

## **March 2023 HNA Meeting Minutes**

Agenda:

city eTOD presentation

City of Austin staff/officials on the call:

Shanisha Johnson (senior planner on the ETOD at the Housing and Planning department)

Andrea Bates (Interim Director of the housing team)

Lucy Hall (senior planner on the ETOD team)

Zo Qadri (District 9 City Council)

**Barbara Epstein:** Shanisha Johnson will give an overview of Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD) plan.

**Shanisha Johnson:** Slideshow presentation. Some points that were made:

- The city has 9 existing TOD (plaza Saltillo, MLK, Crestview station are 3 examples). We have observed when these kinds of projects went up, a major demographic shift happens. There is a downturn in the BIPOC population replaced by wealthier population as property values increase. ETOD is meant to support equitable development
- CapMetro has led the work on first two station area plans (North Lamar and South Congress Transit Center) which we are conducting community engagement for. They have online dashboard to review what has been found
- Station areas in Hancock: Bennett, Hancock, St. David's , Robert Dedman/UT East
- We are trying to grow along dense corridors, rather than from the core - hope to reduce urban sprawl, live in areas with increased access to daily needs.

**Zo Qadri:** We would love to hear from more folks in the neighborhood. Contact info for office staff:

[district9@austintexas.gov](mailto:district9@austintexas.gov) - general emails

[parisa.mahmud@austintexas.gov](mailto:parisa.mahmud@austintexas.gov) - scheduling

[melissa.beeler@austintexas.gov](mailto:melissa.beeler@austintexas.gov) - housing

[caleb.pritchard@austintexas.gov](mailto:caleb.pritchard@austintexas.gov) - transit

**Questions and comments on slideshow:**

**Ted Piper:** I can see the connection of the eTOD program to the 2020 Project Connect bond, however I am concerned about eTODs focus of "Turning down the voices of certain residents

while turning up the voices on others residents"...as the ballot language for Project Connect that voters approved did not talk about prioritizing some constituents in Austin over others? Shouldn't we be focused on listening equally to all constituents?

**Andrea Bates:** I apologize for that language being included in the appendix. It is not accurate to what the emphasis of the engagement is on. We really want to include more voices that are not typically heard from in an engagement process - want to get a representative sample

**Shanisha:** We think about inclusion when we think about equity. That terminology was a mistake. We will make a correction.

**Ted:** The eTOD seems focused on minimizing 'displacement' of under-represented communities however we have heard one of the measures of success is "the number of multi-unit developments built on lots that are currently zoned as single-family". What is being done to protect families in these single family homes that would be displaced?

**Lucy Hall:** The quote comes from a tool called "Soft Density by Right" from the appendix of the policy plan, purpose of which is to make it easier to develop 4-plexes, triplexes. The appropriate metric there is the # of single family lots rezoned to multifamily. This does not indicate that this is a measure of a success system-wide.

There is no prescribed redevelopment currently. It is the intention to prevent displacement, including using tax abatement, rental assistance, home repair programs. The intention is to protect anyone who is at risk of displacement.

**Barbara:** It is currently illegal to turn a detached garage into an ADU, to rent that out. Nobody is talking about owner occupants being able to rent out ADUs.

**Shanisha:** We plan to incentivize the development of ADUs within ETODs areas. This speaks to a property owner, not a developer using these incentives. There will be need to some code changes. We are working with our Development Services dept to explore those codes that make ADU development almost impossible.

**Bart Whatley:** Since eTOD area residents weren't engaged on where stations will be placed (I note no eTODs are planned in deep west Austin or even deeper east Austin) And eTOD area residents weren't engaged in the goals/metrics for success, will residents have a say in what the regulatory changes will be in the station area? Will different areas be able to have different solutions, or is it more one size fits all?

**Lucy:** Some places have more advanced infrastructure for supporting ETOD and the planned Project Connect system. For example downtown is already well suited.

Any changes made, systemwide or corridor specific, will go through the public hearing process, if you are within a half mile of a development of a station area plan. If something is happening you are invited to give feedback, take surveys.

We are looking at station area plans or corridor plans, specific to the needs of the specific areas. There will be more system wide changes but they won't be one size fits all.

**Nancy Lynch:** I live on 38th and Peck in a single family home just inside the "circle". Absolute worst case scenario, what do I have to worry about? I love that I'm close to hospitals, have transit. I bought this house 40 years ago to retire in. I worry that I will be forced to move somewhere that will isolate me.

**Shanisha:** That is not being considered a primary transit corridor on 38th. We are actively seeking neighbors to weigh in on station area planning - this could have the biggest effect on a neighborhood. If you aren't on a major arterial corridor, perhaps someone could add an ADU to the property next door. Large multifamily developments, no.

**Nancy:** Does this increase likelihood that 38th is widened? City has the right to go within 15 feet of my front door.

**Andrea:** The time that it may take to see the transit system improvements, the necessary phasing of station area planning. My concern would be the time before you have the benefit of improved transit.

**Barbara:** When I read the city's ordinances passed in December, it looked like the City could target any street that had a bus line or proposed rail line for redevelopment. I'm confused as to what impact this could have on our neighborhood.

**Andrea:** This policy plan is focused on the station areas - a limited universe of change. The city could do code amendments outside of the ETOD.

**Charles d'Harcourt:** What do you think is the timeline of zoning or code rule changes relating to ETOD in the Hancock/Bennett station areas?

**Lucy:** Those were marked as medium priority meaning they aren't receiving planning in the first year. We don't yet have a timeline as to when those stations would receive corridor or station specific planning.

**Shanisha:** Safe to say no less than one year. We have to perform the analysis to understand the impacts of our proposals. Probably closer to 18 months.

**Charles:** The zoning changes proposed by CodeNext were stopped by a lawsuit preventing zoning changes to any property without a council supermajority. What will prevent ETOD improvements from being stopped by similar lawsuits?

**Andrea:** Any regulatory changes would comply with the lawsuit. The city has a interpretation of when specific property notification is required. As we see the results of the second lawsuit, the understanding of what legal notice and protest rights become more clear, that is what we will do.