

December 8, 2021



Austin City Council
301 W. Second Street,
Austin, Texas 78701

RE: Land Use Commission meetings being moved to new Permitting and Development Center

Dear Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem and Council members,

In a joint meeting recently, current land use commissioners articulated their concerns with moving land use commission meetings from City Hall to the new permitting and development center. As former chair of the planning commission, I wanted to echo the ones that resonated with me from my experience as a commissioner.

1. City Hall has an iconic presence and represents a public space where deliberations, testimonies, policies, decisions, and more, are made.
2. City Hall has well-established safety and security - both perceived and real. During my tenure, I can think of a few meetings with passionate protestors that had to be escorted out of Council Chambers. These protestors then proceeded to exit City Hall and, in an unprecedented move, bang on the windows of Council Chambers from outside the building. These same protestors vandalized houses, surrounded cars and scared many involved in that particular case. In accordance with Imagine Austin, all communities should have a safe and accessible opportunity and place to engage in civic participation – anything less is contradictory to the community supported and Council adopted plan.

Please rescind staff's decision to move land use commission meetings out of City Hall and thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read 'Fayez Kazi', with a large, bold, stylized 'F' and 'K'.

Fayez Kazi
CEO, The Civiltude Group
Former Planning Commission Chair, City of Austin
Former Professor of Practice, Architectural Engineering, UT Austin