take the steps necessary to remedy that with compensation review and the adjustment and the addition of new staff that I outlined in a message board post earlier. You will see on the message board post that I am proposing that we try to address the extra workload that is in some particular sections of -- of the work that they do and then -- then using the rest of the funding that's available from -- from the grants that did thankfully come through to be able to move forward with the proposals from the

[indiscernible] Task force that was high on their list of wants and spread that out over a few years so we are

[3:47:25 PM]

able to pilot it and then continue with that work over a couple of years. I think that there are things that have to happen in the hr compensation study for both divisions for us to be able to solve the problem. There -- you know, we have to understand in each case exactly what is the problem that we're trying to fix a little bit better. I think Ms. Hays' solution of a third party evaluator is a good next step and I understand because of our contracting process that we have, she will be able to do that rather quickly in

this case. So I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting those efforts and then, finally, chief Chacon it's my understanding that you are looking into the reporting structure for victim services which had been recommended to report to the chief directly but has not yet happened; is that correct?

>> Yes, councilmember, that's correct.

>> Alter: Okay, I look forward to continuing that discussion.

[3:48:26 PM]

As we move forward.

>> [Indiscernible].

>> Thank you, thank you councilmember alter for bringing up the need for our victim services unit to be looked at. I saw your message board post, I am in agreement with you and I'm glad that you brought that forward. I have questions for van eenoo. He said things that I wanted further clarity on, if that was okay. You mentioned that the petition has a significant impact financially and that you will be bringing forward a fiscal note to council. Will that be in a memo or a briefing.

>> It would be a memo to accountable.

>> Okay. Great. You also said that there is no funding for the ballot measure in fiscal year 2022. Could you explain for everyone at home who might be watching what that means as far as how it would be funded? Just so that there's a full understanding.

>> Van Eenoo: Sure. Well, the proposed budget in

[3:49:26 PM]

front of you was delivered July 9th, I believe, so it was delivered before this ballot initiative was even put in front of the clerk and the signatures were verified. It's not in this proposal. I think even if it had been delivered earlier, we will have to wait to see what the voters decide where we would want to drastically adjust our budget to respond to it. If it is approved, we're going to need to do that. We will need to be back in front of this body to talk about how we would change our fiscal year 2022 budget to comply with the ballot initiative if it's approved by the voters. Council can do that. Council can amend a budget any given Thursday.

>> Thank you. Just to clarify a little further, that would mean taking money out of other departments within the city? Or would that possibly even mean raising taxes?

>> Well, you wouldn't be able to raise taxes at that point in fiscal year '22. You know, from my initial read on the magnitude of the



[3:50:26 PM]

cost, I think it very, very likely that you would need to do a tax rate election in fiscal year '23 and beyond to comply with it. The alternative would be making very deep cuts to the remainder of our general fund budget. It's not the total budget. Only the general fund budget. About 40% of that is in the police department, that means that you are needing to make all of those reductions from the other 60% of your budget. So it would either be -- tax increases or -- or steep reductions to the remainder of the general fund budget for sure.

>> Thank you. Do you have an expected time when that memo will be to council?

>> I don't. But we understand that -- that the urgency, I would hope in the next week to 10 days.

>> Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Colleagues. Anything else? Councilmember Casar?

>> Casar: First to the -- to the issues raised by councilmember alter. I'm in agreement about reorganizing that money within victim services --

[3:51:28 PM]

[indiscernible] I have one more thing for you here. But I am in agreement with what you have posted on the message board and what we have heard at 911, resource recovery, public health. So I hope that increasing the stipend for employees also helps retain some of that staff that's been working so hard. And then I do look forward to that fiscal note, Mr. Van eenoo, but what you are pointing out is if the petition ordinance were to go into effect because we adopt it, then it would -- we wouldn't be able to raise the tax rate. We would just have to deal with it this coming year. Or if it were passed by the voters in November, it would require cuts because you can't change the tax rate after we have passed the budget. There's really no other way other than --

>> In fiscal year '21, we're going to have to look at it. There has to go a pragmatism about how we are going to comply.

[3:52:28 PM]

You can't just overnight with hundreds of police officers.

>> Casar: There is a line in the charter here that says the people of the city reserve the power of direct legislation by initiative and exercise such power may propose an ordinance, accept an ordinance

appropriating money or authorizing the levy of taxes. So that -- that line sounds familiar to you as a line in the charter that would -- that would prohibit a -- an initiative from -- from appropriating money or authorizing [indiscernible] Of taxes -- a levy of taxes.

>> That's in our charter.

>> Casar: That will be something that the community and council will have to think about as well.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Anybody else on this? Councilmember tovo.

>> Thanks very much,.

>> Alter: For initiating the really important conversation about victims services and I want to thank my colleague for your questions to Mr. Van eenoo about what the impact would be of -- of the proposition that will be before the

[3:53:28 PM]

voters. Mr. Van eenoo, in your response you provided a good response about what could be required if it does pass. It could require either likely a tax rate increase that would require a vote of the people at our next budget time or it would require drastic cuts to our general fund budget. I hope in your memo that comes to council that you will explain why we wouldn't look to any other -- any other budgets for those cuts. You know, I think that the general public doesn't always understand that -- that those other enterprise funds are self-contained. They can't be tapped for needs such as this one. And so I -- just a request that when you come back to us with that memo, that you make that distinction really clear. And also, I know in?

-- In some years there's been a really handy chart, there may be this year, too, how much of the general fund is

[3:54:29 PM]

comprised of public safety budget. Typically, I think it's like the property tax and the sales together -- can you -- can you help me out here, because I don't want to get it wrong here on the dais. But the largest chunk of our general fund is public safety budget. So if we were in a position to have to make cuts to the general fund budget. Those are pretty drastic indeed. So just ask you for your comments here, but again if you could in that memo just really make it clear to the public why -- why we would need to take those --

>> Sure. If you just imagine a pie, right, literally imagine a pie and three-quarters of that pie is enterprise departments, airport, electric utility, water utility, that complaint be used to -- can't be used to fund general purposes. 25% is the general fund, so you have a quarter of the pie left. About two-thirds of that

[3:55:30 PM]

slice that's left is public safety. And so if there's a desire not to make any reductions to public safety, it just becomes a huge lift for the remainder of your general fund budget. That's why I -- why I feel tax rate election is very likely if we needed to comply with -- with this ballot initiative.

>> Tovo: Yeah. And so I think it might be helpful in that memo to have those pies, which have been -- [indiscernible] In the past and also apply alongside it, but obviously I don't get to direct what your memos look like, these are just suggestions, but a pie next to it showing the origins of that general fund money so that people can really clearly see.

>> Sure.

>> Tovo: What portion of that funding comes from sales and property tax, where their sales and property tax currently go. But again I through that really dramatically -- that will dramatically illustrate where the opportunities are to seek other fundings because the other opportunities are really,

[3:56:31 PM]

really slim. And it would mean drastic cuts to things like libraries and parks and social services. So -- any -  
- thanks very much for the conversation.

>> Mayor Adler: Anybody else? Councilmember kitchen?

>> Kitchen: I had asked some questions about, you know, forensics particularly. Because we had moved forensics and I think the communication department -- so both of them are now back in. So -- so -- so I had asked about the feasibility of going ahead and moving forensics back out. And then considering the funding such that the -- that the APD -- you know, contributes a portion, because my understanding is that -- is that the forensics cost is around 12 million or something like that. And -- and so if we move some of the 8 million that's over, out of the APD budget, so that we could start the

[3:57:31 PM]

process for the forensics lab or department to be on its -- to be independent as we had worked towards or independent department as we had worked towards, we could start that department and just have -- have APD pay into a portion of it out of their budget. So -- so, you know, obviously that's a decision that -- that the group would have to make. I'm just laying it out there. But would it that -- we could do that, I guess my question is, asking you to confirm that that logistically that could be done.

>> Certainly. Budgetary it could be done. It's not something that staff recommended. It's not how we budget other departmental functions or things. We do understand that desire to move out the forensic services department. I think there certainly will be opportunities as soon as fiscal year '23 to do that within the confines of house bill 1900, but it's -- the managing the budget, if you are the head of the

[3:58:32 PM]

forensics department, you know, typically you would have your budget in one area and that -- kind of parcel to part. But certainly do understand the community's desire and council's desire to see some of these units moved off the standalone functions and I think that's still possible within the -- within the constraints of house bill 1900, just not in fiscal year '22.

>> Kitchen: Let's work on that, work on my question. We could do it this year budgetarily. We could do it and have APD contribute the difference, right? That was my question, it could be done.

>> I understood your question to be that you wanted to move out part of the forensics unit and leave part of it in APD.

>> Kitchen: No. I'm sorry, I wasn't clear. What I mean is move it out. But APD has a -- is responsible for paying for some of the functions, so what they would be doing is out of their own budget, out of APD's budget, they would be contributing dollars towards that

[3:59:38 PM]

>> I think it would likely be all of it, but the budget wouldn't change.

>> Kitchen: Maybe I'm not clear. It costs 12 million and all of that 12 million is in the and budget right now. And where was it before? Before it was moved back? It was just a separate department --

>> Separate department.

>> Kitchen: With a 12-million-dollar budget. So my question is could you not take eight of that 12 million that's on APD, move forensics into its own department, put that eight million as their budget and then have the contribution from APD's budget of the four million to pay for the services that forensics does for them.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember kitchen, if I could jump on top of that too. We have some costs and some functions that work for multiple departments.

[4:00:38 PM]

We do that for lots of things and there's a proportional share of that thing goes to those departments that share in it. The forensics lab I imagine has obviously a public safety function with it, also has a health and human services function with it so it might have other functions that are in other departments. The way I heard the question and I think is what the question is is can multiple departments that are all receiving benefit from a function like hr for example, could that be a function among the departments that are associated with it?

>> Yeah. I think we could look to that for you. I think the difference there is like hr is not a general fund department, it's set up as a separate fund and then they charge all these different enterprises with forensics as we set up initially is it's a general fund function so you kind of have the general fund paying itself and it becomes circular, and I'm not able

[4:01:39 PM]

to speak to right now if we were to do something like you're suggesting, how much would be appropriate to allocate to the police department versus the fire department. And we could allocate it and I suspect most of it would be allocated back to the police department and most of it wouldn't change.

>> Kitchen: But you wouldn't have to do it the same. Obviously we would have to go away and see what the math would look like, but I think it's important to ask these questions because, a, it gives us the potential to move forensics into its own department sooner, which is something that we had agreed and were working for. The second thing is it does is it will impact in future years the amount of APD budget because of house bill 100. We do have -- 1900. We do have to remember we're setting the floor because of house bill 1900 because of

[4:02:39 PM]

this budget this year. We're not only looking at last year's floor, we are creating a higher floor for ourselves by leaving the eight million in there. So -- and we're also delaying what we had decided was important, which was to create this -- I want to see the math. It may be that this dais doesn't want to do that or maybe the math doesn't work out for something I'm not realizing, but I would like to see the math.

>> Mayor Adler: I think you raise an interesting question. I think we obviously want to fulfill both the spirit and the laws passed by the state legislature but let see if we can get those things in that context. Councilmember pool.

>> Pool: I wanted to ask Mr. Van eenoo to be sure to also add in the factor of just the growth, the cost drivers that grow themselves because of, well, more employees and a higher contribution to the retirement system and other

[4:03:42 PM]

things because the budgets itself will not be static.

>> Just roughly, it's a 430-million-dollar budget that will grow about four percent a year just cost of doing business as normal, wage increases, benefits increases, fuel costs go up, we have vehicles that need to be fueled, so that will be about \$18 million a year just maintaining status quo operations.

>> Pool: And in the example of the forensics lab which was 12 million, if we were to hang on with its current placement, then actually over just the course of a year or two, we would have additional money that then could fund that forensics lab separately, independently, without having to pull that money from other sources because it's being generated within that department in and of itself.

>> That's our thinking.

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, councilmember kitchen.

>> Kitchen: Yes, my point

[4:04:43 PM]

was obviously the dais needs to decide what we want to do about this, but my point in mentioning the fact that we're creating our floor is I think we're also tying the hands of future councils in terms of what the APD budget needs to look like. The more that we change the floor. We can always still understand that there are cost drivers and may choose to pay for those, but what house bill 1900 does is set a budget for us and reduces some of our flexibility in terms of how we might choose to spend those dollars.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay, thank you. Colleagues, anything else? Are we ready to go into executive session? Ed, thank you, thank you, secretary, thank you for the work today, manager. A lot of work covered. We'll make extensive use of the board, but let's go into executive session now.

[4:06:02 PM]

Three items, rather. Three items. I understand. Three items. Pursuant to 551.071 of the government code the council will discuss legal issues related to items 3 and 4, the potential November 2nd election and the city's response to covid-19. And pursuant to 551.074 of the government code, city council will discuss personnel matters related to item 2, employment duties and evaluation of city manager. Any objection to going into executive session on the things listed? Hearing none, here at 4:06 we will go into

executive session. Colleagues, is anybody on the remote going to be joining us that needs a delay? All right. So let's meet back there in like five minutes.

[4:28:46 PM]

.

[6:05:37 PM]

>> >>>

[6:28:41 PM]

♪♪

[6:33:39 PM]

>> We did not get to e2. We have not gotten to that one for quite a while in many of these meetings. With that, August 5th, 2021, the time is 6:34. And this meeting is adjourned.