



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

THRU: Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, Deputy City Manager *YPR*

FROM: Chris Stewart, Interim Chief Information Officer, Communications & Technology Management *CS*
Jessica King, Interim Director, Communications & Public Information Office *JK*

DATE: October 15, 2020

SUBJECT: **Website Update**

The effectiveness of the City's digital properties is more critical than ever as the virtual front door to City services. To serve this growing and rapidly evolving need, digital innovation is an important focus for the City's Government that Works outcome.

In recent years, the City established a fellows program – internally referred to as “Alpha” - to bring new experiences into the organization, conduct discovery to assess user needs and technology approaches, and establish an alpha website to test new user-centric content and architecture approaches while user research continued. Concurrently, while this strategic groundwork was being laid, the City's current website, AustinTexas.gov, and the City's intranet, Cityspace, were both being upgraded to more secure and sustainable platforms – work which is now complete.

We have now reached a significant milestone as the alpha site strategy and resources will be applied to the upgraded AustinTexas.gov on the open-source Drupal environment. This newly merged program will streamline our delivery to place effective content and improved user experiences in front of residents while improving operational efficiencies. This resident-focused approach balances innovation with fiscal responsibility and sustainability in our operations.

We would be remiss if we didn't acknowledge the hard work of the dozens of fellows and City staff who have contributed over the last few years. Their dedication and flexibility have been critical in bringing us to this point. Their efforts were invaluable in successfully positioning the organization for both immediate improvements and our on-going digital service delivery efforts.

If you have any questions, please contact either of us at chris.stewart@austintexas.gov or jessica.king@austintexas.gov.

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Nehemia Pitts III, Chair Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission
David Alexander, Vice Chair, Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission
Jesse Rodriguez, Staff Liaison, Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission