

Travis County continues Tesla deliberations with no date set for vote on economic incentives

By [Olivia Aldridge](#) | 7:27 PM Jun 30, 2020 CDT | Updated 7:28 PM Jun 30, 2020 CDT

Travis County commissioners continue to consider a plan to offer electric automaker Tesla millions of dollars in [economic incentives](#) to build a factory in eastern Travis County, but with no date yet announced for a decision on the matter. If approved, Tesla could receive nearly \$14.7 million in property tax rebates across 10 years with additional rebates in the 10 years following.

At the commissioners' June 30 meeting, Travis County community members again phoned in to voice support and concern regarding the proposed incentives. Several speakers encouraged the county to leverage for greater worker wage and protection commitments.

"We are skeptical. Numerous studies have shown that local governments rarely if ever receive benefits commensurate with what incentives cost, and, despite what they say, businesses rarely if ever give incentives much weight when deciding where to locate," said local resident Michael Floyd, who spoke on behalf of Central Texas Interfaith.

However, other callers said Tesla's commitment to pay all workers at least \$15/hour already presents a notable opportunity to residents in the Del Valle area, where Tesla plans to build.

"We've got to start doing some basic math: They're either here or not here. If they're not here, we are still where we are right now, except where we are right now is without health care, without major grocery stores and healthy food options, without proper infrastructure. There's so much missing that with Tesla bringing in that light and increasing the profile, it changes the conversation for an entire community," resident Richard Franklin said. "We've got to start talking about the realities of the ETJ, of Del Valle, where we live."

Most of the commissioners' discussion of the economic incentives agreement took place in closed session under attorney-client privilege, but Precinct 3 Commissioner Gerald Daugherty did publicly ask Travis County Judge Sam Biscoe to give the community an indication of when a vote might take place. Biscoe said he did not feel ready to do so until a discussion had taken place in closed session, but no additional information about when a final vote would take place was given when the court reconvened.

Travis County will continue its discussions regarding Tesla at its July 7 meeting. Del Valle ISD, which is also [considering incentives for the carmaker](#), holds its next scheduled discussion July 10.

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