

Dear Members of Council:

I am writing to strongly request that you be on the dias to vote “No” on the HOME Initiative.

First, I want to say that I would not want to obstruct a helpful policy. It is only because I believe it is potentially very harmful that I am writing this. And I do appreciate the intention here. I don't believe that anyone intended to create a harmful policy.

It has taken me a lot of research to come to this conclusion that the initiative as written is NOT GOOD for Austin. In truth, to date, I have only been 80% convinced that supply-side solutions do not work, which has been enough for me to object. **Now I have the data** to show that in Austin, **they have been largely harmful**. Below I will explain.

But first, some key points:

- HOME has moved too fast without enough public process or data analysis.
- Austin is a dynamic market, not a fixed one, so supply-side solutions are actually harmful in most cases.
- Members of our planning department suggested against HOME on the basis of equity.
- The resolution came from folks who funded Save Austin Now, which was opposed by folks who supported the unhoused community.
- The resolution is based on a template created by the KOCH Brothers.
- HOME has no affordability protections.

Also before I go into the data, here are some summary materials, and I know you have seen those from CommunityPoweredATX. These get into the data and research summaries.

[Why Increasing the Housing Supply Won't Fix the Problem](#) (8 slides)

[Austin's "Affordable" Housing - In-Depth Data Analysis of Total Units](#) (46 slides)

[Community Backup from Compatability Ordinance](#) This has some additional research summaries by topic. It was written in response to the ordinance on capacity along corridors.

NOW FOR THE DATA (see next page)

The impact of our supply-driven policies is having the opposite effect of the intention. Please see this analysis of the last 5 years of policymaking. The impact is clear. We are losing affordable housing and gaining unrestricted units in at-risk neighborhoods. As MFI distorts, causing evictions and increasing existing nearby rents.

	MFI (Family of 3)*	Dollars Per Hour Translation	Total Known Available Unexpired Units Restricted Under Zip Level MHI	Total Restricted Units Built at Prices Above Affordability Threshold	Number of Unrestricted Units Produced through Affordable Housing	Change in Deeply Affordable Units	Change in Income -Restricted but Not Affordable to Zip Units	Change in Unrestricted Units
2023	\$110,050.00	\$52.91	2,636	5,349	25,653	-258	-424	3,535
2022	\$99,250.00	\$47.72	2,894	5,773	22,118	-264	-1,052	403
2021	\$89,000.00	\$42.79	3,158	6,825	21,715	-11	-941	1,231
2020	\$87,850.00	\$42.24	3,169	7,766	20,484	-464	-605	1,142
2019	\$83,300.00	\$40.05	3,633	8,371	19,342	-18	-260	2,543
5-Yr TOTALS:						-1,015	-3,282	8,854

Currently here is the breakdown of zip codes in which the MHI is under the citywide MFI for a family of 3. (3 is used because in East Austin PPH is 2.8, which is the closest comparison).

	100 MFI (Fam of 3)	80 MFI (Fam of 3)	60 MFI (Fam of 3)	50 MFI (Fam of 3)	30 MFI (Fam of 3)
MHI (Updated 2023)	\$110,050.00	\$88,040.00	\$66,030.00	\$55,025.00	\$33,015.00
# of Zip Codes Where MHI is Under MFI for Family of 3	32	27	14	7	1

The next page covers policy trends over time.

POLICY IMPACT DATA

Policy Impact (See the years following the policy). Note that every time a new "affordable" housing policy gets created, it incentivizes a burst of building unaffordable units in at-risk areas. Scroll right to see the impact by zip code.

Ratio of Harmful Units to Deeply Affordable Units (column c): Should be read as: "For every one deeply affordable unit built through "Affordability" incentives, we have added X number of units (either unrestricted or restricted at a price unaffordable to the neighborhoods here) that will bring richer-than-neighborhood people in, increase property taxes, and encourage local retail and apartments to increase their prices. (Ultimately changing the dynamics of the hyper-local market and culture.)

How we are Defining Affordable & Deeply Affordable - We are defining **affordable** as both at or under 60 MFI *and* placed in a neighborhood where the MFI for a family of 3 matches the MHI (because of an average of 3 per household in the Eastern Crescent, and using 4 would dramatize the effect). We are defining as **deeply affordable** units restricted to 50 MFI or lower.

How we are Defining Harmful: Unrestricted + Restricted to an MFI above the neighborhood MFI. Note that some unrestricted units are not harmful, because they are placed in areas that have an MFI already higher.

Policy	Affordability Start Year	Ratio of Harmful units to deeply affordable units	HARMFUL Unaffordable units created in at-risk zip codes. (This is just the ones in at-risk zips.)	Moderately Affordable Units	Deeply affordable units created anywhere.	Unaffordable in Zips Over 80 MFI	Zip Codes w/ Most Harmful Units (Excluding 78705 or UT)	Number of Harmful Units Added in the Zip Code	Number of Affordable or Deeply Affordable Units Added in same Zip
Total: Since 2010 (not including "None Listed")		14	32921	7165	2425	1383			
TOTAL		10	58182	14702	5563	3409			
<i>There are 212 properties whose data on affordability start data is missing. This means we cannot analyze this data. The data is lacking in many other areas as well.</i>	None Listed	12	18515	4561	1557	1795	78741	1558	0
Compatability & Height (EOY 2022) Not Yet in effect.	2023	28	5340	290	192	0	78752	668	0
	2022	9	2508	833	295	0	78751	198	58
<i>Spike in harmfully unaffordable units compared to significant reduction in affordable ones.</i>	2021	32	2563	187	81	505	78751	303	0
	2020	30	1509	80	51	0	78741	268	0
Affordability Unlocked (Effective 4/20/2019)	2019	63	3727	1616	59	0	78724	304	0
	2018	37	3779	1002	102	0	78741	482	0
	2017	17	2877	1354	171	0	78702	641	0
	2016	43	3019	834	71	878	78721	652	0
	2015	14	2340	221	167	0	78702	496	0
<i>375 of the unaffordable units new in 2010 were in 78741 (Riverside). Total since the policy went into effective, there have been 1,708 unaffordable units built with affordable incentives. (Only total 284 prior to that.)</i>	2014	5	2430	397	445	0	78741	487	0
<i>Affordable units: Prior to 2010, 939 had been built. After that, only 682.</i>	2013	5	832	57	152	0	78745	15	0
	2012	4	426	87	105	0	78702	2	0
	2011	0	91	61	235	0	78751	23	100
East Riverside Corridor Master Plan (Effective Feb 2010)	2010	5	1480	146	299	0	78741	375	0
	2009	3	1253	127	386	0	78723	397	0
	2008	11	1632	11	155	0	78702	10	0
	2007	6	1166	293	191	231	78758	471	0
	2006	9	240	192	26	0	UT Only	0	0
	2005	0	67	5	140	0	UT Only	0	0
	2004	160	160	136	0	0	78745	136	0
	2003	0	8	3	197	0	78702	3	0
<i>A delayed impact on units, developers bought very quickly and sat on the land. The impacts in East Austin can be seen in the units when they built in 2006+. But the</i>	2002	22	844	560	39	0	78741	284	0
	2001	17	420	413	25	0	78728	176	0

<i>displacement happened almost immediately. This period did create some deeply affordable units, but at the expense of half the Black population.</i>	2000	1	530	1007	422	0	78741	250	0
DDZ, East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood Plan	1999	243	243	88	0	0	78744	57	0
	1998	159	159	117	0	0	78758	159	0
	1997	0	0	0	0	0	none from these zips	0	0
	1996	0	0	0	0	0	none from these zips	0	0
	1995	0	0	0	0	0	none from these zips	0	0
	1994	0	0	0	0	0	none from these zips	0	0
	1993	24	24	24	0	0	78745	22	0
	1992	0	0	0	0	0	none from these zips	0	0

As you can see, the data does not support supply-side solutions that do not address deep affordability. In fact, they can be very harmful. This is what displaced and at-risk community members have been saying.

All of that said, I do believe that supporting landowners is a good thing, but this should be done in ways that do not allow corporations, rich property flippers and oversea interests to buy up all the land.

Thanks for your consideration,

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HOME Public Comments 12/1/23 - 12/6/2023		
Comment	Date	Source
My property is currently 6,600sf with a single family home on it. While my lot is large enough, I cannot currently build an ADU without demolishing my home due to existing rules around setbacks and § 25-2-774 requiring at least 10 feet between dwellings. While the change is nice for developers buying up these homes and demolishing them, it doesn't seem to do anything to help allow middle-income homeowners to take advantage of the code changes and add value or generate income on their property.	12/1/2023	PublicInput Comment
I oppose the proposed changes for the following reasons: neighborhoods planned for single family housing lack infrastructure (streets, water, sewage, storm drainage) for higher occupancy; loss of safety for biking, walking, children; loss of trees will create urban heat islands; developers/investors will profit, not average homeowners; lack of regulations for short term rentals; generally diminishing the quality of life for those who have invested in their neighborhoods under existing regulation	12/1/2023	PublicInput Comment
I am for these changes and believe they will provide Austin with some great "missing middle" housing units that are medium sized but great starter homes for relatively affordable prices.	12/1/2023	PublicInput Comment
[REDACTED] THEFT AND VICTIM CRIME UNIT THEFT OF MONEY AND	12/2/2023	PublicInput Comment
1. Does lot width for duplex use come down from 50 ft currently required ? (because it really should ...not seeing that called out in the documentation) 2.a is there a minimum lot width required for lot subdividing a lot? I am seeing in the new proposed code that each unit has to have street frontage. So seems like there shd be a minimum width. 2b. Wondering if these new lots cd be flag lots.(As in Can street frontage mean just a driveway or does it mean a front door facing the street) [REDACTED]	12/2/2023	Email
Hello! The two tiny homes in our backyard have allowed us to continue to afford to stay in Austin despite steadily increasing property taxes. I think the majority of the people who are against this proposal do not understand that this proposal is not about suddenly allowing people to live in RVs in their driveways but rather about allowing for 3 instead of just 2 ADUs on properties that are large enough to support it. This actually makes Austin MORE quaint and affordable.	12/3/2023	PublicInput Comment

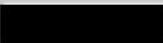
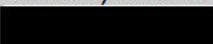
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I support this!	12/3/2023	PublicInput Comment
I am against the proposed zoning changes to single family residential lots. if 3 living units are allowed on a typical residential lot, the effect on homeowners and neighborhoods will be negative The increase in impervious cover will increase flooding; the removal of tree canopy and vegetation will create heat island effect; the lack of parking off street will clog narrow residential streets, impeding emergency vehicles; increased need for water and sewer lines will be costly	12/3/2023	PublicInput Comment
The H.O.M.E. proposal is a boondoggle for developers and the short-term-rental industry. It will incentivise profit making while resulting in increased property taxes, the displacement of lower-income and moderate-income residents, and the despoliation of this city. Driven by the profit motive, the free market cannot solve our affordable housing problem. Austin needs to look to the social housing programs in Europe (e.g. https://www.npr.org/local/305/2020/02/25/) instead.	12/4/2023	PublicInput Comment
To avoid unnecessary confusion on the part of persons developing single family lots under the proposed HOME code, we request 1) that the code expressly state that existing Restrictive covenants are not superseded by zoning regulations that may be more permissive in terms of number of units, lot coverage, building height, parking requirements, occupancy limits, etc., and 2) that persons developing lots are responsible for compliance with restrictive covenants affecting the subject property.	12/4/2023	PublicInput Comment
1. Thank you for that. I would suggest that under home phase 2 the minimum width for duplex use be brought down from 50 ft. Or better yet eliminated altogether. I think that there is a lot of value for community in people having a street facing unit. And that if the builder wants and can in any way create that within other design constraints it should be allowed and encouraged. 2. In addn, i like the sustainability and preservation incentives. I watched the video of the city manager saying that it would add work to planning department and I think it would be worth the work. I am fine w density but if this incented builders to keep existing structures alongside new stuff I think that would make the city look more interesting and diverse rather than just oh Austin was razed and redeveloped in the 2020s:) Please put my comments In The hopper. Thanks for your thought and attention. ++++ [REDACTED] Homeowner and handyman [REDACTED]	12/4/2023	Email

Reducing the requirements for parking spaces will create more congestion on residential streets. It does not promote or encourage use of public transit. Our public transit system needs to be more robust and reliable for people to use it. We should encourage remote work to reduce traffic and travel expenses for working people.	12/5/2023	PublicInput Comment
I support re-zoning to increase density (without parking requirements), especially near rail stations and other transit stops. I'm a single homeowner and so are most of my neighbors now. I don't need 3 bedrooms plus an empty lot to myself. It would be more affordable for me and others to add 4 units in the yard. My neighbors have built garage apartments and the hood is now safer and cleaner. Also, it's nobody's business how many unrelated adults live in a home. "Family" is self-defined. :)	12/5/2023	PublicInput Comment
I am STRONGLY IN FAVOR of this City council proposed change. I am an unemployed, divorced special needs mother with a lot of a half acre (.50) behind Camp Mabry with law land. Being allowed to subdivide and sell with more than ONE residence would allow me to provide financial for my special needs child/adult now and into the future and would also allow people wanting into this neighborhood with access to good schools and location. I beg the City Council to APPROVE this change with no delay.	12/5/2023	PublicInput Comment
I am very much opposed to these proposals, having lived here for 20+ yrs as both a renter and homeowner. This is a sea change for our city that, if it is to be considered at all, should be put to a vote in a general election. It's wrong to take such drastic zoning action without an informed vote from the entire community. I am also concerned the city is opening itself to even more public division and, most likely, litigation. Please reconsider how you are going about this. Thank you.	12/5/2023	PublicInput Comment

Members of Council, Attached you will find a letter opposing the HOME initiative. It includes data that evaluates the effectiveness of our supply-driven initiatives over time. Supply-side policies that have not addressed deep affordability have been harmful, not helpful. After one year of analysis, I finally have the data visualizations to show you the impact. I support the points and alternatives offered by CommunityPoweredATX. My data supports their position. I highly recommend meeting with them if you have not already done so. They have an excellent powerpoint presentation they can share with you. The HOME Initiative is moving too fast to ensure that it will not continue the harmful trend. There are amendments being proposed, but if we can't get to a "No" vote, we probably need a postponement. Please note that I am only sending this to council members serving East Austin or those who have not already signed onto HOME. I am happy to discuss the data further, because I have lots of it. I only included the most important parts in the letter. Additionally, I would like information about how to get this letter included as part of the backup on the agenda. I am adding the city clerk's office for that purpose. Respectfully,   Co-Founder, Community Resilience Trust Director, Earth Day Austin  http://communityresiliencetrust.org/ http://earthdayaustin.com/	12/5/2023	Email
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To whom it may concern: I am writing to voice my objection to the proposed changes to the Land Development code pertaining to single family (SF) zoning. Adding multiple units and families to a SF zoned lot will have a negative impact to the affected communities by: - Increasing stress on existing infrastructure. - Causing safety issues related to fire evacuation - Increasing environmental damage including drainage issues. - Decreasing property values. I urge you to not adapt the proposed changes. Regards, 	12/5/2023	Email
I am against the proposed changes. While density is important, water protection is vital. I expect to see modifications with mandatory affordability requirements and scaling back on impervious cover.	12/6/2023	PublicInput Comment
We are strongly opposed to the HOME initiative, & hope that the City Council members will respect the wishes of existing homeowners by voting against this proposal. We are long-term homeowners who are retired & on a fixed income. This plan will increase our property value & raise our taxes. The increase in impervious cover will result in the loss of trees & green space; cause more flooding; & worsen heat-island effects. Existing utilities & street parking spaces are inadequate for this plan.	12/6/2023	PublicInput Comment
RVs as permanent residences? NO. 3 units on one lot? NO. No limit on adults per house? NO. Please don't rush to pass this. First, improve mass transit - then consider changes to residential use. Granny flats and garage apartments are one thing, but this plan will create a big mess.	12/6/2023	PublicInput Comment
I oppose the proposed changes. I would like to file a protest but do not see how to do it. Can you please tell me how? I've been told that if enough people protest, then the council would need a super-majority to pas it. Is that true?	12/6/2023	PublicInput Comment
I oppose the HOME proposal and the destruction of Single Family neighborhoods. It will not make anything affordable. It will make developers and landlords richer. Unlimited people in a house is not sustainable.	12/6/2023	PublicInput Comment