

6/14/12 Imagine Austin

Late Backup

My name is Stuart Harry Hersh, and like most in Austin, I rent.

I am here to ask you to adopt the Imagine Austin Plan tonight, and have it replace Austin Tomorrow which is so outdated. Imagine Austin is not a perfect document, and the major suggestions I have made in numerous meetings about Austin becoming a homeownership majority City, mitigating gentrification, and creating incentives for housing affordability that really work have not been incorporated in the document before you. But there is time to work on these during code deliberation and budgeting exercises in the future.

Imagine Austin will cause all of us who care about our City and its people to find more creative ways to solve our problems that don't bankrupt us as a community. Here are some topics to consider in this and future budget deliberations:

1. Reinstate the 90/90 code enforcement measure- 90% of housing and zoning complaints result in compliance within 90 days
2. Reinstate the S.M.A.R.T. Housing fast track policy so that subdivision, site plan, and building plan reviews can all be approved concurrently within 30 days if the design team meets response deadlines.
3. Reinstate the 95/7/4 measure for all inspections – 95% of all requested inspections in by 7am are performed by 4pm the same business day and the carryovers first thing the next business day.
4. Reinstate fee-based inspections for any existing building for people who will perform required maintenance repairs if City inspectors will provide a list of what needs to be done based on the age of the building.
5. Recreate building inspection and code enforcement as one city department by making it an enterprise fund department once again
6. Re-establish a housing affordability annual goal of 1,500 new S.M.A.R.T. Housing homeownership and/or rental homes by increasing the incentives needed to attract more private sector partners.
7. Commit local funding and/or create enhanced land use entitlements to achieve these goals.

Our children and grandchildren deserve an Austin that is as good as it can be. By adopting Imagine Austin you help put us on a path for achieving this goal.

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