

Land Development Code Rewrite Project
Listening Sessions Approach / Agenda
DRAFT 8-16-13

1) Overall Goals:

- a Introduce the project with careful attention for positioning the importance of the code for City.
- b Set expectations and set a positive tone for inclusive, authentic, two-way conversation.
- c Build goodwill between project team, city staff and public.
- d Gather input on specific physical places - what the community values (strengths), what they don't like (weaknesses) and what they'd like to see improved (wishes). Also gather input on "hot topics" and issues of concern related to the code.

2) Key Objectives:

- a Set context for how LDC revision will help Austin achieve the vision and goals of Imagine Austin
- b Provide high-level explanation of what the code is and does, and how it directly affects people's quality of life
- c Introduce the team who will be working on the project (consultants and staff) and CAG
- d Explain how LDC revision process will work, timeline, and how people's input will be used
- e Gather input on areas people perceive as assets or strengths and those areas of concern or perceived weakness (in code process and the results produced by the code (standards))
- f Ask how people would like to engage with the process and how best to engage others
- g Foster enthusiasm for ongoing participation and a clear understanding of next steps
- h Strive for a diversity of participants and have a multi-cultural focus
- i Create a balance between number of staff, participants and consultants
- j Position effort as new and different and make clear how this process will be different (i.e. use of technology and tools)

3) Important Design Considerations:

- a Information is clear, relevant, visual and engaging
- b Input is gathered in interactive and diverse ways
- c Presentations are concise, compelling and easy to understand (limit jargon and acronyms)
- d Strike a balance between talking and listening
- e Known problems and issues of concern are acknowledged up front
- f Make it active and fun
- g Be able to replicate as much as possible for smaller settings
- h Manage expectations
- i Have heavy involvement from staff and advisory group to ensure all input is captured
- j Consider integrating stakeholders at tables so diversity of views are shared in small groups
- k Accommodate the needs of the public (i.e. accessibility, refreshments, child care, parking)

4) Target Audiences:

- a Imagine Austin participants
- b Neighborhood associations
- c Business community
- d Development community
- e Issue / Advocacy groups (housing, health, environmental, transportation, arts, planning, architecture, land use, downtown, regional, education, children, seniors, etc.)
- f "Partner" organizations and advocates for Imagine Austin
- g Elected Officials
- h Community Leaders
- i Ambassadors
- j Faith-based groups
- k Governmental and quasi-governmental entities

Approach:

Three Listening Sessions scheduled for the week of September 23, 2013 (M-W or T-TH) at appropriate (accessible, well-known, large) venues located in north, central and south areas of city. Potentially two evening sessions – one north; one south - and a morning session downtown. Estimated session length of 2.5 hours.

Target Dates:

- Major design elements finalized – **August 16**
- Venues Secured – **August 21**
- Meeting marketing materials complete, save the date – **August 29**
- More detailed invitations distributed – **September 3**
- Handouts and maps finalized and ready to print – **September 9**
- Print materials and posterboards complete – **September 20**
- Presentations complete – **September 13**

Draft Agenda:

Set-Up *NOTE: Anticipated group size of 100 participants*

- Welcome table with sign in, handouts
- Informational stations with easels and posterboards
- Round tables seating 8-10
- Screen, projector, sound system
- Video booth
- Tables for refreshments
- Childcare area

Agenda

6:00 – 6:30 p.m. Registration, gathering initial input

1. Room Set-up - Have room organized in five sections – northwest, northeast, central, southwest, southeast. Have large poster by sign-in that shows the five sections color-coded and direct people to go to the portion of the room where they live (maps on easels in that section of the room can have matching colored borders or color paper taped to top edge of map).
2. Sign in - sign-in table, name tags, agenda and instructions, project handout, brief survey, stickers
3. Gathering input – People go to section of room with large maps of section they live in. Place star sticker on map to mark approximate home location. Place green dot on areas they really like or value and red dot on areas they don't like or that concern them. Write short comments directly on map to explain why. City staff and consultants are at map stations during process.
4. Informational boards – Located where participants can view as they enter or exit: Imagine Austin Vision and Goals; LDC Project Goal; Project Team; Timeline, Engagement Process, Technology/Tools to be used in process
5. Video booth for individual short interviews as people arrive/exit

6:30 – 7:00 p.m. Presentation

1. Welcome from CAG and City; Inspirational comments about what this project means for the City; Video
2. Introduction of consultant team, CAG, City
3. Set context – Imagine Austin; building blocks; LDC as priority program

4. Code 101 - High level explanation of what code is and how it affects people/city – mention key challenge areas (compatibility, affordability, etc.)
5. Process - Recap code rewrite process and timeline; explain how input will be used
6. Meeting goals and agenda

7:00 – 8:00 p.m. Table Discussions

1. Set-up – Small groups at round tables of 8-10 with table facilitator and scribe. Tables have flipchart and easel to record comments. Discussion guidelines on table and reviewed by facilitator. People self-select tables in area of room that represents section of Austin where they live.
 - *Table supplies could include large map of area, large printout that shows pictures of types of places (residential, business, shopping, recreation, civic).*
 - *Consider option of having a laptop station in room where use web-based interactive process to zoom in to specific areas on a map; perhaps capture comments real-time electronically.*
2. Warm up - Participant introductions and warm up question such as – Where is a place you take friends/family when they visit and why? What is a place where you've had a memorable time and why? Where is a place you use for inspiration or relaxation?
 - Optional additional warm-up question: “Are you familiar with the LDC or city’s development process?” Or “Would you consider yourself a novice, occasional user, expert with the land development code or process?”
3. Main Discussion - Will focus on Strengths, Weaknesses and Wishes. We want to know what specific places people think are assets (strengths) or offer a positive experience, places that people think need improvement or are negative (weaknesses), and what people would like to be different (wishes).

Facilitator leads three rounds of conversation:

- 1 – “Think about one place in your neighborhood that you really enjoy or think is an asset. What makes it a wonderful place? Now think about another place that you don’t enjoy or think is a problem. What about it is negative? What do you wish were different? Take a minute to write down your thoughts and then briefly share them with the group.” (Scribe captures in three columns on chart “Place”, “+”, “–”, “Δ”)
- 2 – Facilitator recaps themes that emerged as to assets/positives and negatives and asks “What other issues do you think are important that have not been raised?”. This is where people may raise concerns about process of working with the code or code standards that enable or prevent the kind of places they want. Scribe captures.
- 3 – Final question is “What questions do you have, about the code rewrite process or other issues of concern on this topic?”. Scribe captures on sheet with table number. Runner collects sheet and questions get reviewed and top questions typed into PPT slide to show on screen and get addressed by consultant team in closing remarks.

8:00 – 8:30 pm. Survey and Closing remarks

1. Survey: Participants complete a brief survey to gather feedback for Opticos such as:
 - a. Where they live
 - b. Experience with neighborhood plan
 - c. Experience with Imagine Austin
 - d. Experience with code / specific comments or questions about interacting with code

And questions to help Outreach Team improve public engagement process such as:

- e. How else would you like to be engaged in the process
- f. What other groups should be involved
- g. What opportunities would you suggest to engage more people in the conversation

And feedback on the listening session itself

2. Respond to questions: Opticos team responds to sampling of questions (most common/most critical) raised at tables. Advise participants all questions/responses will be posted to project website.
3. Closing remarks including reminder of timeline, website, location for the next listening session. Remind people they can still comment directly on maps and do a short interview at video booth. Thank people for participation.

DRAFT