



**AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES**

**SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2017**

The City Council of Austin, Texas convened in a Special Called meeting on Wednesday, January 11, 2017, AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center, 1900 University Ave., Room #301, Austin, Texas.

Mayor Adler called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Introductions: In addition to introduction of the Council Members, the consultants facilitating the discussion are Peter Hutchinson and Steve Struthers of Accenture.

1. Discuss policy priorities, goals, and the potential impacts on governance for the City of Austin.

Discussion occurred on the policy priorities and goals of the Council which will be incorporated into the City Council’s Strategic plan which will be adopted by Council at a future meeting. The tentative timetable for the developing of the strategic plan is as follows:

- Mid-December to mid-January: Data gathering and workshop
- January: Design of proposed strategic framework
- February/March
 - Use of results of workshop to inform budget discussions and City Manager search
 - Refinement of strategic framework and development of planning roadmap
- Mid-April: presentation of framework and planning roadmap to Council
- Mid-April and going forward:
 - Establishment of targets for indicators
 - Stakeholder engagement
 - Development of strategies to achieve to outcomes
 - Creation, adoption and roll-out of strategic plan

One clarification note: The proposed strategic plan is not being designed as a replacement for Imagine Austin, rather will complement the Imagine Austin Plan.

Council discussed and agreed to use the recommended consensus test methodology to gauge support or opposition to the discussion items. That consensus test methodology is:

5: I am very enthusiastic about the proposal and would be a champion for it.

4: I like the proposal and would actively support it.

3: While the proposal is not my preference choice, I would support it.

2: I do not support the proposal, but could probably accept it. However, I would have suggestions for improvement that I would like the group to consider.

1: I do not support the proposal and have serious reservations before I could accept it. But I would not seek to block it.

Fist: I do not support the proposal and would actively work to block it.

Mayor Adler recessed the meeting at 10:43 a.m.

Mayor Adler reconvened the meeting at 11:02 a.m.

Discussion of Opportunities and Challenges for City’s Strategic Planning Efforts

- Clarity of Purpose: Proposed Elements for Austin’s Strategic Framework
 - Vision: a brief qualitative statement of what Austin aspires to become
 - Citywide Priorities: the key outcomes
- Citywide Strategies Priorities: A “Strawperson” Proposal

“In working toward the vision of Austin being the most livable city in the country, we strive to create a community where every Austinite is able to say that he or she is experiencing all of the following outcomes:

 - I have economic opportunities that make Austin an affordable place for me to live.
 - I can get where I need to go safely and efficiently.
 - I feel safe in my home, at work and in my community.
 - I am able to lead a healthy life.
 - I have access to enriching cultural and learning opportunities at every stage of my life.
 - I trust that my city government is a good steward of its resources, has a high-performing workforce, and engages with the public with high degrees of transparency and collaboration.”

Note: The strategic plan is also not designed to be a vision statement.

Discussion of the proposed strategic priorities occurred with the following thoughts and recommendations proposed.

Mayor Adler suggested the following proposed change to the purpose statement: “In working toward the vision of Imagine Austin this Council, at this moment prioritizes the following strategies and outcomes”.

Council Member Kitchen recommended including “short-term and long-term outcomes” in the purpose statement and possibly incorporates the vision statement from Imagine Austin into the strategic plan.

Mayor Pro Tem Tovo suggested that in designing the purpose statement it should have a one-line statement that expresses to staff what we are trying to achieve.

Council Member Garza suggested that the “I” statements should be “We” statements and should incorporate language that citizens “experience and contributes” to the outcomes.

Discussion followed regarding each of the priorities with the goal of limiting the priorities to six that are broad priorities for the City:

- **Economic Opportunities and Affordability**

Proposed outcome definition: “I have economic opportunities that make Austin an affordable place for me to live”. Suggested critical issues to include under this priority are:

- Affordable housing
- Homelessness
- Economic development
- Job training
- Energy
- Tourism

Council Member Houston suggested a change to the definition to read “I have economic opportunities that allow me to live in Austin on my wages”.

Council Member Troxclair suggested other issues include the impact that the zoning and planning regulations have on affordability, property taxes and to use “utility bills” rather than “energy” to include all utility costs.

Council Member Flannigan suggested “economic sustainability” rather than “on my wages”.

Mayor Adler suggested to include transportation, child care, subsidized and unsubsidized housing.

Council Member Pool suggested including healthcare or quality of healthcare.

Mayor Pro Tem Tovo suggested including either here or under Safety, education and youth programming opportunities.

Council Member Kitchen suggested including access to quality food and “recognizing that it is choices for all people given their individual circumstances”.

Mayor Adler recessed the meeting at 12:12 p.m.

Mayor Adler reconvened the meeting at 12:50 p.m.

Discussion continued on Economic Opportunity and Affordability

Council Member Houston suggested using “income” rather than “wages”.

Council Member Casar suggested incorporating language indicating “integrated communities”.

Council Member Kitchen pointed out that homelessness includes multiple resources to address the issue including affordability, mental health, etc.

Council Member Alter recommended including communities that address innovative economy and entrepreneurial endeavors.

Mayor Pro Tem Tovo suggested “I live in a City that is vibrant with a strong unique culture” which includes that we value the past, embrace the future; we are quirky and not Anytown, USA.

Council Member Flannigan suggested “access to cultural opportunities”.

- **Mobility**

Proposed outcome definition: “I can get where I need to go safely and efficiently”.

Suggested critical issues to include under this priority are:

- Traffic congestion
- Public transportation
- Road maintenance
- Bicycle network
- Pedestrian safety

Council Member Kitchen suggested including that the outcome is having choices in the transportation system that work together. It is having a “transportation system in our community that provides choices to get where they need to go, when they need to go”.

Council Member Flannigan stated that mobility efficiency is about economic opportunity and mobility safety is about safe transportation options and traffic safety.

Mayor Pro Tem Tovo suggested “I can get where I need to get safely and efficiently at a reasonable cost”.

Council Member Kitchen recommended including regional cooperation and opportunities.

Council Member Renteria stated that citizens are being forced out to the suburbs and have no transportation options.

Council Member Kitchen recommending including environmental stability.

- **Safety**

Proposed outcome definition: “I feel safe in my home, at work and in my community”.

Suggested critical issues to include under this priority are:

- Crime prevention and response; community policing
- Fire prevention and response
- Emergency preparedness
- Disaster response
- Code compliance
- Court administration

Council Member Garza recommended incorporating language that clarifies that response times are equal throughout the City.

Mayor Pro Tem Tovo recommended “I feel and I am safe in my home, at work and in my community”.

Council Member Flannigan and Casar both recommended including language that addresses non-discrimination, workers compensation, rights are respected, etc.

Council Member Kitchen suggested including flooding experienced by our communities.

Mayor Pro Tem Tovo suggested including youth programs and educational programs which can assist with public safety concerns.

Council Member Pool suggested including programs like the graffiti abatement program.

- **Health**

Proposed outcome definition: “I am able to lead a healthy life”. Suggested critical issues to include under this priority are:

- Promotion of healthy behaviors
- Access to healthcare services
- Water and wastewater
- Solid waste
- Environmental protection
- Recreational facilities

Council Member Pool recommended clarifying that health includes mental health and the importance of green space as density increases within the city.

Council Member Houston stated that there is still a stigma attached to mental health so it is important that we include mental health, and recommended “lead a healthy life, physically and mentally”.

Council Member Alter recommended that environmental protection should also be a priority in other outcomes since it includes more than just health benefits.

Council Member Renteria stated that building maintenance and the health risks associated with asbestos need to be addressed.

Council Member Casar pointed out that quality of life issues include cultural, environmental, equity, etc.

Council Member Troxclair mentioned that access to healthcare should include “effective” healthcare.

Council Member Kitchen stated that the outcome needs to include delivery of services as well as just the outcomes.

Council Member Garza suggested including “lead and maintain” a healthy life.

Council Member Kitchen suggested including seniors’ ability to stay and live in their homes”.

- **Cultural and Learning Opportunities**

Proposed outcome definition: “I have access to enriching cultural and learning opportunities at every stage of my life”. Suggested critical issues to include under this priority are:

- Library services
- Early childhood development
- Cultural and music events
- Public art

Council Member Houston suggested including historic preservation.

Council Member Flannigan suggested including that “I have the ability to lead my life as I choose”.

Council Member Garza suggested that “I can be weird or not but that I have access and participate in enriching”.

Council Member Renteria pointed out the need to spread support and funding to all cultural programs to ensure minority cultures are preserved.

Mayor Pro Tem Tovo pointed out the relationship that these opportunities have to other areas such as economic development, health and public safety.

Council Member Houston suggested including “awareness, experience and appreciation of other cultures and building inter-relationships”.

Mayor Pro Tem Tovo suggested “I am continuing to expand my understanding of other cultures”.

- **Trustworthy Government**

Proposed outcome definition: “I trust that my city government is a good steward of its resources, has a high-performing workforce, and engages with the public with high degrees of transparency and collaboration”. Suggested critical issues to include under this priority are:

- Financial management
- Maintenance of public facilities and infrastructure
- Human capital management
- Technology management
- Performance management
- Stakeholder engagement

Council Member Kitchen suggested including responsive government that gets results.

Interim City Manager Hart suggested including high-performing and ethical workforce.

Council Member Houston suggested including fair and equitable government.

Council Member Flannigan suggested including innovation.

Council Member Kitchen suggested including best practice and cutting edge.

Council Member Alter suggested that City Hall that works for everyone and opening access to City Hall to a wider base.

Mayor Pro Tem Tovo suggested “collaborates with the public” rather than “engages”.

Council Member Troxclair suggested quality of the engagement rather than quantity of the

engagement.

Council Member Houston suggested including responsiveness and being nimble to change.

Council Member Flannigan suggested effectively or efficiently collaborates.

Mayor Adler recessed the meeting at 2:02 p.m.

Mayor Adler reconvened the meeting at 2:17 p.m.

Following the discussions, below is the second version of the strawperson proposal for the Citywide Strategic Outcomes:

In working towards the city’s long-term vision as articulated in Imagine Austin and our aspiration of being one of the most unique, thriving, livable cities in the country, this City Council has chosen to pursue these strategic outcomes at this time.

Together we strive to create a community where every Austinite has choices that allow them to experience and contribute to all of the following outcomes:

- Having economic opportunities and resources that enable the sustainability of their lives and communities.
- Getting them where and when they want to go safely and cost-effectively.
- Being safe in their homes, at work and in their community.
- Being able to maintain a healthy life both physically and mentally.
- Being enriched by Austin’s unique civic, environmental, cultural, ethnic and learning opportunities at every stage of life.
- Believing that city government works for everyone: that is fair and equitable; a good, continuously improving and innovating, steward of its resources; has a high-performing, ethical workforce; effectively collaborates with the public; and delivers the results people expect and an experience they welcome.

Council used the “fist to 5” method to indicate support for the revised proposal. All indicated at least a level 4 or higher for support for the proposal.

Day two of the retreat will focus on indicators. Proposed indicators for discussion are:

- Economic Opportunity and Affordability: Having economic opportunities and resources that enable the sustainability of their lives and communities.
Citywide Indicators could include measures of:
 - Employment
 - Poverty
 - Cost of living (housing, transportation, food, child care, etc.)
 - Homelessness
 - Perception of economic opportunity and affordability
- Mobility: Getting them where and when they want to go, safely and cost-effectively.
Citywide Indicators could include measures of:
 - Road congestion
 - Commute time
 - Accidents/injuries/fatalities for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists
 - Roadway condition
 - Perception of mobility
- Safety: Being safe in their homes, at work and in their community.

Citywide Indicators could include measures of:

- Crime
 - Responsiveness of police, fire and EMS to emergency calls for service
 - Compliance with codes and other regulations
 - Court administration
 - Perception of personal safety
 - **Health: Being able to maintain a healthy life both physically and mentally.**
- Citywide Indicators could include measures of:
- Prevalence of disease and/or unhealthy conditions
 - Healthcare quality
 - Access to parks/trails/recreational opportunities
 - Environmental quality
 - Perception of personal physical and mental health
- **Cultural and Learning Opportunities: Being enriched by Austin’s unique, civic, environmental, cultural, ethnic and learning opportunities at every stage of life.**

Citywide Indicators could include measures of:

- Attendance at cultural events
 - Usage of and satisfaction with City libraries
 - Educational attainment
 - Perception of civic, environmental, cultural, ethnic, and learning opportunities
- **Government that Works: Believing that city government works for everyone: that it is fair and equitable; a good, continuously improving and innovating, steward of its resources; has a high-performing, ethnical workforce; effectively collaborates with the public; and delivers the results people expect and an experience they welcome.**

Citywide Indicators could include measures of:

- Financial health of City government
- Condition of City facilities
- Satisfaction with City services and user experience
- Employee engagement
- Trust in City government

Council Member Kitchen requested that staff provide the link to the existing Citywide Indicators and the Community Action Network (CAN) indicators.

Council Member Casar suggested infusing equity and justice into the indicators to ensure that areas that need improvement can be identified and that they should include both the average for the city as well as by districts or demographics.

Council Member Flannigan pointed out the need to ensure the accuracy of the indicators and the cost to produce the indicator.

Council Member Alter pointed out that the indicators should not always be quantitative but should have a balance of subjective measures.

Mayor Adler adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m. without objection.

The minutes were approved on this the 2nd day of February 2017 on Mayor Pro Tem Tovo’s motion, Council Member Pool’s second on a 10-0 vote. Council Member Casar was off the dais.