

Government and Utility Services Introduction

This section of the Comprehensive Plan coordinates government and utility service policies with the overall goals of environmental preservation and growth management. Government services and utility service policies effect the quality of the environment and land use planning. The basic municipal utilities of wastewater and solid waste collection, electricity and water service can be provided within a framework of preserving Austin's natural environment, managing urban growth and reducing urban sprawl

A long range water and wastewater plan is seen as a major tool for pursuing these goals. Annexation and taxation are also viewed within the context of growth management, land use planning and the equitable distribution of municipal costs. Other services such as libraries, fire protection, auditorium and coliseum facilities should continue to be provided at high levels and periodically updated.

GOAL 410.0 PROVIDE UTILITY SERVICES IN THE MOST EFFICIENT AND EQUITABLE MANNER CONSISTENT WITH SOUND ENVIRONMENTAL AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICIES.

Three major concerns relate to the direct environmental effects of utility construction and operations: energy and resource conservation, growth management and reduced sprawl

Objective 411.0 Minimize environmental damage in the construction and operation of utility facilities.

Policy 411.1 Minimize the odor at wastewater treatment facilities and minimize the damage to water quality from wastewater treatment plant effluent

Municipal wastewater treatment facilities should incorporate new methods beyond secondary treatment as downstream uses change, such as the change from non-contract recreation to swimming,

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has designated the river quality downstream of Austin as excellent

Policy 411.2 Reduce the overflow of sewage from wastewater mains during periods of peak flow through replacement or relief of overloaded lines and lift stations

Policy 411 3 *Implement programs to eliminate storm water infiltration into older, existing wastewater systems.*

Policy 411 4 *Minimize damage to creek beds from sewer line placement through improved procedures, including restoration and placement of lines away from the creek*

Policy 411 5 *Locate and construct power plants, electric substations, utility lines, water and wastewater treatment plants and other utility facilities in a manner compatible with surrounding land uses, presenting as little visual confusion as possible.*

One method of lessening the visual impact of utility facilities would be to encourage the underground placement of utility lines within subdivisions, taking into consideration vegetation and terrain

Policy 411 6 *Ensure that regulations on privately owned sewage disposal systems and septic tanks provide for their effective, non-polluting operation.*

Most of Travis County is either not suitable or only moderately suitable for septic tanks. Septic tanks should be prohibited in areas which have unsuitable geology or topography

Policy 411 7 *Oppose the proliferation of independent water and wastewater utility districts*

The Texas Water Quality Board recognizes the benefit of a single, regionalized wastewater collection and treatment system. The City should oppose independent utility district formation where municipal wastewater service can be made available in the future. If there is a demonstrated need for earlier development, interim use of package plants could be permitted with specifications approved by the City. Collection systems should be built to specifications which would permit connection to the City's wastewater collection system.

Policy 411 8 *Limit the use of the pumping and hauling operations of raw wastewater from developments planning to connect to the City's wastewater system.*

Policy supported by City Council Resolution 20080214-055

Objective 412.0 Pursue opportunities to support the Zero Waste plan for the City of Austin to include education outreach, community participation, and other programs that promote energy conservation, greenhouse gas reduction, renewable energy resources, and resource conservation.

Austin's Zero Waste Plan will take into consideration Austin's current and planned public and private solid waste infrastructure, as well as our city's Climate Protection Program. Recommendations developed through this process are integral to achieve the U N Urban Environmental Accord's goal to reduce by 20% the per capita solid waste disposal to landfills by 2012 and zero waste by 2040. Energy and greenhouse gas language is drawn from the Austin Climate Protection Plan which is supported by Resolution 20070215-023.

Policy 412.1 *Evaluate electric rate structure changes as a means of promoting energy conservation*

Electric rate making includes the allocation of production costs to customers and the stabilization of electric loads to maintain low average per kilowatt hour cost. Further reference can be made to Policy 412.5. Under the current rate structure, the per unit charge for electricity decreases as the amount of electricity consumed increases. Economies-of-scale and higher charges for peak use also effect per unit charges. Consideration should be given to lowering per kilowatt hour charges for low volume users within particular user groups to encourage energy conservation.

Policy 412.2 *Discourage the use of lighted outdoor displays and signs which consume an excessive amount of electricity*

Some lessening of electricity demand, and thereby electric generating fuel, could be realized through minimizing lighted outdoor signs. Restrict the total electric demand of new signs.

Policy 412.3 *Evaluate building codes and technology on a continual basis to improve heating and cooling efficiency.*

Implement the most energy efficient building codes in the nation and aggressively pursue energy efficiency retrofits and upgrades to existing building stock.

Addition drawn from the Austin Climate Protection Plan.

Policy 412.4 *Undertake public education programs to encourage more efficient use of heating, lighting, air-conditioning systems and household appliances*

Policy 412.5 *Encourage more even electric use between peak and off-peak times*

Previous policies relating to electric consumption were aimed at reducing energy and fuel consumption through reduction in total kilowatt hour electric usage. A major portion of the cost of providing electricity is the cost of the generating facilities. These must be constructed to meet peak demand. A reduction of off-peak usage without a reduction in peak usage would thus require large per kilowatt hour expenditures for the provision of electricity.

In order to reduce the capital expenditure required for the operation of the electric utility it is necessary to reduce the peak demand for electricity.

Policy 412.6 *Continue to investigate the cost, resource conservation, greenhouse gas reduction, and renewable energy resources potential and environmental hazard of alternative electric generation fuel sources*

Policy language drawn from Austin Climate Protection Plan which is supported by Resolution 20070215-023

Policy 412.7 *Continue to investigate and promote alternatives to land filling solid waste*

Currently the majority of Austin's solid waste is disposed of in sanitary landfills. It is recommended to continue enhancement of the current diversion programs, as well as implement other programs focused on source reduction, resource re-use, recycling, and composting. Help to educate the City of Austin on Zero Waste Policy initiative, continue use of green waste, and look for ways to enhance this market within the City and the Central Texas Region.

Change to explanation necessary to include all of Solid Waste Services recycling activities (recycling collection, yard trimming collection, large brush collection, bulk collection, etc). These materials are taken to different disposal sites and not landfills. Austin's Zero Waste Plan will take into consideration Austin's current and planned public and private solid waste infrastructure, as well as our city's Climate Protection Program. Recommendations developed through this process, are integral to achieve the U N Urban Environmental Accord's goal to reduce by 20% the per capita solid waste disposal to landfills by 2012 and zero waste by 2040.

Objective 413.0 Promote a compact, contiguous and planned urban form using utility service to guide growth.

The patterns of growth can significantly affect the quality of the natural landscape and the cost of providing the many municipal services needed for the maintenance of the community. The sequence of development and its resulting pattern have direct bearing on the cost of providing utility services.

The most efficient pattern of development for the provision of municipal services is one that is compact, with minimum distances required to provide services from central locations. This applies to the distribution of water, collection of wastewater, transmission of electricity, garbage collection, police and fire service. Requirements for transportation rights-of-way are minimized in a compact urban configuration through reduced travel distances. The compact and contiguous form would also minimize the encroachment of new development into environmentally sensitive areas. Development location can be directed by planning the extension of municipal facilities and encouraging full development in areas which are already served by newly extended facilities before additional extensions are made.

Policy 413.1 *Develop a phased, long range program of water and wastewater services to promote compact, contiguous and planned growth, particularly in the City's Desired Development Zone*

Since development decisions are often made well in advance of actual construction, a long range utility extension program addressing the location of major water and wastewater facilities should be prepared and adopted by the City Council. This would be used as a guide for the Capital Improvements Program, funding for which is approved by City Council annually through the budget process. It would coordinate, at the policy level, water, wastewater and other facility expansion plans.

Austin City Code Chapters 2-14, 25-1, and 25-9 and the City's annual budget ordinance support the policy revisions

Policy 413 2 *Coordinate government service facility plans to assure uniform and concurrent extension of all services*

Policy 413 3 *Discourage the use of septic tanks in favor of the centralized municipal wastewater system, particularly in the Desired Development Zone*

Septic tank regulations should be used to reduce environmental health hazards, minimize damage to water sources and promote development within the Desired Development Zone of the City of Austin

Austin Land and Development Code Chapters 25-9 and City Council Resolution 980204-8 support the policy revisions

Policy 413 4 *Discourage additional urban development in City-owned water districts or districts supplied with City water unless the areas will also be provided with municipal wastewater service*

Areas which are outside the city and are served with municipal water should be limited by the carrying capacity of their existing water system unless they are part of an overall, combined water and wastewater plan. This would help to redirect development to appropriate areas within Austin

Policy 413 5 *Continue higher rates for out-of-city water service*

In addition to reflecting the cost of water service outside the city, policies for out-of-city services should discourage non-contiguous growth and development beyond areas of combined City utility service availability, including wastewater

Policy 413 6 *Institute higher water and wastewater service tap fees for out-of-city service than for service within the city*

Tap fees should be used to divert growth to areas of complete municipal utility service

Policy 413 7 *Annex those areas which can most economically be served from existing and proposed wastewater service*

This will encourage the development of areas proposed for water and wastewater service extension as other City services are provided upon annexation. It will also reduce the speculative benefit of holding land off the market

Policy 413 8 *Require all water and wastewater systems located within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction be designed and constructed in accordance with City standards and specifications*

This requirement would ensure future City annexation efforts are not impeded by substandard utility infrastructure and would discourage premature development before City facilities become available

Policy revisions are supported by Austin City Code Chapter 25-9.

Policy 413 9 *Consider extending the present one hundred foot distance within which connection to the City of Austin wastewater system is mandatory for new development*

This would reduce septic tank development on the edge of the city where municipal wastewater service will become available within a reasonable time This requirement would be waived where the local collection system cannot accommodate the added service

Policy 413 10 *Minimize the cost to the City of connection to water and wastewater service if service is needed prior to the Capital Improvements Program schedule*

Policy 413 11 *Limit the use of lift stations which transport sewage from a drainage area which is not served by municipal wastewater service unless such use is determined to be consistent with growth management objectives*

Policy 413 12 *Encourage the development of currently undeveloped portions of the city where utility service is already available, taking into consideration local environmental and neighborhood constraints.*

Objective 414.0 Promote water conservation and adopt practices that will reduce peak day water system requirements and per capita water usage.

Objective addition supported by Austin City Code Chapter 6-4

GOAL 420.0 PROVIDE EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT SERVICES TO ALL CITIZENS OF THE COMMUNITY.

Objective 421.0 Continue to provide a high level of emergency service to the citizens of Austin.

Change by consensus.

Policy 421 1 Continue to respond to innovations in police, emergency medical, and fire service

Policy 421 2 Continue to provide equitable emergency service to all areas of the city

Change by consensus

Policy 421 3 Periodically update the police, fire, and emergency medical Strategic and/or Business Plan

Change by consensus

Policy 421 4 Continue to coordinate and work with surrounding municipal and county emergency service agencies to ensure the highest level of service is provided to all citizens

The Austin-Travis County EMS (A/TCEMS) Department is the primary provider for medical rescue within the City of Austin and Travis County. A/TCEMS is supported in its operation by 18 first response agencies and 16 corporate first response teams. Outside the city limits, within Travis County, responsibilities for first response are shared among EMS/Fire agencies (both volunteer and paid). The City of Austin EMS Department expanded its services to include all of Travis County under an Interlocal Governmental Agreement beginning May of 1977. After an exhaustive assessment by A/TCEMS System stakeholders (1998-2001) regarding which government should host the A/TCEMS Department, it was recommended that the City of Austin continue in its current role as the managing entity for A/TCEMS. Under an expanded interlocal governmental agreement, Travis County formally transferred all of its EMS related administrative duties to the City of Austin EMS Department to streamline operations and minimize duplications in administrative process. The EMS Communication Center is located within the Combined Transportation Emergency & Communications Center (CTECC), all City/County 911 calls for EMS assistance are processed through this center.

Objective 422.0 Continue to provide a high level of library service to citizens in all areas of Austin.

Policy 422.1 Periodically update the Library Facilities Master Plan to provide adequate central, resource and branch library facilities.

Council Resolution 010301-20 supported the funding and creation of the Austin Public Library Facilities Master Plan which is currently utilized

Policy 422.2 Consider a joint City/County library system.

In order to provide superior library service to the entire region, a metropolitan library system should be considered, provided that Travis County pays its proportional share of the costs

Objective 423.0 Continue to provide municipal facilities for major cultural events.

Policy 423 1 *Maintain auditorium and coliseum facilities for municipal activities.*

Policy 423.2 *Investigate the need for new or improved facilities for major cultural events*

Objective 424.0 Locate municipal offices and service yards to provide maximum service to the public.

Policy 424 1 *Continue to consolidate the location of the main offices of municipal departments.*

The central offices of municipal departments should continue to be consolidated to promote efficient interdepartmental operations and to provide a single central location where all municipal staff services are available and other city government and public business can be conducted

Policy 424 2 *Provide regional or neighborhood municipal office centers for selected government business.*

Policy 424 3 *Develop a public facility plan to coordinate municipal service yard operations and designate municipal office locations*

Objective 425.0 Correct existing deficiencies in utility service to neighborhoods.

Existing neighborhoods should receive highest priority in the long range program of utility improvements and in the preparations of the Capital Improvements Program

GOAL 430.0 COORDINATE THE EXTENSION OF MUNICIPAL SERVICE, LAND USE CONTROL AND MUNICIPAL TAXING AUTHORITY THROUGH A LONG RANGE PLAN WHICH SETS PRIORITIES FOR ANNEXATION.

Objective 431.0 Establish a plan for annual annexations which promotes sound development and fairly distributes the cost of municipal services.

An annexation plan which is coordinated with a utility extension and facility plan should link the provision of municipal services with the *ad valorem* tax revenues needed to pay for those services, and extend land use and development controls. Three main categories of land surrounding the city may be annexed: residential land or undeveloped land with the potential for residential development, industrial and large scale commercial areas, and areas of environmental concern

Policy 431.1 *Annex areas which will be provided with government services and utilities through coordinated municipal utility and service extension plans and the Capital Improvements Program*

Residents outside Austin receive the benefit of many City services, such as major park and library facilities, the airport, auditorium facilities and cultural and recreational programs. The additional benefits of police and fire protection and City sanitation service would become available upon annexation

In most instances, the annexation and development of land depends on the extension of water and wastewater service. The general areas to be served by overall facility plans would be considered prior to annexation. Annexation and extension of water and wastewater mains would be coordinated through the Capital Improvements Program

Annexation of desired development locations would encourage more rapid subdivision within those areas, provide for utility main extensions, more rapidly return *ad valorem* fiscal benefits and utility revenues, and extend land use and building quality regulations

Policy 431.2 *Continue to annex major industrial and commercial areas on the periphery of the city*

Based on the municipal services provided, there is little difference between industry and commerce located within or on the periphery of the city. Both benefit from a stable, sound community from which to attract labor and customers. In order for both industry and commerce to share equally in the cost of maintaining the city, they should be included in the *ad valorem* tax base.

Policy 431.3 *Consider annexation of those areas of natural environmental sensitivity*

Areas of particular natural environmental sensitivity should be annexed and designated for environmental conservation. Detailed performance standards for development should be applied to prevent their degradation. Large developments would be required to meet currently available municipal services, including water and sewer facilities.

GOAL 440.0 ASSURE QUALITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH EQUITABLE TAX POLICIES.

Objective 441.0 Promote quality development through tax policies.

Policy 441.1 *Support the enactment of state-enabling legislation to permit property tax incentives for historic structures*

One method to preserve historic structures and prevent the property's conversion to more intensive use is to reduce the cost to the owner of the historic structure through lower property taxes.

Policy 441.2 *Investigate the feasibility of legislation which would permit tax incentives to promote renovation of deteriorated structures*

Increased property value and resulting higher taxes often deter the owners of deteriorating structures from renovating their homes, even when financing is available through public programs. Special legislation should be investigated that might permit a delay in tax reappraisal where increased taxes deter housing rehabilitation.

Policy 441.3 *Stabilize taxes on residential property in older neighborhoods through improved zoning controls*

In many older neighborhoods undergoing some transition in land use, the potential for higher intensity use increases land value. This, in turn, increases property taxes. Speculative increases can be minimized by protecting neighborhoods through improved zoning controls, as discussed in Policy 511.2.

Policy number changed since Austin Tomorrow referenced the incorrect policy number.

Objective 442.0 Support fiscal policies which aid the poor.

Policy 442 1 *Continue to provide property tax exemptions for the elderly.*

There is currently a five thousand property tax exemption for homesteaded residential property of persons age sixty-five and over, as permitted by state law.

Policy 442 2 *Encourage state legislation which would give property tax relief to low income persons.*

The Goals Program suggests tax relief for low income persons. The burden of property taxes falls heaviest on low income and fixed income persons. Current legislation does not allow for any relief to particular groups of persons other than the elderly. Other states have adopted procedures whereby property taxes which exceed a given percentage of a person's income, either in total or according to a graduated scale, are refunded. The City should support State adoption of such a circuit breaker property tax approach.

Objective 443.0 Continue to investigate alternate sources of revenue to augment municipal funds

Federal, state and other funding sources should be actively pursued to aid the City in providing services and facilities. General revenue sharing, Housing and Community Development funds and other sources can supplement standard municipal funds from sales and ad valorem taxes, utility revenues and user charges for municipal services.

Housing, Neighborhoods, and Community Development Introduction

This section is designed to provide a coordinated strategy to assure a quality residential environment for all of the residents of Austin. The overall objective of this topic area coincides with a long-standing national community development goal enacted by Congress to provide a decent, safe, and affordable housing and a suitable living environment for low- to moderate-income households. The strategy used consists of two interrelated parts, and each part is aimed at the achievement of a basic housing goal.

The first of these goals concentrates on the assurance of the quality of neighborhoods within the city, while the second goal is directed at the provision of housing stock of sufficient quality and at such a cost that adequate housing is available to each resident of the city. These two interrelated goals, if not approached with a series of very carefully articulated and coordinated policies and programs, may become mutually exclusive. A balance between neighborhood environment and the quality and affordability of available housing primarily for low- to moderate-income residents of the city is critical for the effective implementation of the following policy guidelines.

Policy revisions reflect language found in the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Consolidated Plan and Action Plans.

GOAL 510.0 IMPROVE HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY

The quality of the city's housing and neighborhoods, including older, centrally located neighborhoods, is important to the well-being of every resident in the community. The city has a considerable number of policies, programs, and controls that have impact on various aspects of the quality of residential areas. The coordination of these diverse efforts, as well as the maximization of their effectiveness, is imperative to the achievement of quality housing and neighborhoods. It is also essential that programs directed at the improvement of neighborhood quality be tailored to the specific needs of the residents in the neighborhood.

Objective 511.0 Assure the continued identity and improve the quality of Austin's existing residential neighborhoods.

Policy 511.1 Develop and implement specific, detailed plans tailored to the needs of each neighborhood

The boundaries of the individual neighborhood units that compose the city should be defined, and City policy relating to the location of arterial streets and all other public facilities and services should recognize these boundaries.

Policy 511.2 *Protect existing neighborhood from the intrusion of higher intensity land uses*

The Zoning Ordinance should provide protection for single-family neighborhoods, especially those experiencing redevelopment pressure. The Ordinance should effectively deal with the negative results of traffic and parking problems, privacy intrusions, bright lighting, signs and other detrimental products of high intensity land uses. Higher intensity land uses in older centrally located neighborhoods have had a deteriorating effect upon neighborhood cohesion, character, security and safety. Neighborhood preservation should be the ultimate goal in the concept and administration of the Zoning Ordinance.

Policy 511.3 *Increase of the power of neighborhood residents in decisions affecting the neighborhood*

Citizen participation in the planning process is essential. Associations representing each neighborhood in the city should be encouraged and citizen input on zoning changes and other public policy should be sought and used.

Policy 511.4 *Expand notification for proposed zoning changes*

The number of area residents who are notified of a proposed zoning change should be increased. Renters should also be notified by the most practical means available. The procedures that notify neighborhood residents of proposed zoning changes should strive to be timely and accurate. Area residents notified of a proposed zoning change should also include neighborhood associations, homeowner associations, businesses, and other neighborhood stakeholders.

Policy addition based on zoning process adopted in S M A R T (Safe, Mixed Income, Accessible, Reasonably Priced, Transit Oriented) Housing Policy Resource Guide. The S M A R T Housing policy initiative is designed to stimulate the production of affordable housing for low and moderate income residents of Austin. Through the S M A R T Housing policy, the City of Austin provides fee waivers and S M A R T Housing development review, typically faster than conventional review. This initiative applies to new single-family, multi-family and infill development.

Policy 5115 *Develop and review regulations and incentives tailored to affordable housing goals and construction costs associated with different neighborhoods*

Require regular review of regulations and incentives designed to promote geographic dispersion of affordable housing to determine whether these are proving successful and adjust to match and anticipate changing market conditions

Policy addition based upon Council-approved S M A R T. Housing Policy

Objective 512.0 Continue controls over the condition of existing housing.

The Housing Code and technical provisions of the Land Development Code are the most important control available to the City to maintain housing quality and to prevent the deterioration of the existing housing stock

Extensive code enforcement could help the city promote property maintenance and the rehabilitation of existing buildings

Policy Revisions based on Chapter 25-12 of the Austin City Code

Policy 5121 *Increase the effectiveness of the Housing Code and the Code Enforcement Program.*

Balance the efforts of the Uniform Housing Code enforcement with the goal of preserving and expanding housing affordability A narrow focus on code enforcement alone could result in increased displacement of low-income renters and homeowners

Policy revisions based on Part 4 of the S M A R T. Housing Ordinance requiring Affordability Impact Statements. The Uniform Housing Code, not the Uniform Building Code is the adopted Housing Code. Policy language revisions reflect that code enforcement is not part of Building Inspection

Policy 512.2 *Require strict compliance with the Code Enforcement Program, especially in the case of substandard rental property.*

The use of Certificates of Occupancy, through a program such as Rental Licensing, can provide a realistic mechanism for periodic evaluation of the effects of deterioration upon the stock of rental housing in the city, as well as a useful tool for arresting deterioration. The City would thus be given control over the condition of rental property in the community

Policy 512.3 *Monitor housing conditions, supply and deterioration trends, and evaluate the effectiveness of housing programs and the preservation of affordable housing*

A continuing source of up-to-date information regarding housing condition is essential for meeting city-wide housing needs. Adequate funds should be provided to maintain a continuous survey and review of housing characteristics and their effect on residents. Such surveys would provide a basis for determining program target areas and for assessing the impact of programs on the city's housing supply. A continuing source of up-to-date information regarding expiring state- and federally-assisted affordable rental properties is highly recommended and would impede the future loss of affordable housing to market conditions

Charts are updated as part of the Annual Plan.

Objective 513.0 Provide incentives for the maintenance of the existing housing stock.

The City can encourage housing maintenance through tax reforms: alleviating the burden of property taxation would encourage the preservation of older neighborhoods

Local effort should be directed toward modifying state and federal legislation to relieve some of the negative impacts of the property tax

Policy 513.1 *Investigate the possibility of enacting legislation to permit a delay in the re-evaluation of improvements for property tax purposes in cases of rehabilitation or code compliance.*

Action should be taken to keep taxes from discouraging home improvements, for example, delayed reassessment after rehabilitation for code compliance could be allowed

Policy 513.2 *Research the possibility of taxing property on the basis of its actual use rather than its potential market value*

Older, centrally located single-family neighborhoods often experience redevelopment pressures as higher intensity land uses enter the neighborhood, and property market values rise. Tax assessments now increase according to market value, burdening the single-family, owner-occupant in the neighborhood. This process often contributes to housing deterioration.

Policy 513.3 *Continue rental assistance for low income families to encourage the rehabilitation of substandard units*

Funding priorities for affordable housing extend beyond the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Housing Assistance Payments Program and are part of the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan process.

Objective 514.0 *Assure the availability of funding to low income families for housing maintenance and rehabilitation.*

Presently, in many areas of the city, residential structures are being rehabilitated through the normal workings of the private market. In other areas, lending institutions will extend loans only for short terms and at high interest rates, making it financially difficult to undertake rehabilitation. This problem is complicated by the inability of low-income homeowners to assume the financial burden of extensive rehabilitation costs.

Policy 514.1 *Increase the scope of the Housing Rehabilitation Program which provides for low-income households residing in substandard housing*

The Housing Rehabilitation Program, funded through the Housing and Community Development Block Grant, and various other funding programs provide loans or grants to rehabilitate substandard units for low-income households.

The criteria that should be used in the selection of rehabilitation target areas include concentrations of owner-occupied units with serious housing deficiencies, areas where rehabilitation will complement recent public improvements, and areas which afford convenient temporary relocation

Rehabilitation funding should be a combination of loans and grants, with the proportion of funding that a grant based upon the income of the household

Many other programs are available beyond the Housing and Community Development Block Grant to provide for low-income households.

Policy 514 2 Establish a self-help program for housing maintenance in low-income neighborhoods

A self-help program of housing repair should be directed at preventive maintenance in lower income neighborhoods which are in early stages of decline or deterioration. Such a program, through the provision of building materials, tools, technical guidance and inspection services, could effectively increase the concern of the residents for the preservation and quality of their neighborhood.

Policy 514 3 Establish a revolving fund to guarantee high risk rehabilitation loans below market interest rates to encourage the availability of rehabilitation funding from private financial institutions

Private capital for home improvement loans can be made more available to lower income homeowners if the loans can be insured against default. A revolving fund should insure local financial institutions against capital losses on loans to low-income homeowners. The revolving fund to guarantee rehabilitation loans should produce available funds from private institutions of up to ten times the amount committed to the revolving fund

To assure the quality of the rehabilitation funded under this program these loans should be accompanied by an inspection requirement.

Objective 515.0 Assure that all new residential development maintains a high level of housing and neighborhood quality.

The most important tools available to the City to maintain high quality in new residential construction are the Subdivision Ordinance and the Residential Code and Building Code. The following policies are directed at assuring the effectiveness of these controls.

The Housing Code has been replaced by the Residential Code and Building Code.

Policy 515.1 Strengthen the controls over the design and construction of new subdivisions.

Strong, flexible controls over new development are indispensable to the quality of new residential areas. Subdivision controls should encourage street designs that minimize through traffic, permanently protecting the character of the neighborhood, while providing for safe, efficient traffic circulation. Controls should properly locate neighborhood facilities, public parks and open spaces, and give adequate protection to important natural vegetation and environmentally unique areas. The performance of the subdivision design should be paramount, and flexibility should be incorporated into controls regarding street widths, lot arrangements and sizes. Flexible, effectively administered controls should permit designs for new subdivisions to respond to unique environmental conditions and engineering constraints.

Policy 515.2 Continue to provide strict controls over the quality of new housing through revision of the Building Code

This policy should be continued, with particular attention given to the durability and privacy of new multi-family structures. Revisions to the Residential and Building Code to improve the quality of new construction must be carefully balanced against the need to reduce housing construction costs. It is imperative that the performance of an improved material, design, or building technique be considered in light of the cost of utilization.

The Uniform Housing Code, not the Uniform Building Code, is the adopted Housing Code. Both the Uniform Building Code and Federal Housing Administration building standards are no longer accurate.

Policy 515.3 Provide incentives and research toward improved design, construction and financing of new housing.

The City administration should develop housing programs and continue research of housing and subdivision design. The Building Code and Subdivision Ordinance should be readily modified to incorporate new design, layout and construction techniques.

GOAL 520.0 INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING FOR LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSEHOLDS IN AN INTEGRATED SETTING.

Housing availability pertains to the number of vacant housing units on the market for rent or sale, as well as to the cost and condition of these units. Although the level of housing availability depends on a number of complex market forces, fair municipal policies and assistance are required to assure sufficient, standard quality housing for lower income families. The goal is to provide decent housing for all residents of Austin.

Various initiatives encourage mixed-use developments and affordable housing options throughout Austin. The Affordable Housing Incentives Taskforce consists of stakeholders to review, develop, and recommend to City Council enhancements to the City's policies and procedures for providing incentives to builders to include on-site affordable housing in their developments or, secondarily, to dedicate resources for the development of off-site affordable housing in the downtown area. The Density Bonus Program gives incentives for creating affordable and workforce housing in downtown through the use of density. Ordinance 20060831-068 amends the City Code relating to zoning and allows for Vertical Mixed Use along Core Transit Corridors in an effort to increase the amount of affordable housing.

Objective 521.0 Reduce neighborhood segregation.

The negative impact of racial and economic segregation upon the availability of housing to minority and low-income households cannot be over-emphasized. The following policies are directed at the reduction of housing segregation to increase the accessibility of standard quality housing at the lowest possible cost to lower income and minority households.

Policy 521.1 Adopt and enforce a Fair Housing Program

Continue support of the Fair Housing Ordinance Effective enforcement of this ordinance by the Human Rights Commission will be the decisive factor in assuring housing availability at fair prices to minority households

Policy revisions reflect adoption and enforcement of the Fair Housing Ordinance

Policy 521 2 *Continue to require strict compliance with federal and local fair housing laws.*

The City should encourage housing providers to construct affordable housing in diverse areas of the city in an effort to promote housing integration

Effective enforcement of federal and local fair housing laws and ordinances by the Human Rights Commission will be the decisive factor in assuring housing availability at fair prices to minority households Strict compliance should be the requirement for all housing

Policy revisions reflect the goals of S M A R T Housing Policies and the Affordable Housing Incentives Task Force in addition to the Fair Housing regulations and enforcement practices.

Policy 521 3 *Improve the financial mobility of low-income households*

The stabilization of employment, increased manpower, job training and the elimination of job discrimination are important elements of this policy

Objective 522.0 Provide assistance to increase the availability of standard quality housing to low-income families.

The federal government is the source of funding for the most important housing assistance programs in Austin. The amount of funding, as well as the implementation policies for many federally designed programs, are determined on a national level. Federal legislation has, however, given cities more control over the direction and intensity of local housing assistance, most notably through the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 Continuing categorical federal assistance programs often require City initiative for the procurement of funding. The following policies relate to the efforts required of the City to establish an effective housing assistance strategy

Policy revision on consensus.

Policy 522 1 *Encourage federal rental assistance payments to low-income families*

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's Rental Assistance Payments Program in addition to multiple other rental programs provide opportunities for rental subsidized to low income households. The Public Housing Authority of Austin, as the operating agency for the Program, should make every effort to seek increased funding in subsequent program years.

Multiple programs beyond the Rental Assistance Program exist that provide rental opportunities for low income households.

Policy 522 2 *Expedite the construction of new affordable housing*

The City should encourage funding for new public housing. Current priorities should consider the availability of vouchers, waiting lists, and the expiration of affordable housing properties.

Policy revisions reflect the Council-adopted S M A R T, Housing policy.

Policy 522 3 *Encourage federal home ownership assistance to lower income families.*

The number of categorical federal programs assisting lower income families to own their homes or provide opportunities for homeownership through homebuyer assistance was reduced by the initiation of the Housing and Community Development Block Grant and various other programs. Homeownership subsidies initiated by the City for lower income households could include interest rate reduction subsidies, extended loan terms, mortgage indemnification, or interest deductibility subsidies funded through federal block grants.

The policy is expanded to include other programs that assist lower income families. Language revisions reflect the goals of the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan.

Policy 522.4 *Direct rehabilitation efforts toward preserving the supply of standard housing available to low income families*

A significant number of substandard, but salvageable, houses are demolished each year. For some of these, rehabilitation through private financing to meet Housing Code specifications would result in higher-than-competitive rents. For others, demolition is the result of public property acquisition for rights-of-way. If such houses could be publicly acquired, relocated and repaired, they could then be sold to lower income families. Through a more comprehensive preservation policy, the City can avoid the potential loss of affordable housing. A significant number of older multifamily and single-family homes are demolished, redeveloped, or rehabilitated each year. For the majority, higher market rents replace affordable rents because of the costs associated with construction and land values.

The policy revisions reflect the goals of the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan.

Objective 523.0 Reduce the cost and increase the production of new housing for lower and moderate income families.

The tools available to the City for increasing the production of low cost housing are limited, but a coordinated, comprehensive use of the policies and programs that are available could help alleviate the problem. Increased production of marketable new housing for moderate income households also increases the effectiveness of the filtering process which allows older units to become available to low income families.

Policy 523.1 *Research and encourage construction methods, materials and housing design which reduce housing costs*

The City should research construction design techniques and building materials which reduce housing costs. The Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances and building codes should be readily modified in response to innovations.

Policy 523.2 *Expand research into the federal assistance available for the financing of low and moderate income housing construction*

Many federal programs are underused because the City or program sponsor must actively pursue the federal funding source. The City should assume the responsibility of publicizing program availability as well as counseling and coordinating the efforts of program sponsors and operating agencies.

Policy 523.3 *Lower the cost of land for residential construction.*

Numerous City policies, most notably those relating to subdivision, annexation and utility extension, have a direct and marked impact upon the cost of developable land. Encouraging the use of planned unit developments or cluster housing techniques densities can effectively reduce land costs per unit. The application of the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances should be sensitive to their impacts on residential land costs and the feasibility of lower income housing construction. Municipal land use controls must be designed with consideration for the over-all housing needs of the community.

Parks, Open Space, and Recreational Facilities Introduction

The citizens of Austin are aware of the need for parks and open space in which to pursue their recreational interests. It should be the responsibility of the City of Austin through the Parks and Recreation Department to provide for park land acquisition, facilities and programs to meet these needs. It should also be the responsibility of the City to maintain and manage recreational land in an economical and adequate manner.

It will be necessary to define future, as well as current, recreational interests and needs, and derive standards on which to base long range programs. Communication and cooperation among various agencies, boards, commissions and groups will be needed in order to assure a balanced program for open space, parks and recreational facilities.

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreational" by consensus

GOAL 610.0 PROVIDE ADEQUATE PARK LAND AND OPEN SPACE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF AUSTIN'S CITIZENS.

Areas should be provided for the development of recreation-oriented facilities as well as the preservation of Austin's unique character.

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreational" by consensus

Objective 611.0 Prepare a parks and recreation master plan for the city.

Policy 611.1 *Develop a set of size and service area standards to guide the City in securing park and open space areas*

Standards for park land and open space should meet or surpass those set by the National Recreation and Park Association.

Policy 611.2 *Discourage the building of non-recreational facilities in park land*

Park land, because of its visibility, accessibility and availability, is a prime target for the construction of facilities which could more appropriately be placed elsewhere

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreational" by consensus

Objective 612.0 Expand programs to secure adequate park land and open space to meet a plan adopted by the City of Austin.

Policy 612.1 *Encourage private donations of funds or lands*

The City of Austin should establish a foundation to facilitate donations of land to the City for park and/or open space needs. The benefits of land donation as a tax incentive should be publicized and the creation of land trusts for park purposes should be encouraged

Policy 612.2 *Establish new agreements, as needed, and reevaluate existing agreements between all independent school districts and the City of Austin with reference to the purchase and use of school grounds as possible park sites*

Policy 612.3 *Continue to develop a program of advance land acquisition by the City prior to development and before the escalation of land costs*

Policy 612.4 *Consider revision of the Subdivision Ordinance to require developers to dedicate park land, or monies in lieu of land, for all new subdivisions.*

The Parkland Dedication Ordinance requires residential developers of subdivisions or site plans with three or more dwelling units to contribute either land or money towards the Austin Park System. Fees are collected based on the number of houses that are proposed for the development.

Policy 612.5 *Define and acquire easements for open space and/or recreational use prior to land development as an alternative to fee simple purchase or dedication*

This policy would assist in implementing the adopted Bicycle Master Plan, where easements for linear parks/trails implement a bicycle facility in an adopted bicycle corridor.

Policy 612.6 *Maintain the Zoning Ordinance to include an agricultural zoning classification.*

The purpose of this policy is to permit the annexation of agriculturally used land and to retard the escalation of the price of land so that tax values will still permit agricultural use

The City currently has an agricultural zoning classification (AG) that allows stables, animal and crop production and support housing, on sites of 10 acres or more which preserve open space and valuable farming lands .

Policy 612.7 *Zone all creek floodplains in conformance with a master drainage plan*

Policy 612.8 *Evaluate all publicly owned lands that are not in current use or identified for future use for their potential as public open space*

Policy 612.9 *Examine all lands currently used as municipal open space, but not currently owned by the City, for feasibility of purchase.*

Policy 612.10 *Determine the potential use of land through leasing and the potential that might be available under a leasing option*

The use of purchase options for land acquisition should also be determined

Policy 612.11 *Seek the procurement of land and facilities through life estates.*

Policy 612.12 *Classify all future park land acquisitions as dedicated park land in order to ensure permanent classification*

Policy 612.13 *Extend "Lake" zoning uses to Lake Austin and areas along Lady Bird Lake that are not currently covered by such a zoning classification*

Height limits were not associated with the Lake zoning category that was in place during the adoption of Austin Tomorrow in 1979. The current Lake zoning classification takes height into consideration and currently limits maximum height to 200 feet.

Policy 612.14 *Provide more public park space along Lake Austin, Lady Bird Lake, and Colorado River below Longhorn dam.*

Addition of Lady Bird Lake and Colorado River by consensus

Policy 612.15 *Develop agreements with other public agencies for the joint acquisition, development and staffing of park sites throughout Travis County.*

Policy 612.16 *Actively encourage private park and open space development.*

This encouragement could also implement the adopted Bicycle Master Plan when private parks and open space are developed in the form of linear parks/trails in adopted bicycle corridors.

Policy 612.17 *Where feasible, use drainage easements as public open space with appropriate access.*

Objective 613.0 Identify and preserve areas of unique natural beauty, significant habitats of flora and fauna, and areas of historical, geological and archaeological significance.

Policy 613.1 *Identify and preserve natural areas, especially along creeks, for minimal development and use*

The purpose of this policy is to prevent the destruction of the natural character of an area through overuse by the public. The City will work with various public and private environmental and conservation groups in identifying those areas that need protection, including those already identified by the Audubon Society.

Policy 613.2 *Educate citizens concerning the need for protection and preservation of the natural environment by providing opportunities for participation in activities which enhance appreciation of Austin's environment and natural resources*

Maintain and improve satellite programs through provision of group transportation and operation of outdoor recreation programming.

Policy 613.3 *Preserve historically, geologically and archaeologically significant trails and buildings in park-like settings*

Encourage the use of historical buildings for public purposes.

Policy 613.4 *Establish a program for re-naturalizing areas within parks and open space where desirable and feasible.*

Policy 613.5 *Protect and retain existing plant material as part of overall landscape designs*

GOAL 620.0 IMPROVE DESIGN CRITERIA AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES TO ACCOMPLISH A HIGH QUALITY PARK SYSTEM.

Objective 621.0 Establish design criteria for park facilities, programming, and operations.

The design criteria should reflect bicycle facilities where appropriate to efficiently implement a Parks Master Plan and the Bicycle Master Plan. Addition of "operations" by consensus.

Policy 621.1.1 *Develop a design review process with all pertinent City departments for parking, roads and other facilities related to parks*

Policy 621.2 *Continue to observe established guidelines concerning the use of porous and non-porous surfaces and resulting drainage runoff*

Policy 621.3 *Designate appropriate buffer areas between park development and surrounding land uses.*

Park land and open space should function as buffers between such installations as athletic fields and picnic areas, and surrounding neighborhoods.

Policy 621.4 *Coordinate planning activities to provide a hike and bike trail system throughout the city within open space, parks and street corridors*

Policy 621.5 *Acquire and develop park land adjacent to new thoroughfares, where feasible.*

When street development is expanded to include provisions of adjacent park-like corridors the right-of-way of unused streets can be utilized as park land

Linear Parks or trails adjacent to thorough fares also implement the Bicycle Master Plan.

Policy 621.6 *Continue to use natural materials in parks and open space design.*

All planning for new park facilities should include strong energy saving design in order to minimize the use of energy and protect the environment.

Policy 621.7 *Establish guidelines on the general use and maintenance of landscaping within the Central Business District*

Policy 621.8 *Design all future recreation facilities for multi purpose use, where appropriate.*

In particular, all new golf courses and recreation centers should be designed as multi-use facilities. For example, the design of golf courses could incorporate a trail system along the perimeter, or areas within the course might be preserved for their natural beauty or for their environmental importance

Especially where doing so would provide alternative transportation use of the City's linear parks and trails. For example, design facilities for multi purpose use in a corridor adopted in the Bicycle Master Plan

Policy 621.9 *Provide necessary public restroom facilities at all public parks and open spaces*

Objective 622.0 Consider the mobility-impaired population of Austin in all planning and construction phases.

Policy 622.1 *Determine and identify the needs of the mobility-impaired population of Austin with respect to facilities and transportation related to recreation*

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreation" by consensus

Policy 622.2 *Upgrade, where feasible, existing recreational facilities to be accessible*

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) design standards require accessibility for people with varying disabilities.

Texas Senate Bill #111 no longer pertains to this matter. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) design standards require accessibility for people with varying disabilities.

Objective 623.0 Consider the aesthetic setting of Austin in the planning and development of parks, open space and municipal projects.

Policy 623 1 *Provide for review by the Parks and Recreation Department of City projects that affect open space and the appearance of the city*

The relative operational capacity of various City departments is the responsibility of the City Manager.

Policy 623 2 *Develop a municipal street tree planting and landscaping program*

Traffic median and street landscaping should be provided The City should encourage native plantings and

landscaping by both public and private concerns.

Objective 624.0 Utilize citizen participation to evaluate programs and facilities related to parks, open space and recreational activities.

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreational" by consensus.

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreational" by consensus for their input into the operation and development

Policy 624 1 *Continue to consult advisory boards and neighborhood associations for their input into the operation and development of park land and facilities.*

Policy 624 2 *Develop a public awareness program to educate the public and keep them informed of services provided by the Parks and Recreation Department*

The City should develop slide presentations, brochures and other media presentations to assist in the public awareness program of the Parks and Recreation Department

GOAL 630.0 PROVIDE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS TO BEST MEET THE NEEDS OF AUSTIN CITIZENS.

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreational" by consensus

Objective 631.0 Provide athletic facilities to fulfill the recreational needs of Austin citizens.

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreational" by consensus

Policy 631.1 *Continue to provide equal athletic facilities throughout the city, in keeping with a parks and recreation master plan.*

Athletic facilities should be designed for multiple uses

Objective 632.0 Provide facilities and programs for senior adults so that their increased recreation time can be used to maintain mental and physical health.

Deleted "leisure" and "citizens" and replaced with "recreational" and "adults," respectively, by consensus

Policy 632.1 *Adapt existing facilities to accommodate physical activities for senior adults.*

Construct park facilities for seniors such as covered areas for passive activities, and adjust fee structures, where applicable

Deleted "citizens" and replaced with "adults" by consensus.

Policy 632.2 *Develop multi-purpose senior activity centers which meet the needs and interests of participants.*

Help improve the economic position of the elderly through such agencies as the Community Workshop Market, the Community Workshop Senior Guild and the Texas Employment Commission

A center should be provided primarily for the use of elderly people in a centralized location Branch centers can coordinate with the main center in various neighborhood recreation facilities throughout the city

Policy 632 3 *Cooperate with private organizations whose facilities can be used by seniors in neighborhoods where no other public facilities are provided*

Policy 632 4 *Improve transportation systems for the elderly to and from recreation-oriented facilities*

This would be implemented in conjunction with the Urban Transportation Department.

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreational" by consensus.

Objective 633.0 Ensure the accessibility of recreational facilities.

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreational" by consensus.

Policy 633 1 *Advocate the amendment of state statutes to permit the use of school buses for youth recreation during after-school hours*

Policy 633 2 *Develop a mobile recreational system to meet the needs of homebound individuals in areas where recreational services are currently inaccessible*

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreational" by consensus

Objective 634.0 Develop facilities so that citizens in all sections of the city have the opportunity to participate in cultural and fine arts activities.

Policy 634.1 *Promote the arts by maintaining interrelationships among independent art groups in the city.*

Policy 634.2 *Provide a centrally located, City-owned cultural arts center.*

Policy 634.3 *Provide areas designed and programmed for the cultural arts in neighborhood community facilities.*

Policy 634.4 *Expand and improve outdoor performing and exhibit facilities*

These should include both permanent and mobile facilities

Policy 634.5 *Plan, design and construct additional performance areas in district parks or in conjunction with recreation centers*

Policy 634.6 *Construct or expand facilities for community-wide special events to be held outdoors*

Such facilities would provide for community festivals and ethnic celebrations.

Deleted "Aqua Festival, Yule Fest" and replaced with "community festivals" by consensus.

Objective 635.0 Maintain and develop facilities to allow interpretations of the culture, heritage and natural phenomena of the community.

Policy 635.1 *Continue to evaluate, develop, maintain and improve museums within the community*

Potential projects include construction of educational buildings for class use in conjunction with museums, museum programs in neighborhoods; acquisition of mobile vehicles, and permanent satellite museum facilities, and services

GOAL 640.0 IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS TO PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE AREAS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreational" by consensus.

Objective 641.0 Provide effective maintenance of parks, trails, open spaces, and recreation facilities.

Expanded objective by consensus.

Policy 641 1 *Establish varying levels of maintenance in parks, open spaces and creeks to meet the planned use of an area*

A strong recognition and re-evaluation of maintenance levels within parks and open spaces should be undertaken in light of present energy needs, budgetary cutbacks and increases in publicly-owned lands

Policy 641 2 *Provide maintenance to repair and replace recreational equipment and facilities within parks.*

Policy 641 3 *Establish forestry programs for maintenance and care of existing and newly planted trees in public areas*

Design all facilities to meet federal safety standards to protect both the public and staff

Policy 641 4 *Develop guidelines concerning the maintenance, access and development of easements, or other non-City public areas*

This could include the construction and maintenance of public trails or similar facilities on private land.

Policy 641 5 *Enact an ordinance which authorizes City monitoring of easements and right-of-way maintenance by private property owners*

Objective 642.0 Ensure adequate revenue for the operation of parks, open space and recreational facilities.

Deleted "leisure" and replaced with "recreational" by consensus

Policy 642 1 *Evaluate fees so that no segment of the community is deprived of basic recreational services due to inability to pay*

Policy 642 2 *Actively seek non-City funding to supplement current and future service*

Policy 642 3 *Continue to investigate revenue sources such as concessions at City facilities on City land*

Objective 643.0 Provide for the security and safe use of all park facilities by the general public.

Design all facilities to meet federal safety standards to protect both the public and staff

Transportation Systems Introduction

This section coordinates transportation system policy with the overall goals of urban design improvement, neighborhood protection, environmental protection and urban growth management. It reflects increased concern for safe and efficient public transit systems and non-motorized travel modes, rather than continued dependency on the automobile as the primary means of travel. Inherent in this shift of emphasis is the need for basic transportation for all citizens, including mobility-impaired individuals, and for compatibility between the transportation system and adjacent land uses. A change in priorities should also help to reduce transportation related noises and have a positive effect on air quality.

Policies have been developed to complement each other, no policy, objective or goal should compete against another. The intent of each is to provide a framework from which to build a transportation system that is responsive to the present needs of the Austin community and that will remain responsive to future needs. A Comprehensive Transportation Plan for the location, size and development of physical transportation elements will be produced by the Austin Transportation Study Office. Upon completion, this plan will be adopted as an integral part of the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan.

Adequate air transportation facilities and the efficient movement of goods and services within the urban area are also discussed in this section. Standards, criteria and guidelines are suggested by many objectives and policies, and these should be based on definitive research and realistically attainable values.

SAFETEA-LU (Pub. L. 109-59, August 10, 2005) and ADA (Pub. L. 101-336, July 26, 1990) requirements

GOAL 710.0 DEVELOP A BALANCED, SAFE AND EFFICIENT SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

This goal is supported by the 2002 Complete Streets Resolution, the 1996 and 1998 Bicycle Plan, and the 2000 Pedestrian Master Plan

Objective 711.0 Encourage the development and use of public transportation systems.

Policy 711.1 Establish an effective, public transportation circulation system within the core area and other major activity centers which integrates with the city-wide transportation system.

This policy is supported by the 1996 and 1998 Bicycle Plan and 2000 Pedestrian Master Plan

Policy 711.2 *Promote services and increase passenger amenities to encourage transit use, especially for commuter trips during peak hours*

Deleted 'mass' based on consensus

Policy 711.3 *Establish a low or pre-paid fare structure for transit in order to increase ridership*

Deleted 'mass' based on consensus.

Policy 711.4 *Develop an intra-city transit system serving all parts of the metropolitan area.*

The system should consist of high intensity service which connects major activity centers with less intense feeder and line-haul service which, in turn, joins residential areas with the high intensity services. It should also reflect due to regard for the system's development potential

Policy 711.5 *Develop transit service programs tailored to the needs of existing and potential users, including, but not limited to, the use of Braille, bilingual and culturally-oriented transit information and special shopping and recreation service programs*

Policy 711.6 *Develop high intensity travel corridors by integrating various infrastructure elements and restricting high density development to these corridors.*

Policy 711.7 *Develop core area transit terminal facilities joining inter-city bus and rail passenger service with transit system routes, feeder services, taxi services, bikeways and pedestrianways*

Deleted 'mass' based on consensus

Policy 711.8 *Develop terminal and transfer facilities at strategic locations throughout the City for intra-city transit, taxi, bicycle, pedestrian and parking facilities*

Policy 711.9 *Establish streets, lanes or access ramps where low occupancy vehicles are restricted during specified periods of particular days*

Encourage the use of High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes and managed lanes, where appropriate.

Ordinance No. 010607-48, amends the Comprehensive Plan by adopting amendments to the Austin Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan. City of Austin, 2025 Austin Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan includes recommendations for HOV lanes on roadways such as US 183 and IH35.

Policy 711.10 *Improve city-wide taxi service by ensuring twenty-four-hour service, minimizing response time and encouraging multiple passenger fare structures*

Policy 711.11 *Establish taxi fares that will provide sufficient revenues for the operators yet not be burdensome to the user*

Policy 711.12 *Improve the quality and accessibility of all streets, streetscapes, and sidewalks*

Streetscapes should be accessible, comfortable and have an aesthetic sidewalk network throughout the city. Public right of ways should be used as a catalyst for creating great public spaces in order to improve the quality of the city

Policy addition to address Downtown Austin Alliance's adopted Great Streets concept via City Council Resolution 19961121-030 November 21, 1996. In 1996, voters approved \$5 million in bonds for the Great Streets Program. Commercial Design Standards extend the scope of the concept to include areas of the city beyond downtown.

Policy 711.13 *Create districts which promote transit-oriented development near light rail infrastructure.*

The districts should establish denser development surrounding commuter rail stations, improve connectivity between the surrounding community and district, and establish housing affordability goals for new development.

Policy added. Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). Ordinance adopted by City Council, Ordinance 20060309-057 March 9, 2006.

Objective 712.0 Establish and expand the planning, funding, implementation and operation of a multi-modal transportation system, including transitways, roadways, bikeways and pedestrianways.

Provide funding to monitor all elements of the transportation system on a regular basis

Policy 712.1 *Develop and implement management programs that promote operationally compatible multi-modal transportation corridors.*

Policy 712.2 *Establish partial or total auto-free zones in conjunction with other efforts to maintain or increase the level of accessibility to the zones*

Policy 712.3 *Improve the safety and security of all transportation facilities and users through educational programs and appropriate facility design*

Policy 712.4 *Modify the design of hazardous drain inlets and remove obstacles to ensure both pedestrians, including mobility-impaired persons, and cyclists of safe passage*

The 1996 Austin Bicycle Plan details the issue.

Policy 712.5 *Annually evaluate the implementation and operation of the multi-modal transportation system with one- and five-year programs.*

Policy 712.6 *Develop and refine the entire transportation system so that it anticipates, and is consistent with, long range plans, including land use, housing, environmental and social service objectives. Short term strategies should be utilized to accommodate variations in life style and preference.*

Policy 712.7 *Collaborate with local citizens to balance transit needs while preserving and enhancing the character of our unique neighborhoods*

The process should bring together members of the community to address the local issues and concerns that affect the neighborhood as a whole. The representation of diverse interests within the planning process should foster a shared vision for their community

Policy addition to address the Neighborhood Planning Process program initiated in 1997 that gives emphasis to citizen involvement as defined by City of Austin Resolution 19970521-018, March 21, 1997. The Bicycle Plan Update currently underway will have opportunity for extensive public involvement.

Policy 712.8 *Develop travel corridors which feature long and short term coordination of transportation and land use improvements and which are consistent with community transportation objectives, modal choices and movement patterns.*

Provide economic and/or other incentives to concentrate high and medium density development along designated transportation service corridors. The corridors should be designed to accommodate and anticipate the changing mix of transportation modes.

Policy 712.9 *Develop mechanisms to plan, implement and operate multiple use right-of-way*

Policy 712.10 *Identify a system of transportation corridors based on movement characteristics.*

Policy 712.11 *Implement an effective and efficient management program to guide existing transportation elements into a multi-modal system*

Policy 712.12 *Construct or modify bridges to provide for the safe movement of all transportation modes.*

Complete Street Council Resolution 2002 mandates that bicycle and pedestrian facilities be considered in all street construction projects and implemented if the cost does not exceed 20% of total project cost.

Policy 712.13 *Protect or eliminate all roadway and railway at-grade crossings at major streets and protect crossings at other streets*
Discourage at-grade crossing in new developments

Objective 713.0 Develop a safe, effective network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

This Policy is supported by the 2002 Complete Streets Resolution, the 1996 and 1998 Bicycle Plan, and the 2000 Pedestrian Master Plan.

Policy 713.1 *Develop a comprehensive, all-weather pedestrian network alongside vehicular routes and in space reserved exclusively for pedestrian movements including, but not limited to, alleys*

Policy 713.2 *Establish a comprehensive set of standards which will govern the degree of separation between pedestrian and vehicular movement*

Provide concourses, skyways or pedestrian bridges, where warranted, at intersections, mid-block and building locations

Policy 713.3 *Provide pedestrianways in all new areas by means of public use easements, where appropriate.*

Require public use easements by combining pedestrian, utility and drainage facilities between lots in subdivisions. This would provide public passageways through subdivisions, where children might otherwise be required to go around unusually long blocks or move along heavily traveled streets to reach parks, greenbelts or other areas of interest

Policy 713.4 *Improve pedestrian safety and access along major streets and intersections. This could be accomplished through the use of specially phased, pedestrian-activated traffic control signals and other traffic control devices. There should be a maximum separation between the pedestrianway and roadway, while avoiding major obstacles, such as trees*

Policy 713.5 *Provide pedestrian amenities and increase the comfort and convenience of pedestrianways, especially in centers of activity.*

Policy 713.6 *Develop a community-wide bikeway network based on a comprehensive plan which includes, where appropriate, hard surface bike trails along linear parks and creeks*

Supported by the existence of Austin Bicycle Plan supported by City Council Ordinance 960411-E and 980507-D. The Parks Master Plan should be cross-referenced here, to the extent their trail/linear park system also serves as a transportation corridor. For example, Shoal Creek Trail, Walnut Creek Trail, Johnson Creek Trail, Walley Creek Trail. The City of Austin Bicycle Plan identifies all existing and planned bicycle facilities.

Policy 713.7 *Improve the channelization of bicycle and motor vehicular movement along streets and at major intersections.*

Policy 713.8 *Establish very strict standards governing the parking of vehicles in on-street bicycle facilities*

Policy 713 9 *Develop a community-wide bikeway network based on a comprehensive plan which includes hard surface bike trails along linear parks and creeks, bikeway facilities in high traffic volume areas and in all new developments.*

Supported by the existence of Austin Bicycle Plan supported by City Council Ordinance 960411-E and 980507-D
The City of Austin Bicycle Plan identifies all existing and planned bicycle facilities.

Policy 713 10 *Expand safety and educational programs dealing with non-motorized transportation*

Austin Bicycle Plan 1996 expands this policy

Policy 713 11 *Establish a comprehensive set of standards which will govern the degree of separation between pedestrian and vehicle movement*

Supported by the existence of Austin Bicycle Plan and Transportation Criteria Manual Street Design Criteria, Section 7, Bikeways. The Austin Bicycle Plan and the City of Austin Transportation Criteria Manual contain design standards.

Objective 714.0 Encourage the efficient use of roadways and other existing transportation elements.

Policy 714 1 *Develop an active program designed to encourage and assist businesses and institutions in developing and implementing incentives for the use of transit, car pooling, or other ride-sharing vehicles and non-motorized transportation*

Deleted 'mass' based on consensus

Policy 714 2 *Encourage staggered working hours within the core area and other major activity centers*

Policy 714.3 *Improve traffic flow through the use of synchronized traffic signals, land controls, surveillance systems, one-way streets and left turn lanes*

Policy 714.4 *Regulate on-street parking after taking into consideration traffic flow, adjacent land uses, available traffic routes and alternative transportation.*

Word change as on-street parking is both permitted and restricted in various sections of the city as supported by City Council Ordinance 960411-E and 980507-D. This policy repeated and expanded in adopted Bicycle Plan

Policy 714.5 *Uniformly enforce all laws and regulations pertaining to traffic operations*

Policy 714.6 *Minimize utility interference with the use of transportation ways*

Minimize the use of streets in construction related activities

Policy 714.7 *Design and develop circulation patterns in the core area to de-emphasize through traffic*

Policy 714.8 *Develop a comprehensive parking plan and policy based on desired land use and transportation relationships.*

This would include special consideration of the parking requirements of historical areas and reservation of the most accessible parking spaces for vehicles with high occupancy.

Policy 714.9 *Establish parking allocations as one of several means of supporting the multi-modal use of the transportation system.*

Provide fringe parking areas for activity centers, as appropriate

Policy 714.10 *Establish a workable set of guidelines for exemptions from parking regulations*

Policy 714.11 *Regulate access along roadways.*

Driveways and medians should be designed to maintain the operational characteristics of a roadway
Minimize the number of intersections and curb cuts
Coordinate driveway design with on-site traffic operations.

Policy 714.12 *Provide emergency service vehicles with improved routing and better control systems to minimize response time and ensure safe operation.*

Policy 714.13 *Establish a maintenance program for bike, pedestrian, transit and road facilities.*

The maintenance program should include, but not be limited to, paving curbing, drainage systems, signing, marking and signalization

Policy 714.14 *Pave all unpaved streets*

Policy 714.15 *Develop user-oriented marketing programs that encourage the efficient use of various transportation modes.*

Objective 715.0 Improve basic transportation for all mobility-impaired individuals and adhere to Americans with Disabilities Act principles to ensure the transportation network is accessible by all residents.

Revisions based upon American with Disabilities Act language, Pub L 101-336, July 26, 1990

Policy 715.1 *Coordinate special transportation service programs and funding for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.*

Policy 715.2 *Develop barrier-free pedestrianways with specific provisions for ramps and crosswalks.*

Policy 715.3 *Provide adequate pedestrian signal time to allow mobility-impaired persons to safely negotiate selected street intersections*

Policy 715.4 *Provide for transit or alternative services for mobility-impaired individuals*

Remove operational and physical barriers to mass transit services The special requirements of privately operated transportation services will require legal arrangements

Provide Special demand-responsive taxi services.

Deleted 'mass' based on consensus

Policy 715.5 *Reserve appropriate parking space for the mobility-impaired in public parking facilities*

Policy 715.6 *Require all public use buildings to be made physically accessible to mobility-impaired persons.*

GOAL 720.0 ENSURE THAT THE DESIGN AND USE OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ENHANCES AND MAINTAINS THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OF THE METROPOLITAN AREA.

Support the passage and enforcement of stricter state motor vehicle, air and noise pollution inspection laws

This Policy is supported by the 1996 and 1998 Bicycle Plan and the 2000 Pedestrian Master Plan

Objective 721.0 Maintain acceptable noise standards.

Policy 721 1 Develop appropriate noise standards for each classification of transportation and include noise considerations in the design, operation and maintenance of transportation facilities

Policy 721 2 Within the city, limit the operation of motor freight vehicles to designated truck routes

Policy 721 3 Use various means of buffering sound to reduce noise impacts on areas adjacent to transportation facilities.

These might include building setbacks, added building insulation, berms and foliage

Policy 721 4 Control the location and design of land uses so that noise-producing transportation facilities are not located near land uses which require a quiet setting.

For example, hospitals, schools or neighborhoods should not be located adjacent to airport runway approach zones, rail yards or interstate highways

Policy 721 5 Vigorously enforce noise regulations

Allow the operation of only those vehicles which conform to established noise guidelines.

Objective 722.0 Maintain and enforce acceptable air quality standards.

Continue to reduce the amount of ozone created and improve air quality in Central Texas by creating various programs and initiatives to address environmental concerns and by monitoring the area's air quality according to federal standards

Addition based on Austin-Round Rock MSA Early Action Compact (12-18-02), Central Texas Clean Air Coalition (11-13-02), Central Texas 03 Flex Agreement and supported by City of Austin Resolution 20031204-056, December 4, 2003

Policy 722 1 *Develop appropriate air standards for each classification of transportation route and include air considerations in the design, operation and maintenance of these facilities*

Policy 722 2 *Allow the operation of only those vehicles which conform to established emissions guidelines.*

Make all City fleets totally carbon-neutral by 2020 through the use of electric power, non-petroleum fuels, new technologies, mitigation, and other measures as necessary, and provide residents mechanisms for reducing their carbon footprint.

Addition based on Austin Climate Protection Plan and supported by City of Austin Resolution 20070215 023 February 15, 2007.

Policy 722 3 *Control emissions from indirect, transportation related sources*

Policy 722.4 *Regulate the number of vehicle miles traveled within the urban area by encouraging more efficient location of services and open space*

Objective 723.0 **Improve the control of transportation related storm water runoff.**

Policy 723 1 *Use special pavement materials, street curb design and other methods to reduce water runoff and creek pollution.*

Objective 724.0 **Preserve the scenic views and ecological diversity along designated transportation corridors**

Policy 724.1 *Encourage lower density and high quality development in environmentally sensitive areas within the region to maintain aesthetic views and ecological health.*

Objective and policy added to address Hill Country Roadway Ordinance passed in 1986 and supported by Ordinance 19860116-J, January 16, 1986.

GOAL 730.0 ENHANCE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND ADJACENT LAND USES.

Objective 731.0 Ensure the functional compatibility of the transportation system and adjacent land uses.

Develop and apply urban street design criteria which are consistent with the land uses they serve.

Delineation of roadway edges should be compatible with the roadway's functional requirements and the character of adjacent land uses

Access between the transportation facility and the adjacent land use should not destroy the character of either.

Additional right-of-way or setbacks may be desirable along transportation routes

Acquire right-of-way, as appropriate, through dedication or purchase based on the requirements of the route

Require dedication of additional right-of-way, if needed, concurrent with land use changes

Policy 731.1 *Require a study of the impact of significant changes in land use or transportation in order to ensure compatibility.*

Policy 731.2 *Prevent interference with sight distances along transportation routes*

Policy 731.3 *The location and appearance of traffic control devices should be coordinated, wherever possible.*

Policy 731.4 *Install efficient and economical street lighting to promote the safety of traveled ways while not detracting from adjacent areas*

Policy 731.5 *Use buffer zones, where appropriate, to ensure the compatibility of transportation and adjacent areas.*

Policy 731.6 *Through proper location and design, ensure that the development of major transportation routes produces minimum negative impact on neighborhoods.*

Policy 731.7 *Develop physically identifiable areas for separate transportation functions to minimize conflicts with activities on adjacent land*

Objective 732.0 Ensure aesthetic compatibility among transportation facilities and adjacent land uses.

Policy 732.1 *Design bridges and overpasses to enhance surrounding environmental features*

Develop designs based on anticipated short term needs which are also adaptable to long term requirements.

Policy 732.2 *Develop landscaping and tree planting programs to enhance efficient vehicular and pedestrian movement*

Policy 732.3 *Encourage the enhancement of the overall appearance of transportation routes*

Policy 732.4 *Develop beautification and buffering performance standards for all parking facilities*

Policy 732.5 *Design and locate street lighting and other transportation support devices so that transportation safety and nearby aesthetic features are mutually enhanced.*

GOAL 740.0 PROVIDE ADEQUATE AIR TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES.

Objective 741.0 *Provide safe, efficient and convenient movement of people and freight via air carriers and general aviation.*

Policy 741.1 *Coordinate all metropolitan surface and air transportation operations.*

Policy 741.2 *Develop an airport master plan for short, medium and long range periods, and update it at regular intervals*

Explore ways to obtain origin and destination information about trips to and from the airport

Policy 741.3 *Provide for adequate airline terminal facilities, aircraft sales and service facilities, as well as runway, taxiway and navigational aids*

Austin-Bergstrom International Airport was built, Mueller Airport closed.

Policy 741.4 *Continue to monitor development within the Controlled Compatible Land Use Area and the Airport Overlay Zones to provide for environmental and land use compatibility*

Airport Overlay and Compatible Land Use policy have been adopted by City Council as City Code 25-13 in addition to adherence to Federal Aviation Regulations

Policy 741.5 *Set user charges to offset the operating and capital costs of the airport*

Policy 741 6 *Provide adequate vehicular parking for airport facilities*

Policy 741 7 *Improve airport freight and loading facilities.*

GOAL 750.0 ENCOURAGE THE EFFICIENT MOVEMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES BY SURFACE TRANSPORTATION WITHIN THE URBAN AREA.

Objective 751.0 Encourage coordination between all public and private agencies involved in the movement of goods and services.

Policy 751 1 *Develop a goods and services movement plan*

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization has adopted a freight element, as part of Mobility 2030 Plan.

Addition supported by Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) Mobility 2030 Plan, June 6, 2005, Section 4.4 – freight

Policy 751 2 *Encourage a single rail and trucking terminal*

This terminal should be accessible to both railway and roadway systems to reduce freight and rail movement within the city

Encourage the development of a piggyback operation ramp and terminal to facilitate the exchange of goods between transportation modes

Policy 751 3 *Encourage a single, package express facility for bus companies*

Policy 751.4 *Encourage joint delivery services where there is a concentration of retail stores, such as service oriented businesses.*

Objective 752.0 Encourage efficiency in the use of roads for goods movement and the transportation system, as a whole.

Policy 752.1 *Prohibit parking for pick-up or delivery except in specified loading zones, and prohibit parking in areas reserved for deliveries.*

Policy 752.2 *Establish districts where deliveries can be made only during specific hours*

Policy 752.3 *Where alleys are available in commercial areas, restrict their use to deliveries, only*

Policy 752.4 *Require off street loading docks.*

Objective 753.0 Encourage efficiency in the use of railroads for goods movement and in the transportation system, as a whole.

Policy 753.1 *Encourage the establishment of a single rail yard.*

Policy 753.2 *Create special rail freight zones, as appropriate*

Policy 753.3 *Eliminate or regulate the spotting of rail cars within street right-of-way*