

## Headlines / Quote of the Week

FRI., JULY 23, 2021

Back on the Dais: **City Council** meets today, July 22, at **City Hall** for its **first in-person meeting** in more than a year. Council will hold a public hearing for comment on the city's **fiscal year 2021-22 proposed budget**; catch it online at [austintexas.gov/atxn](https://austintexas.gov/atxn) beginning at 4pm.

A Dangerous Threshold: **Austin Public Health** warned that **Stage 4** of the local **COVID-19** Risk-Based Guidelines is now "**imminent**." APH is urging everyone, **regardless of vaccination status**, to wear a **face mask** while indoors.

Virus-Free School Year? Austin Public Health, **Travis County**, and the **Austin Independent School District** are encouraging caregivers to get their **students ages 12 and older** fully vaccinated before returning to **in-person learning** this fall. For children under 12 years of age, the entities strongly recommend they continue to wear a mask as the school year begins until a vaccine for their age range is approved.

Takin' It to the Streets: **Rideshare app drivers** in Austin have formed the first Texas chapter of **Rideshare Drivers United**, a labor rights group of drivers for **Uber**, **Lyft**, and others. The chapter joined a daylong **nationwide strike** on Wed., July 21, in support of the proposed

federal **Protecting the Right to Organize Act**, which would make it easier for workers to unionize.

Back to the Redistricting Board: The **Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission** has started holding **public forums** on the redrawing of Austin's 10 **Council district boundaries**. The commission has until **November 1** to approve a new district plan, which will be in effect for the **2022 City Council elections**. Find more at [redistrictatx.org](https://redistrictatx.org).

Affordability by the Numbers: **HousingWorks Austin** released its **2020 Austin City Council District-by-District and Community at a Glance Analysis** covering **affordability** in Austin. Key takeaways include: More than 40% of all households are **housing cost-burdened** in Districts 4, 5, and 9, and 22% of all affordable units in the city are in **District 1**; **Districts 6 and 8** have less than 5% of the city's affordable housing combined.

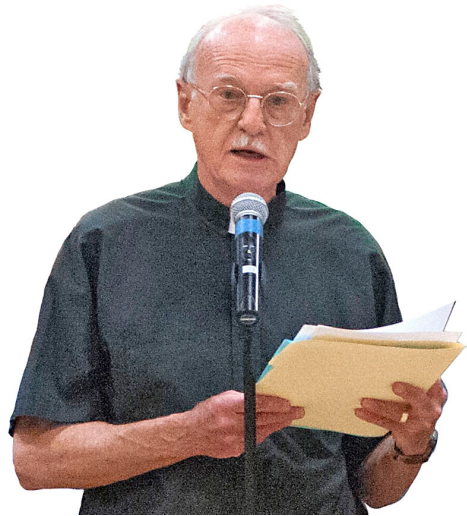
Try, Try Again: **Texas Health and Human Services Commission** submitted its new application for Texas' **Medicaid 1115 waiver extension** last week, three months after the federal **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** returned it for more public input. HHSC is requesting that CMS approve its extension by **Sept. 30**.

In Related News: Days after the HHSC submitted its new extension request, Attorney General **Ken Paxton** filed suit against CMS Administrator **Chiquita Brooks-LaSure**, seeking to restore the prior approval (under Trump) of a 10-year extension to Texas' 1115 waiver.

## Quote of the Week

**"The shell game needs to stop, and both the city and county need to act now."**

*– The Rev. Michael Floyd of Central Texas Interfaith, calling on city, county leaders to immediately invest millions in federal stimulus funds to address homelessness*



*Photo by John Anderson*