



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Gregory I. Guernsey, AICP, Director  
Planning and Development Review Department

Victoria Li, Director  
Watershed Protection Department

**DATE:** October 3, 2014

**SUBJECT:** Imagine Austin Priority Programs and CodeNEXT

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an overview of how the Imagine Austin Priority Programs will inform and be integrated into the new land development code as part of CodeNEXT.

In October 2014, Council will be asked to identify the preferred approach which will define a framework for revising the code. Detailed work on the new code, including integration of the Priority Program initiatives, will begin in late 2014 or early 2015.

Imagine Austin identifies eight Priority Programs, which organize Imagine Austin's key policies and actions into related groups to make it easier to implement the plan. All priority programs are interrelated and each implements policies and actions from multiple programs. The structure they provide will allow the City of Austin to more efficiently coordinate its operations, investments, and the provision of core services.

### **Imagine Austin Priority Programs**

1. Invest in a compact and connected Austin;
2. Sustainably manage our water resources;
3. Continue to grow Austin's economy by investing in our workforce, education systems, entrepreneurs, and local businesses;
4. Use green infrastructure to protect environmentally sensitive areas and integrate nature into the city;
5. Grow and invest in Austin's creative economy;
6. Develop and maintain household affordability throughout Austin;
7. Create a Healthy Austin Program; and,
8. Revise Austin's development regulations and processes to promote a compact and connected city.

### **Priority Program Teams**

In order to align its internal functions under the vision and policies of the Imagine Austin Priority Programs, the City formed interdepartmental teams for each of the Programs. These teams bring together experts from many departments to review and make recommendations on related regulations, public investments, and partnerships.

All of the Priority Program teams are working on numerous initiatives to implement Imagine Austin, and many of these initiatives will have an effect on CodeNEXT. Examples include Phase II of the Watershed Protection Ordinance, Complete Streets/Green Streets policy implementation, and the Housing + Transit + Jobs Action Team recommendations.

### **Priority Programs and CodeNEXT Work-to-Date**

During the initial phase of the project each of the Priority Program teams identified barriers within the current code to implementing Imagine Austin and potential topics to address in the new code. There have also been multiple meetings between the Priority Program teams and staff working on CodeNEXT. Once Council identifies the preferred approach to revising the code in October 2014, detailed work on the new code, including integration of the Priority Program initiatives, will begin.

### **Integrating the Work of the Priority Program Teams into CodeNEXT**

CodeNEXT staff will meet with each Priority Program team to review the specific elements of their priority programs which should be considered in the next phase of CodeNEXT, and how the teams can participate in and support those efforts. The Priority Program team recommendations, along with public input, the Code Diagnosis and the preferred Approach will shape the work program for drafting of the new code which will be an approximately 18 month process.

We have initiated this process with staff from the Green Infrastructure Priority program team, the Watershed Protection Department, and the Office of Sustainability. This will serve as the template for integration of the other Priority Programs.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact either George Adams at (512) 974-2146, or George Zapalac at (512) 974-2725.

cc:     Marc Ott, City Manager  
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