IMAGINEAUSTIN
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TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Mathew Lewis, Assistant Director, Planning & Development Review

DATE: November 13, 2014

SUBJECT: Amendments to *Imagine Austin*

Along with the Annual Report, amendments to the comprehensive plan are proposed.

1. CPA-2014-0001: Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan amendments

Applicant: City Council

Background: With Resolution Number 20140320-056, Council initiated the effort to develop the Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan to address access to digital technology. Council followed with the passage of Resolution 20140501-043 which directs the City Manager to incorporate digital inclusion into Imagine Austin as part of the 2014 annual report. The goal of digital inclusion is to address the digital divide: All residents, institutions and businesses will have the tools, skills and motivation to gain value from the digital society. Staff from Telecommunication and Regulatory Affairs, the Technology and Telecommunications Commission, and Planning and Development Review worked together on the following amendments.

1. Add new policy E P19 (p. 146): "Provide ongoing and coordinated digital services to meet the needs of the community by ensuring that all residents have access to internet connectivity, hardware availability, digital literacy training, and access to relevant information."
2. Add new action E A22 (p. 243): "Initiate the development of the Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan."
3. Amend the following Priority Programs by adding Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan under the Related City Initiatives
    a. Priority Program #1: Invest in Compact and Connected Austin, p. 189
    b. Priority Program #3: Economic Development, p. 194

c. Priority Program #5: Creative Economy, p. 200
d. Priority Program #7: Healthy Austin, p. 206

Rationale: These amendments are needed to meet the requirements of both Council resolutions and to help this initiative achieve its goals. These amendments also support the value of Imagine Austin to promote inclusiveness for all residents.
Staff Recommendation: Support.

2. CPA-2014-0002: Amendment to align Imagine Austin with the City-endorsed Austin Travis County School Readiness Action Plan

Applicant: Early Childhood Council

Background: In 2013, City Council endorsed the School Readiness Action Plan which focuses on helping children succeed in school by addressing various needed services for those between 0 to 5 years old. The Early Childhood Council has been meeting with Planning and Development Review staff to initiate amendments to *Imagine Austin* to recognize and help launch the updated School Readiness Action Plan. The proposed language was endorsed by the School Readiness Action Plan Leadership Team, which includes members from the Early Childhood Council.

1. Add a new policy S P30 (p. 174) : Ensure that our youngest children are healthy, happy, and ready for school success by ensuring they have access to education, health care, and other necessary resources and services.
2. Add a new action S A55 (p. 262): Help children between ages 0-5 achieve success in school by implementing the School Readiness Action Plan which seeks to ensure that:
    - families have access to and use the necessary resources that support nurturing their children;
    - children and families have access to high quality early learning environments;
    - children receive early and regular developmental screenings;
    - children have access to health care;
    - and public and private sectors in Austin and Travis County work together to ensure that the community has the resources and infrastructure to deliver services to children and their families.
3. Revise S A32 (p.260) as follows: Work with educational and business partners to expand the availability of early childhood education and ~~daycare~~ childcare services and programs for all residents, especially for middle and low income households and

for those with children with disabilities, and fund through a modest fee or sliding-fee structure.

4. Revise S A34 (p. 260) as follows: Work with child care providers, school districts, local businesses, government agencies and non-profits to make affordable and accessible childcare, early education, preschool, afterschool, and summer programs widely available throughout Austin and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ)

   Rationale: These amendments are needed to help support the implementation of the School Readiness Action Plan. Also, recognition of the action plan will help to support the numerous early childhood provisions within *Imagine Austin*.
   Staff Recommendation: Support.

3. CPA -2014-0003: Public Safety amendments

Applicant: Austin Police Department, Austin Fire Department, Austin-Travis County EMS

Background: The following amendments are proposed to refine several actions in Chapter 5 and are the result of several meetings with the Austin Police, Austin Fire, Emergency Medical Services, and Planning and Development Review.

A. **Revise CFS A14 (p. 250) from:** Coordinate performance measures across public safety agencies to better plan for additional facilities, units, and staffing and to provide better oversight and service to all parts of Austin as the city grows.

   Revise to: Coordinate and explore co-location opportunities for all city facilities. In addition, add a new action (CFS A45, p. 255) stating: Provide the appropriate service delivery to all areas of the City, including areas of new development and redevelopment.

   Rationale: Even though EMS, APD, and AFD are often thought of as same/similar agencies – this is not the case due to their different service deliveries. Units are different, staffing is different, and need to serve the public is different. The current action is getting at two ideas:
   1) The need to explore all co-location options for city facilities
   2) To provide the appropriate service delivery to all areas of the City.

   Providing better oversight and service to all parts of Austin is reflected in the new language "provide the appropriate service delivery to all areas of the City, including areas of new development and redevelopment."

B. **Revise CFS A15 (p. 250) from:** Develop and promote online and interactive mapping, analysis and notification tools to provide recent data related to public safety issues and natural disasters threats.

   Revise to: Develop notification tools which help inform the public about active/recent safety issues, public education efforts, and natural disaster threats.

   Rationale: All three departments have notification tools, but generally do not coordinate since an incident usually has a lead department. (Ex. Hostage Situation=APD, Wildfire=AFD). This action seems to have several aspects intertwined with it and not easily provided by all three agencies, plus Homeland Security and Emergency Management. The heart of this item is to work on notification to public. All public safety departments have them, but they are specific to the type of incidents or outreach efforts.

   Interactive mapping and analysis are not always the most suitable and are certainly not the only tools that can be used to inform the public. Additionally, mapping and analysis take time and may not be the most prudent way to disseminate high priority information immediately. By using the broader "notification tools" terminology, public safety agencies have an opportunity to utilize various applications like Twitter, Facebook, and Nextdoor in addition to more traditional formats. The more general language also provides departments with the flexibility to adopt communication tools that become available in the future.

C. **Revise CFS A17 (p. 251) from:** Conduct and maintain a comprehensive existing Austin Fire Department and Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Service building condition report to assess the need for remodeling, expansion, replacement, or consolidation of facilities.

   Revise to: Conduct and maintain a comprehensive building condition report to assess the need for remodeling, expansion, replacement, or consolidation of City-owned facilities.

   Rationale: The Building Services Department conducts this assessment for all City-owned facilities, not just AFD & EMS.

D. **Revise CFS A21 (p. 251) from:** Continue expansion of public safety regional service delivery model. This may be accomplished through Interlocal Agreements with surrounding municipalities and agencies or a confederation or consolidation of public safety agency operations.

   Revise to: Continue to explore the potential benefits associated with various public safety partnerships across the region.

Rationale: This is an important element to focus on, but it is not necessary to specify "how" to accomplish it.

E. **Revise S A15 (p. 259) from:** Increase safety patrols in gathering spaces and along pedestrian routes, including trails, walking paths, and school tracks.

Revise to: Monitor community gathering spaces to maximize the safety of individuals utilizing an area in pursuit of professional, educational or recreational opportunities

Rationale: While this is an important function performed by APD, it is not necessary to place the 'solution' into the item. APD is a data driven organization – it is not necessary and is not a prudent use of their limited resources to arbitrarily increase patrols in areas beyond the normal staffing level. If an area experiences a spike in crime or there is some other justifiable reason, then APD evaluates that need and assigns the appropriate resources to address it.

F. **Revise S A17 (p. 259) from:** Extend the assignments of public safety professionals in a given geographic area in order to build stronger community relationships.

Revise to: Delete this action.

Rationale: This action is problematic because it could interfere with the ability of public safety departments to direct resources as needed to meet ever-changing needs within the City. Community policing is not going away, but the Department must have the flexibility to move resources to respond to additional needs in other areas of the city and assign new personnel due to promotions, retirements, transfers, etc.

Staff Recommendation: Support.

4. CPA-2014-0004: Remove "Affordable" from Related Visions Components for Priority Program 8 – Revise Austin's development regulations and processes to promote a compact and connected city.

Applicant: Planning and Development Review Department

Background: An error was made, on page 207, in including "affordable" as a vision component.

Rationale: The vision components do not include "affordable" as a separate entity.

Staff Recommendation: Support.

5. CPA-2014-0005: Amendment to Priority Program #8

Applicant: Planning Commission through a request by Council Member Morrison

Background: This amendment is proposed to address concerns and perceptions that the CodeNEXT priority program is too focused on the compact and connected principle.

Revise From: "8. Revise Austin's development regulations and processes to promote a compact and connected city."

Revise to: "8. Revise Austin's development regulations and processes to promote each of the priority programs and the adopted policies and goals of Imagine Austin." This change would be reflected on pages 186, 192, 194, 197, 203, 206, 207 and throughout the Action Matrix.

Rationale: This amendment helps to address concerns and perceptions that CodeNEXT is overly focused on compact and connected and that it seeks to address the other major goals of Imagine Austin. This proposed change brings the priority program's title into closer alignment with its descriptive language (p. 208-209) which speaks to the inter-relatedness of this priority program and other priority programs. The change supports compact, connected, and complete communities and the many benefits they provide. These include human-scaled places, greater transportation options, health benefits, more possibilities for social interactions, more efficient use of infrastructure and natural resources, and allows for greater housing choice.

Staff Recommendation: Support.