

Newsletter of the Zilker Neighborhood Association

OCTOBER 2017

Austin, Texas Established 1981

CodeNext 2 Does Not Get the Message

by ZNA President Jeff Jack

"What part of **NO** don't you understand?" -Lyric from a Lorrie Morgan country song

THAT LYRIC summarizes the ZNA Executive Committee's reaction to the latest revision of the City's zoning code, known as CodeNext 2.

When the first draft of CodeNext came out at the end of January, we spent a lot of time trying to figure out how it would affect the Zilker Neighborhood. It was not easy. That version suffered from unfinished sections, glaring contradictions, a lack of graphics, and confusing nomenclature. After months of digging, we concluded that over 95% of Zilker would be rezoned, including significant added density using cookiecutter "form-based" transects and changes to parking requirements, setbacks, building placement requirements, and administrative procedures.

In response to these massive changes to the residential character of our neighborhood as well as a drastic expansion of commercial uses, we conducted a straw poll at the April quarterly meeting. As reported in the June *ZNews*, the neighbors expressed a clear desire 1) for more (Continued on page 4)

A Conversation with the Mayor

Joint meeting of neighbors from Zilker/Barton Hills/ South Lamar **Hosted by Council Member Ann Kitchen**

October 26, 2017, at 6:30-8 pm, Zilker Elementary School Cafeteria You are invited to join me and Mayor Adler to talk about what you would like to see related to our land development code rewrite, CodeNext. In preparation I am requesting you send to my office by October 20, specific questions for the Mayor, so we can better ensure each neighborhood is provided the opportunity to raise questions as well as to get a good variety of topics day-lighted for discussion. I hope we are able to get at least 6 questions from residents in each neighborhood. Please send those to Donna. Tiemann@austintexas.gov. Opportunity for additional follow up questions will be provided through the course of discussion at the meeting. We look forward to hearing from you,

> Ann Kitchen Council Member District 5



Election Day is Tuesday, November 7. Early voting is Oct 23-Nov 3.

Precincts 332 and 340 vote at Zilker School (1900 Bluebonnet),

Precinct 342 at Barton Hills School (2108 Barton Hills Dr.)

You may also vote at any other Travis County polling place on election day. Check election info at traviscountyelections.org or call 512-238-VOTE.

Travis County and AISD bonds are on the ballot (see p. 2).

ZNA Election Meeting October 30

Monday 6:30-8:30 PM

at Zilker Elementary School 1900 Bluebonnet

* *

ZNA Officer Election (p. 11) Capital Metro Smart Trips Holiday Families Program (p. 10) AISD and Travis County bond elections (p. 2) Future City of Austin bonds CodeNext Petition (p. 9)

Newcomers, homeowners, renters, business neighbors

All Welcome *

Austin ISD 2017 Bond Election

THE SCHOOL BONDS on the November 7 ballot are designed to modernize or construct 16 new campus facilities, some of which will be replacement schools, and to update campuses with capital improvement projects without increasing the AISD tax rate. Some key projects included in the bond proposition are:

- Districtwide improvements to technology for teachers and students and transportation,
- Improvements to address overcrowding and critical needs, and
- Reinvention programs for 21st century learning. The bond package totals \$1,050,984,000. Visit AISDFuture.com to view the AISD 2017 Bond Book, with summaries of the proposals and campus-by-campus details.

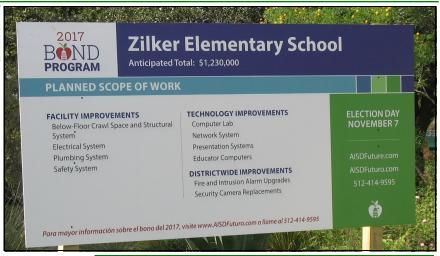
How our schools score:

Zilker Elementary is at 122% capacity. Its facility score is 41 (poor). Proposed improvements \$1.23 million.

Ann Richards School, facility score is 28 (very poor). Proposed improvements \$70 million.

Austin High, facility score is 62. Proposed improvements \$23.468 million.

A districtwide open house is scheduled on Saturday, Oct. 21, 11 am-1 pm, at the Carruth Administration Board Room.



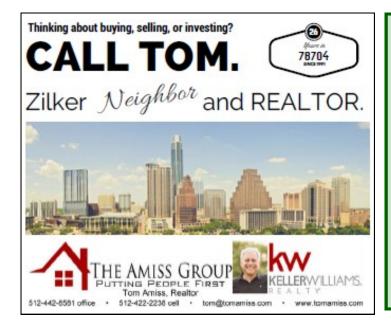
Improvements proposed for Zilker Elementary are listed on this sign in front of the school, at 1900 Bluebonnet Lane.

Travis County 2017 Road and Parks Bonds

TRAVIS COUNTY will have two bond propositions on the November 7 ballot.

- Proposition A covers \$93.4 million worth of road bonds including pedestrian and bicycle safety projects, construction of drainage and stream crossings, and new roads.
- Proposition B is for \$91.5 million to acquire land and improve eight parks and to execute conservation easements.

Also, there are seven state constitutional amendments on this year's ballot.



See the entire ballot at www.traviscountyelections.org.

The League of Women

Voters Guide,

with information on AISD,

Travis County,

and state elections,

is now available online at lwvaustin.org/voter-guide.

The Monarchs Are Coming to Zilker

ZILKER ELEMENTARY GARDENERS broke ground on a new butterfly garden on October 14. The school received a grant from the National Wildlife Federation to create a monarch garden. To ensure the success of the new habitat, they still need help gathering supplies, things like insect habitats, new picnic tables, a rain barrel. If you would like to help with a donation, check out their Amazon Wish List.

To keep up with gardening and other news at Zilker Elementary School, visit the school website at zilkerelem.org. Look for news of Jabo's Garden and the PTA Sustainability Committee.

Support the Friends of Little Zilker Park.

Contact FLZP@yahoogroups.com or littlezilker@gmail.com to keep up with park projects. Or donate through the Austin Parks Foundation.

Visit austinparks.org.

SISTED LIVING

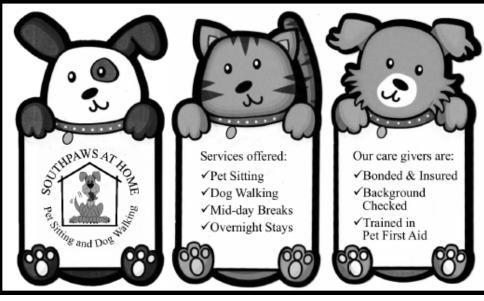
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It is the 20th Anniversary of Barton Hills Assisted Living this year!

We would like to welcome the Zilker Neighborhood to come check out our recent upgrades and enjoy lunch on us, prepared by our own chef!

Please call or email us to make an appointment.





Southpaws Playschool, at 2235 South Lamar, is proud to announce that we have expanded our services! We are now offering pet sitting and dog walking to the neighborhood.

We bring the same level of conscientious care into your home that we have offered at our facility since 2002.

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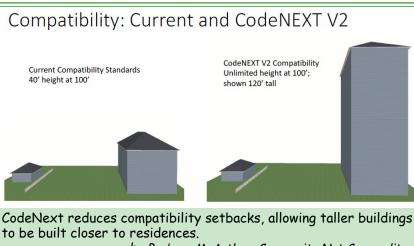
(Continued from page 1) housing that moderate and lower income folks could afford, 2) for more housing for families, 3) to maintain or increase the stock of single-family homes, 4) to limit the commercial uses of residential property, and 5) to maintain or increase compatibility standards between residential and commercial property. (The Executive Committee's full response to the first draft is available on the ZNA website at zilkerneighborhood.org.)

When the second draft was rolled out on September 15, we once again dived into figuring out how it would impact Zilker. A common complaint about the first draft was that it was even more complicated than our current code. At first glance, the

ed than our current code. At first glance, the new proposed zoning map (pages 6-7) looks much simpler than the map in the June *ZNews* and very similar to the current zoning. Closer scrutiny, however, reveals that the massive changes in residential and commercial intensity remain. Our objections to CodeNext fall under these three broad topics.

1. Zoning of individual properties

In our first review, we identified about 40 properties that were mapped incorrectly or with zoning that was inconsistent with current uses. We recommended that the second draft should contain NO inconsistencies with current uses. For example, the Umlauf museum and gardens should be changed from single-family to park-



by Barbara McArthur, Community Not Commodity

land since this land is owned by the City and is clearly a park use. The new map addresses only about a dozen of these errors.

2. Commercial zoning along South Lamar and Barton Springs Road

In July we asked that there be NO increase in commercial zoning entitlements, NO decrease in compatibility standards, and NO displacement of existing small businesses. Instead, Code Next 2 upzones properties along South Lamar from a variety of office, retail, commercial services, and vertical mixed use (with height limits of 40 to 60 feet) to new "Main Street" districts allowed to build to 85 feet tall and much closer to residential properties. Also, under the new zoning, every commercial lot along South Lamar would be allowed to have a bar as a "by right" use (see inset on page 7).

Especially disturbing is the application of





Main Street zoning to the very small commercial lots fronting South Lamar, in violation of the Vertical Mixed Use (VMU) overlay that ZNA and the City Council approved about 10 years ago. The overlay limits VMU projects to large properties that can accommodate a parking garage (like Lamar Union). To redevelop smaller lots on South Lamar, developers would need to acquire the adjacent residential lots, increasing the pressure for "commercial creep" that would displace existing single-family homes, "missing middle" housing, and small local businesses.

And with Main Street zoning along the south side of Barton Springs Road, we could have 75- to 85-foot tall buildings on top of the cliff face!

3. Residential single-family character

The most drastic zoning changes are proposed for our single-family residential areas. We asked for NO increases in density that would encourage the replacement of existing single-family homes with smaller, less family-friendly, more expensive housing. As in topic 2 above, this recommendation also reflected our concern that Zilker lacks the infrastructure capacity (Continued on page 8)



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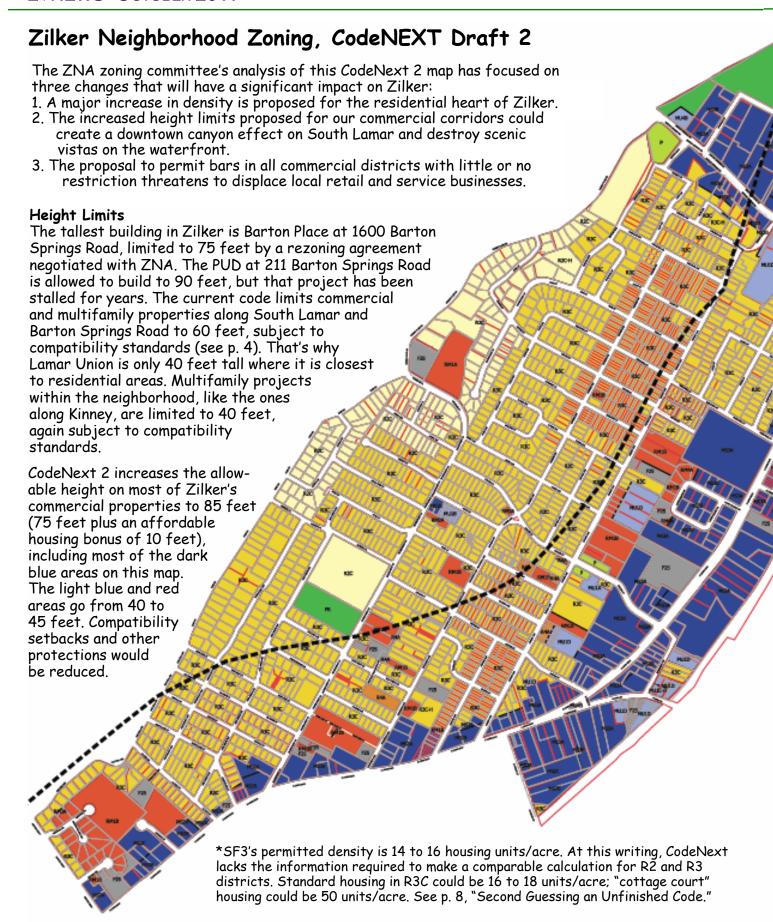
Don CarpenterBS Electrical Engineer

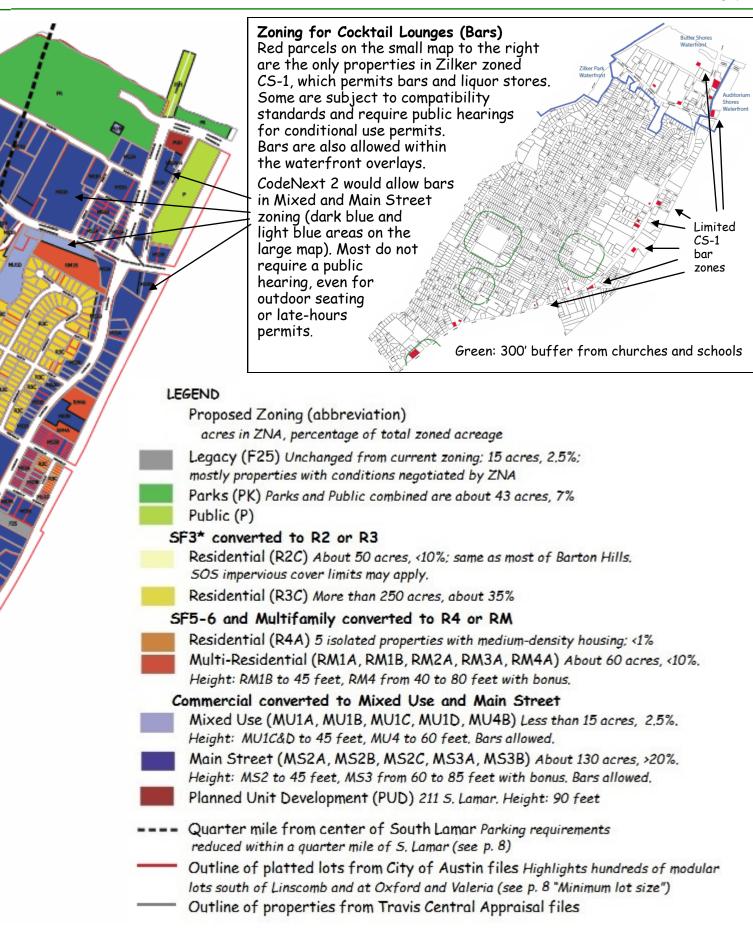
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(Continued from page 5) required for any increase in density.

Instead, CodeNext 2 upzones almost all of Zilker's 1800 single-family (SF3) lots by the following methods:

- Minimum lot size: This draft reduces the minimum buildable lot size from 5750 to 5000 square feet (sf) for newly platted lots, and it would allow new construction on existing lots as small as 2500 sf. Zilker has more than 500 SF3 parcels below 5750 sf. Of those, at least 388 are narrow "modular" lots platted in the 1930s, when it was customary to buy two or three lots to create one homesite (see the blocks south of Linscomb and around Oxford and Valeria on pp. 6-7). If the minimum lot size and width are reduced, existing houses could be demolished and replaced with three new homes, each with an ADU, resulting in six units where before there was only one. This could drastically increase the density of Zilker.
- Size of accessory dwelling units (ADU):
 Before last year, ADUs were allowed only on SF3 lots over 7000 sf. In Zilker, about 890 lots could have qualified for an ADU of 850 sf. The City Council approved a code change in 2016 that allowed ADUs to be as large as 1100 sf. CodeNext 2 would allow ADUs on all residential lots in Zilker, and in some cases the size of an ADU may be 1300 sf, essentially allowing for a full second house.
- Parking requirements: The current code requires two off-street parking spaces for each

daniela, athleisurist longcut, \$45 indy brew, complimentary

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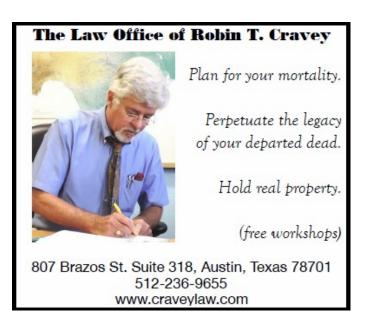
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dwelling unit and one for each ADU. However, no parking is required for ADUs within a quarter mile of a transit corridor such as South Lamar (see map pp. 6-7). CodeNext 2 reduces onsite parking requirements even further, with only one space required per standard dwelling unit and none for any ADU.

Second Guessing an Unfinished Code

Many factors will determine the final density of Zilker if the proposed up-zoning is adopted. CodeNext 2 still has not defined the number of structures allowed per lot, so our estimates are based on educated guesses and assumptions. Using the appraisal district's data on the size and number of SF3 parcels, we estimate that the new code would increase the allowable single-family dwelling units by more than 76% (from 2964 to 5210). The actual build-out would depend on how developers respond to market conditions, but a fair assessment is that Zilker will go from an area of single-family residences with many home owners to primarily a rental area with a preponderance of smaller units. It will result in a significant increase in on-street parking in a neighborhood with narrow streets, mostly without sidewalks, and it will allow more business uses in the residential area. These zoning changes will also result in increased property valuations and the associated impact on property taxes. And demolitions will continue on almost every block, replacing existing houses with much more expensive buildings. Therefore, the ZNA Executive Committee agrees with Community Not Commodity



(CNC) that this draft is worse than the first. It is clear that CodeNext does not know the meaning of NO!

Similar concerns were expressed by the development community, a wide array of neighborhood associations, environmental groups—even the League of Women Voters. So where do we go from here?

To many it appears that the CodeNext process cannot be salvaged. The ZNA Executive Committee believes that if the third draft, due out late in November, does not have major changes, our only hope is to put the entire code to a vote of the people. This can be done by exercising our right to petition for a City of Austin ordinance requiring voter approval *before* CodeNext becomes effective. The petition to do that is being circulated with this issue of *ZNews* and by CNC.

Please encourage all your friends and neighbors who are registered voters to sign this petition and return it to the address at the bottom of the petition. These petitions do not need to be notarized, but if you collect signatures you need to indicate that on the form.

Your neighbor, Jeff Jack

Visit the CodeNext pages of zilkerneighborhood.org for: current and proposed ZNA zoning maps, zoning committee comments on the draft text and mapping, special editions of ZNews.

Also, links to documents by Community Not Commodity and other groups, such as the League of Women Voters, SOS Alliance, city boards and commissions, and the CodeNext Advisory Group.

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Give Your Neighbors the Gift of a Happier Holiday

by Harmony Grogan, ZNA Holiday Families Program Coordinator

THE HOLIDAY SEASON is truly the time for sharing, and the Zilker Neighborhood Association will again provide a special holiday for families who need assistance within our community. All families are selected from Zilker Elementary School, and each family will complete a wish list with the help of the school counselor. From these lists, volunteers, known as ZNA Elves, shop, wrap, and deliver gifts to families for Christmas.

We need your help and holiday spirit! Please consider contributing to the ZNA Holiday Families Program through monetary donations, gift cards, or purchasing a gift directly from the wish lists. Local businesses can give a helping hand too!

If you would like to make a contribution, please complete and mail the form below or e-mail ZNAHoliday@gmail.com for more information. Or come to the ZNA meeting on Oct. 30. You may also donate online at www.zilkerneighborhood.org, the ZNA web site. Any money received for the program will be used to purchase gifts for the families. Gift cards (in any amount) will be given directly to a sponsored family.

Greetings, Zilkerites!

Join your neighbors at ZNA's next Happy Hour get-together,

Wednesday, Nov. 8, 5-7 pm, at

It's Italian Cucina, 1500 S. Lamar.

We visit a different Zilker venue each month.
Look for updates on zilkerneighborhood.org, and on the Yahoo group zilker@yahoogroups.com.

Pat Cramer, ZNA social chair

ZNA boundaries include Zilker Park and Rabb Road on the west and extend to the railroad on the east, Barton Skyway on the south, and Lady Bird Lake on the north. Residents on both sides of boundary streets are eligible to join ZNA.

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ZNA Officer Nominations for 2017-2018

ON OCTOBER 30, the Zilker Neighborhood Association will elect officers to serve from November 1, 2017, through October 2018. The ZNA Executive Committee has nominated this slate of officers:

President: Dave Piper
First VP: Gary Hamilton
Second VP: Bobby Rigney
Secretary: James Russell
Treasurer: Bruce Wiland
Social Chair: Pat Cramer
ANC Delegate: Katy Fendrich
ZNews Editor: Lorraine Atherton

In the unelected executive positions, Bill Neale is returning to chair the Zoning Committee, and Gail Rothe will be chairing the Parks and Environment Committee.

ZNA's bylaws allow the executive committee to accept nominations for the eight elected positions up to a week before the fall meeting, so you have until Monday, Oct. 23, to volunteer to serve or to nominate someone else. Contact any of the officers on the back page, or e-mail them through the ZNA Web site.

Membership and Voting

All ZNA memberships run from Nov. 1 to Oct. 31. To be eligible to vote at the October election or any other ZNA meeting, you must be a member of ZNA for at least 30 days before the date of the vote. If you were a ZNA member in 2016, you may pay your 2017 dues at the Oct. 30 meeting and still be eligible to vote at that meeting. Your membership, however, will expire at the end of the month, and you will have to renew your dues to retain voting privileges in 2018. For first-time members, dues paid after Sept. 30 will be credited to the membership year beginning Nov. 1.



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Newsletter of the Zilker Neighborhood Association

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Advertisers: ZNA reserves this newsletter's limited advertising space for businesses based within the boundaries of the association. (See map on page 6.)

2017 Executive Committee of the Zilker Neighborhood Association

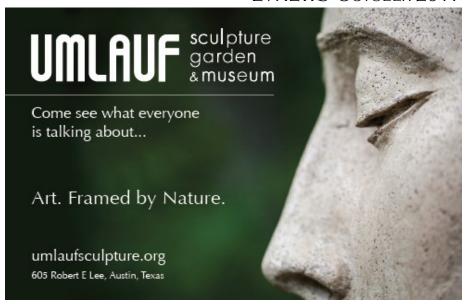
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1st Vice President: Dave Piper
2nd Vice President: Bobby Rigney
Secretary: Gary Hamilton
Treasurer: David King
Social Chair: Pat Cramer
Austin Neighborhoods Council
Delegate: Katy Fendrich
Newsletter Editor:
Lorraine Atherton

Other executive members:

Parks and Environment Chair:
Gail Rothe
Zoning and Code Chair:
Bruce Wiland

The Executive Committee may be contacted by e-mail through zilkerneighborhood@gmail.com



About the Zilker Neighborhood Association

ZNA holds quarterly meetings on the last Monday of January, April, July, and October, at Zilker Elementary School, 1900 Bluebonnet Lane. The Executive Committee meets at the Umlauf Museum, 605 Robert E. Lee Road, 6:30 PM the first Monday of most months. Watch the Web site for updates.

Our Purpose: To improve the quality of life in the neighborhood in matters of land use, environmental protection, public services, consumer protection, preservation of the historic and unique character of the community; to provide support in other matters of neighborhood concern; and to promote and participate in the civic life of the city.



PETITION FOR AN AUSTIN ORDINANCE REQUIRING BOTH AWAITING PERIOD AND VOTER APPROVAL BEFORE CODENEXT OR COMPREHENSIVE LAND DEVELOPMENT REVISIONS BECOME EFFECTIVE

We, the undersigned registered voters of the City of Austin, support a proposed ordinance requiring that there shall be BOTH a waiting period and voter approval by election before CodeNEXT (or any subsequent comprehensive revisions of the City's land development laws) is legally effective. No land entitlements shall be granted or vested under the proposed comprehensive revisions until both requirements are met. Therefore, we, the undersigned, propose this ordinance be placed on the next available municipal election for a vote of the citizens of Austin:

- . Required Waiting Period and Voter Referendum for Comprehensive Revisions of the City's Land Development Laws.
- the June 1st following the next regularly scheduled council elections after Council adopts CodeNEXT or the comprehensive revisions. This waiting period is to ensure voters can learn about the proposed A. Waiting Period. CodeNEXT, or subsequent comprehensive revisions of the land development laws, shall not go into effect legally, or any land entitlements be granted or vested under these laws, until comprehensive revisions and elect council members with sufficient time to amend or reject the prior council's adopted comprehensive revisions before these laws may go into effect.
- under no circumstances, shall the voters' rejection of CodeNEXT or proposed comprehensive revisions under this Section be considered or interpreted as repealing the existing land development code. or vested under these laws, until the registered voters of Austin approve these laws at the next available municipal election. Voters shall approve or disapprove CodeNEXT, or subsequent comprehensive B. Voter Approval. After the waiting period in Subsection (A), CodeNEXT, or subsequent comprehensive revisions of the land development laws, shall not go into effect, or any land entitlements be granted revisions, in its entirety and not piecemeal. Should the voters fail to approve the comprehensive revisions, then the existing land development laws remain in effect. Notwithstanding any other provision,
 - C. This section overrides all city charter provisions, ordinances, and laws and should be liberally construed to uphold Austin citizens' sovereign rights to control their government and laws.
- D. Severability Clause. If any provision of this ordinance or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this Act that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this act are declared to be severable.

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QUESTIONS? Contact Let US Vote Austin SPAC at letusvoteaustinspac@gmail.com

Please print out, fill out all fields that are not optional, and mail to the following address ASAP: Let Us Vote Austin SPAC, 309 East 11th, Suite 2,

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