

To: City Manager Spencer Cronk
From: The City of Austin Planning Commission
Date: June 22, 2021
Subject: **Transmittal of FYs 2021-2023 Long-Range Capital Improvement Program Planning Memo of Recommendations**

The Planning Commission is pleased to transmit the FYs 21-23 Long-Range Capital Improvement Program Planning (LRCP) Memo of Recommendations. Transmittal of the recommendations to the City Manager allows the Planning Commission to meet its requirement under the Charter to submit a list of capital improvements to the City Manager which implement the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan Joint Committee of Planning Commission and Zoning and Platting Commission participated in development of this year's LRCP recommendations and approved a memo for consideration by the Planning Commission.

LRCP is the process that examines CIP needs looking 10 years or more into the future. It is a lens for viewing CIP projects, which are typically granular in nature, within the scale of high-level policies identified in the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Direction 2023. The LRCP is part of a larger Capital Improvement Program planning cycle, a multi-year, continuous process of planning, funding, and implementation of capital improvements, that also includes the Five-Year CIP Plan and the annual Capital Budget.

To further the City's long-term vision and aspiration of being one of the most unique, thriving, and livable cities in the country, the City Council chose to focus City operations and budgets around Strategic Direction 2023's Outcomes:

- **Government that works for all:** *Believing that city government works effectively and collaboratively for all of us - that it is equitable, ethical and innovative.*
- **Safety:** *Being safe in our home, at work, and in our community.*
- **Economic Opportunity and Affordability:** *Having economic opportunities and resources that enable us to thrive in our community*
- **Mobility:** *Getting us where we want to go, when we want to get there, safely and cost-effectively.*
- **Health and Environment:** *Enjoying a sustainable environment and a healthy life, physically and mentally.*
- **Culture and Lifelong-Learning:** *Being enriched by Austin's unique civic, cultural, ethnic, and learning opportunities.*

This LRCP cycle for FYs 21-23, the Memo of Recommendations is organized by the six Strategic Direction outcomes. Additionally, a new website has been developed to present the data and information related to Long-Range CIP Planning. The website can be found here: <https://imagineaustin.wixsite.com/lrcp>

Government that works for all and Safety

- To have a comprehensive picture of existing infrastructure conditions and potential liabilities over time, prioritize a more complete inventory and assessment of existing assets. Implement a robust enterprise Asset Management approach and facilitate the maturation of the City's internal asset management system to ensure coordination and cooperation across all departments and all infrastructures.
- Prioritize investments related to public health and safety and capital renewal, such as project rehabilitation and restoration. Maintenance and repair prevention need to be funded appropriately and equitably to minimize premature failures, unacceptable levels of service, and far more expensive replacement of assets.
- Continue to explore innovative and durable revenue sources and policies.
- Review the city's resilience to extreme weather events and other impacts of climate change to ensure safety of city residents, reliability of electric, water and other critical infrastructure, and identify long-range capital improvements to improve resiliency in an equitable manner.

Economic Opportunity and Affordability and Mobility

- Prioritize maintenance of infrastructure that supports voter approved capital investments and minimizes service disruptions.
- Prioritize future infrastructure investments that support City of Austin's goals of anti-displacement, ending homelessness, affordable housing and mobility.

Health and Environment

- Integrate nature into the city by supporting, maintaining, and expanding parks and our urban trail network.
- Properly evaluate the impacts of capital investments to ensure the equitable mitigation of environmental risks across the city.
- Invest in green infrastructure including stormwater management that creates a network of natural lands and other open spaces.

Culture and Lifelong-Learning

- Make investments that strengthen our portfolio of culture and lifelong learning programs, events, and facilities and build trust with the community.
- Increase the amount of affordable creative space that is available to working artists, including performance artists, and incentivize the equitable and inclusive development, redevelopment, and use of assets for creative space.

- Invest in supporting Austin’s creative community by continuing to sponsor and facilitate art as a component of public infrastructure.

Conclusion:

In the past year the City has faced unique challenges, including an extreme weather event that showed vulnerability in our physical infrastructure, and a pandemic and concomitant economic disruption that showed the vulnerability of our social infrastructure. The above recommendations highlight not only the importance of improving the city's system of asset management to get the most out of the investments we make as a community, they also emphasize appropriate concerns about equity in the investments we make across the city. The recommendations also continue a focus on addressing displacement, homelessness, equity, affordability, and mobility for Austin. Finally, the recommendations highlight needed ongoing investment to maintain our natural environment and ensure a vibrant creative arts community.

Regards,

Todd Shaw
Chair, Planning Commission

Cc: Austin City Council Members
Rodney Gonzales, Assistant City Manager
Rosie Truelove, Director, Housing and Planning Department