

City Hall not Permitting and Development Center

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Vice Chair, Zoning and Platting Commission

Appropriate meeting place?

City Hall

- Symbol of democracy and political discussion
- Landmark building
- Downtown
- Conveys gravitas
- Designed for public hearings
- Land use & other commissions have met here since City Hall opened
- Comfortable
- Easy for public to see commissioners and for commissioners to see public
- Keep tab of meetings from lobby

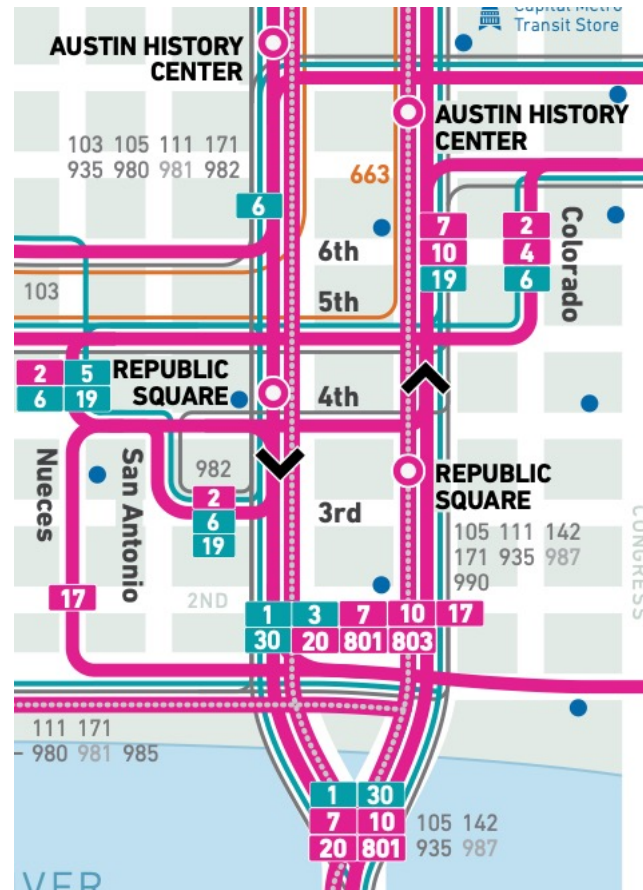
Permitting and Development Center

- *Name says it all* – where developers get permits
- Is developer-focused
- Result of city's goal of "one-stop permitting" push
- Office building
- Multi-purpose room

Moving meetings further away from south Austin

- More difficult for residents, applicants and volunteer commissioners
- Less bus service
- Force south Austinites to travel through downtown at rush hour
- I-35 is not a viable route at 6 pm
- South Austinites must already contend with crossing one of five downtown bridges to reach City Hall; travelling northward would make the commute worse
- A question of equity

City Hall is at the center of transit



Highland Mall is *not* the center of transit

Closest bus stop half mile away from
PDC

No pedestrians

Few bus riders

Poor lighting

No hustle and bustle of downtown's
Republic Square and Lavaca bus stops



Bus service

City Hall

Republic Square SB stop **.2 miles away**

Lavaca NB stop .2 miles away

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 17, 19, 20, 30, 801,
803

Seven high-frequency bus routes

Busiest bus stops in the city

PDC

Bus stops on Airport & Highland Mall
Blvd, **.6 miles & .5 miles away**; Red Line
.6 mile walk

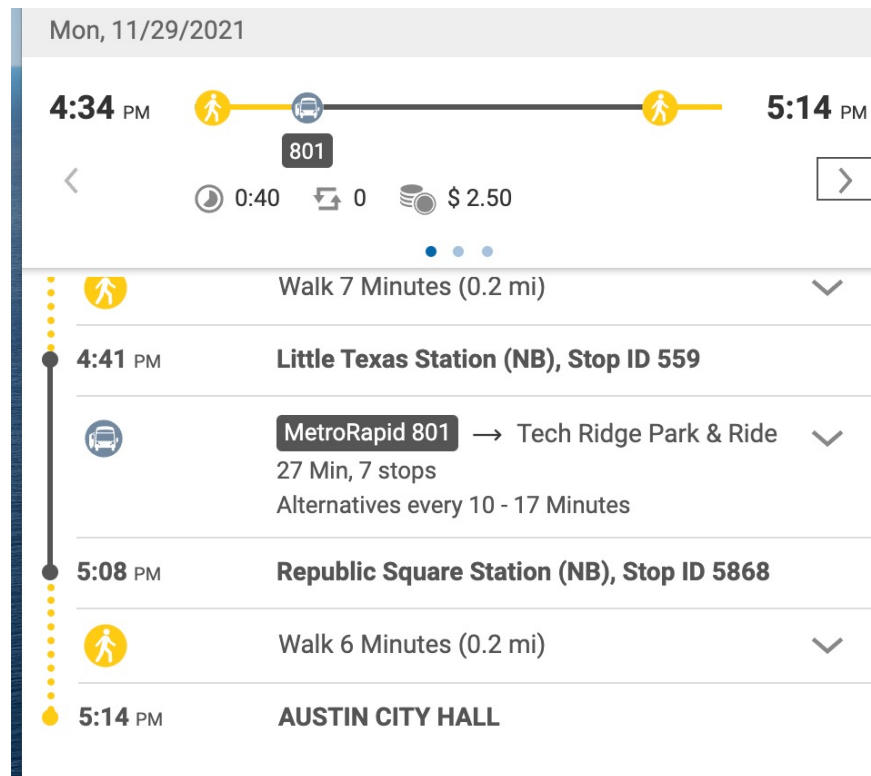
7, 324, 337, 350

Two high-frequency bus routes

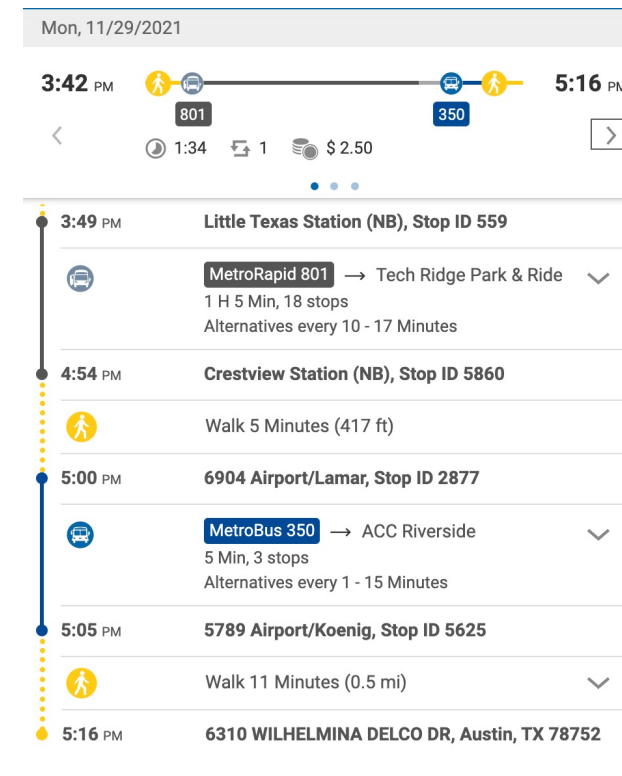
No one at the bus stops at night

D2 bus ride

City Hall – 40 minutes, no transfer



PDC – 94 minutes, one transfer*



* Must walk 5 mins. from one bus stop to another, including crossing Lamar

Personal safety at risk

Immediately
across from
one entrance
to the PDC
(the entrance
with the signs)



No lighting
No sidewalks
No cars
No people

Personal safety at risk



Immediately across from another entrance
to the PDC



Parking lot lit by
adjacent Holiday
Inn

Personal safety at risk

Bus riders
must pass
this dimly lit
construction
site with no
sidewalks

*And no
people*



City Hall more secure

- Metal detectors and security outside chambers at all times
- Secure parking
- Outdoor lighting
- Bus stops are busiest in city
- Downtown full of pedestrians
- Many businesses open late

PDC
multipurpose
room, south side



Moving meetings to PDC sends the wrong message about who should participate

- Transit dependent cannot attend or will have a harder time reaching the meeting
- Potential volunteer commissioners who rely on transit will be less inclined to apply
- Residents south of the river may be less inclined to be commissioners or to speak at commission hearings
- Forces people to rely on cars
- Voters just approved transit improvements yet city wants to move commission meetings to less transit-accessible PDC

Says Austin not serious about equity and fighting climate change

From memo to City Council about the PDC:

(June 29, 2021)

The PDC brings together resources and expertise from multiple City departments which provide permitting and development services for our community. The new facility is designed to provide a seamless development process, all in one place, for residential and commercial customers and special events. All pertinent department representatives will be co-located at the PDC.

- *States explicitly that PDC is for the development customer*
- *"Seamless development process"*
- *Did not mention that land use commissions would move to the PDC*

City rationale for move to PDC

(October 19, 2021)

- Staff at PDC – although this is NOT true. Staff for ZAP meetings is at 11th Street and One Texas Center locations
- Implication that city views volunteer commissioners like paid staff, moving them without consultation or discussion
- Lots of parking!

room for 351-person occi
969-parking space garage
or to February 2022 Rather

- Does not acknowledge inconvenience to public, applicants and commissioners
- Uses Zucker Report as excuse

Since staff invokes the Zucker Report

- Critical study of DSD and PAZ that was originally withheld from the public
- Focus was on city staff esp. customer service (i.e. not returning phone calls) & length of permitting process
- Released only when City Council proposed resolution asking it be released
- Released with redactions and was noticeably edited
- **Acknowledges commission meetings at City Hall with NO mention whatsoever of moving them**
- Zucker makes many recommendations on assisting commissions that the city ignores
- City ignores recommendation that City Legal attend ZAP & PC meetings

Austin activists push for planning report, only to find it redacted

Posted: 12:00 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 22, 2015

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By Lilly Rockwell - American-Statesman Staff

After push from concerned citizens, city releases draft of Zucker Report

Lilly Rockwell

Published 12:01 a.m. CT Oct. 12, 2016 | Updated 10:12 p.m. CT Sept. 26, 2018

Public Notice: Closeout!

Zucker Report finally put to bed? Eh, sorta.

BY NICK BARBARO, FRI., FEB. 22, 2019

453. *Recommendation:* The Development Services Manager for the Current Planning Division should determine when a particular item requires legal representation or other specialized technical staff (e.g., environmental) at the PC or ZAP and ensure that a qualified attorney from the City's Legal Department is in attendance to answer questions.

Contrary to city's memo, Zucker Report mentions that commissions will *remain* at City Hall

167. *Recommendation:* Purchase iPads or laptops computers for Commission members, if they are not currently available in hearing chambers, so

Austin, Texas

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Zucker Systems

that agenda packet materials can be viewed electronically at hearings instead of on paper.

PDC multi-purpose room

Not designed for public hearings



No dais, awkward layout, movable tables and stackable chairs.

Used as a polling place for the last election

Does the city really expect the public, staff, applicants and commissioners to sit for hours on these stackable chairs?



Thank you!