BOND DEVELOPMENT GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND PROCESS

OVERVIEW

A Vision for Austin's Future
As it approaches its 200th anniversary, Austin is a beacon of sustainability, social equity and economic opportunity; where diversity and creativity are celebrated; where community needs and values are recognized; where leadership comes from its citizens and where the necessities of life are affordable and accessible to all.

Austin's greatest asset is its people: passionate about our city, committed to its improvement, and determined to see this vision become a reality.

Draft Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan
Preamble to the Vision Statement

Thousands of Austinites have participated in the Imagine Austin comprehensive planning process and shared their ideas on how Austin should grow and develop over the next three decades. The draft Imagine Austin Plan is the culmination of two years of community input, reflecting our city's commitment to preserving the best of Austin and changing those things that need to be changed.

The final plan, expected to go before City Council in 2012, will provide a framework for City leaders' decisions and set the direction for how the City of Austin operates.

Imagine Austin Vision

The following are the key tenets outlined in the Imagine Austin Vision Statement:

- A Vision for Austin's Future
- Austin is Livable
- Austin is Natural and Sustainable
- Austin is Mobile and Interconnected
- Austin is Prosperous
- Austin Values and Respects its People
- Austin is Creative
- Austin is Educated

(Read full Imagine Austin Vision Statement at www.imagineaustin.net/intro)

Imagine Austin – Priority Programs

Austinites, through the Imagine Austin process, have identified eight priority programs that reflect the vision statement and core principles for the plan and are intended to shape Austin's future. In summary, the draft priority programs include:

- An update of City rules for land uses
- Improved transportation options for cars, transit, bikes and walking
- A network of parks, trails, waterways and natural areas
- Manage long-term water resources
- Grow and invest in Austin's creative economy
- Affordable housing throughout Austin
- Education and talented workforce
- Create a "healthy" Austin program

On October 6, 2011, the Austin City Council established a Bond Election Advisory Task Force to "identify and prioritize bond funding for projects that will advance the vision identified by the Imagine Austin planning process… within the scope of a needs assessment and funding priorities to be recommended by City staff" (Resolution #20111006-057).

The Bond Election Advisory Task Force, City staff, and the community will work together over the next several months to develop recommendations for City Council to consider in presenting a bond proposal to the voters in the next Bond Election.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles are intended to articulate overarching goals for development of the Bond proposal. They are drawn from the community vision and values expressed in the Imagine Austin planning process and best practices in capital improvement planning. These principles will be used to inform, evaluate and develop the Bond proposal. The guiding principles and associated criteria will provide a framework for balancing priorities and guiding Bond-related decision-making towards projects and programs that will have the greatest positive impact for, and at the most economical cost to, the city.

I. Provide for adequate infrastructure and facilities to maintain City services

The City provides public facilities and services used and enjoyed by Austinites on a daily basis, such as parks and libraries, public safety, and transportation infrastructure. Throughout the Imagine Austin planning process, the community consistently identified the importance of continuing to provide these public resources.

The City should make investments in maintaining and repairing existing assets as well as providing new facilities and infrastructure needed to maintain existing levels of service to a growing population.

Criteria for evaluating potential projects:
Near-Term Projects (Level 1)

- Required by state or federal law, legal judgment, court order, or regulatory mandate
- Remedies or prevents a serious hazard that threatens public health, safety, or security
- Infrastructure failure occurring or high possibility of failure in the immediate future
- Project deferral will lead to significant degradation of infrastructure that substantially compromises delivery of services

Departmental/City Service Priorities (Level 2)

- Directly implements an adopted departmental service plan or policy
- Accomplishes or makes significant progress toward achieving department business goals and priorities
- Directly addresses Horizon Issues identified in a department's Business Plan
- Produces a tangible improvement to service delivery and/or access to service

II. Support new investments reflecting the values and priorities of the City as identified in the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan and related plans

The Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan and related small area plans such as neighborhood plans, corridor plans, and other area master plans make specific recommendations to address existing challenges and work toward a community vision for the future. Our city investments should also support those new initiatives.

Criteria for evaluating potential projects:

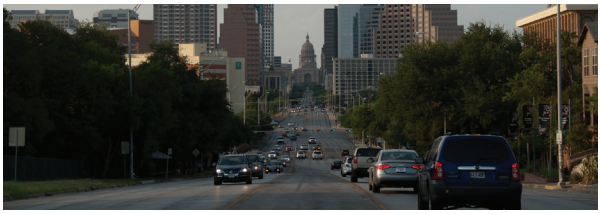
- Contributes directly to advancing priority programs established in the draft Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan
  - Change Austin's development regulations and processes to promote a compact and connected city
  - Invest in transportation and other improvements to create a compact and connected Austin
  - Create a green infrastructure program to protect environmentally sensitive areas and integrate nature into the city
  - Create a program to sustainably manage our water resources
  - Grow and invest in Austin's creative economy
  - Develop and maintain affordable housing throughout Austin
  - Continue to grow Austin's economy by investing in our workforce and education system
  - Create a Healthy Austin program
- Takes into account Imagine Austin related plans and priorities
  - Advances a priority project established in related neighborhood plans and other small area plans adopted by Austin City Council
  - Furthers a specific Council directive or resolution
  - Advances a specific strategy or project identified in a regional planning effort in which the City of Austin participates (e.g. CAMPO, CAPCOG, Capital Metro)

III. Make investments in new mobility capacity, including an initial segment for an urban rail system

Austinites have identified transportation mobility as a priority and challenge to be addressed as our city grows and changes. Through Imagine Austin, the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, the CAMPO regional transportation plan and other city and regional planning processes, the community has consistently said that we need a variety of options to address our mobility challenges. These solutions include improvements for all transportation modes: walking, biking, transit and driving.

Austin should continue investing in new regional mobility capacity for all modes of transportation, including a first investment in Urban Rail.

- Supports identified strategic mobility and multi-modal transportation priorities
- Takes into account priorities as outlined in:
  - Draft Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan
  - Austin Strategic Mobility Plan
  - Envision Central Texas
  - CAMPO 2035 Plan
- Addresses economic vitality and sustainability priorities



IV. Promote a sustainable community and high quality of life

The Austin City Council established sustainability as the central policy direction of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan. Sustainability is best understood as considering not only today's needs, but also whether we are meeting them in ways that conserve resources and promote quality of life for future generations.

The sustainability's "triple bottom line" should be considered when making City investments: the economy, the environment, and society and equity.

Criteria for evaluating potential projects:

Economy

- Facilitates private investments or other activities that produce jobs, attract new companies, or retain and grow local businesses
- Integrates or leverages investments in local innovation and emerging technology
- Addresses more than one service delivery need within a department or across multiple departments' business needs

Environment

- Demonstrates an innovative approach to more sustainable, environmentally-friendly business practices and service delivery. Exceeds minimum sustainability performance goals
- Directly advances a specific measure identified in the Austin Climate Protection Plan for greenhouse gas reduction and mitigation, climate adaptation, reduced water or energy demand, alternative energy or transportation.
- Makes critical assets or services more resilient so they can adapt to and recover from disruptive events. Examples include use of natural systems such as green infrastructure, decentralized or renewable strategies.

Society and Equity

- Provides infrastructure or services to a geographic area or population that has been historically underserved. Results in more equitable distribution of resources and environmental effects on community health and well-being
- Contributes directly to the preservation or vitality of cultural and historic assets, sense of place, and/or neighborhood character
- Contributes directly to appropriate mix of uses, walk-ability, complete neighborhoods, proximity to goods, services, housing, transit, and employment

V. Identify projects that are cost-effective, leverage other funding sources and maximize the benefit of capital investment

The City will seek to provide City of Austin taxpayers with investments that are cost-effective and that provide substantial benefit to the community.

Criteria for evaluating potential projects:

- Decreases future operating and maintenance costs
- Results in avoidance of future operating costs
- Leverages external (public or private) funds from other sources, reducing the City's financial commitment
- Provides for increase in City revenues or prevents anticipated loss of City revenues
- Prevents future additional capital costs

VI. Consider the balance of priorities in proposed bond package

Each of the above guidelines and associated criteria is important for guiding selection of potential projects for inclusion in the Bond. In developing a final bond proposal it will also be important to evaluate the collection of potential projects and programs together to ensure a balanced proposal of investments for the community.

Considerations for evaluating the bond package:

- City bond capacity and impact on City of Austin taxpayers
- Existing services vs. new investment priorities
- Geographic distribution of investments
- Sufficient funding for recommended projects
- Impact on future City operating and capital budgets
- Anticipated long-term benefit of projects for the community

BOND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

OVERVIEW

Opportunities will be available throughout the Bond development process for the Bond Election Advisory Task Force and the community to review and provide input on how the guiding principles are applied and how projects and programs are selected for consideration in developing a future bond proposal.

The City Council has established a citizen Bond Election Advisory Task Force to work within the scope of a capital needs assessment, the financial impact on the City's bond capacity and funding priorities to provide recommendations for balancing capital improvement priorities. The Task Force will consider initial recommendations provided by City Staff and input from the community to make their recommendations for Council and staff consideration.

Below is an outline of the process for bond package development:

Council Approval of Guiding Principles

The guiding principles and associated criteria will provide the framework for reviewing and prioritizing projects and programs for inclusion in a Bond proposal to advance the vision of Imagine Austin.

Estimated timeline: December 2011

Capital Needs Assessment and Bond Capacity presentations to Council

City Staff will provide an assessment of the city's current and anticipated capital improvement needs ("needs assessment") and the City's bond capacity (how much money the city is able to borrow based on the ad valorem tax rate of the City).

Estimated timeline: December 2011

Initial Staff Prioritization of Needs Assessment Projects

Once approved by Council, staff will apply the guiding principles and funding criteria to develop a "prioritized needs assessment" that identifies the initial staff-recommended ranking of projects and programs.

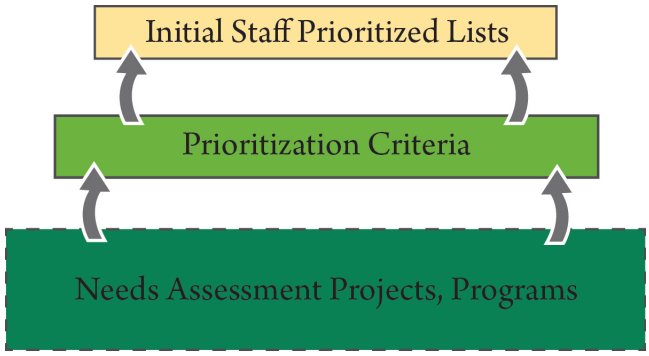
Estimated timeline: December – February 2012

CHARGE OF THE BOND ELECTION ADVISORY TASK FORCE

On October 6, 2011, City Council established the Bond Election Advisory Task Force. As outlined in Resolution #20111006-057, the Task Force will:

- Develop recommendations for projects for potential bond funding that will advance the vision of Imagine Austin
- Work within the scope of a needs assessment and funding priorities to be recommended by City staff
- Attend City Council public briefings on bond-related information
- Conduct regular open and posted meetings to maximize citizen engagement
- Ensure recommended projects have adequate funding
- The Task Force will dissolve upon City Council's adoption of the ballot language for the bond election

Methodology Overview



Bond Election Advisory Task Force & Community Consideration of Staff Prioritized Lists

The cumulative costs of projects and programs initially identified in the staff prioritized needs assessment will likely exceed the City's bond funding capacity. The Task Force, stakeholders and the community will review and provide feedback on the initial staff prioritized needs assessment and application of the guiding principles and funding priorities. The Task Force, using input from the community and stakeholders, will also consider priorities for balancing investments within the context of the City's bond capacity.

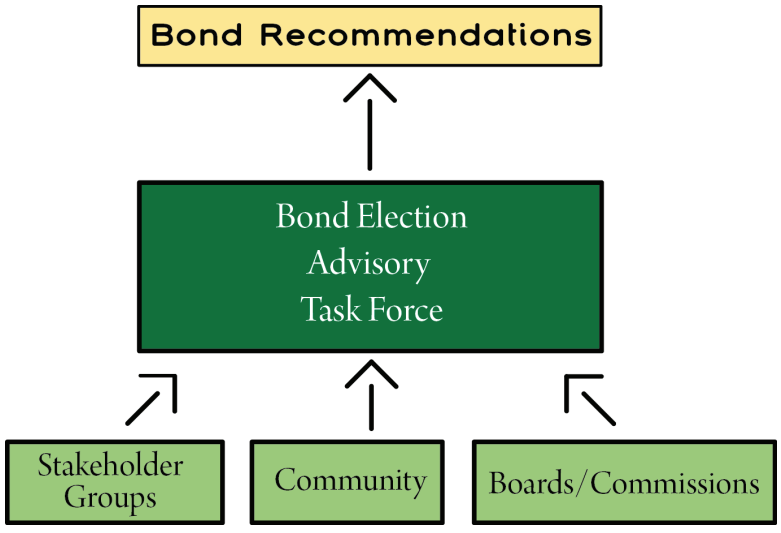
All stakeholder comments will be provided to the Bond Election Advisory Task Force for their consideration and use in developing recommendations.

Estimated timeline: February – April 2012

Bond Package Development

The Bond Election Advisory Task Force will consider the initial staff prioritized projects, community input and its own deliberations in formulating recommendations for Council and City staff consideration.

Staff will use the recommendations of the Task Force in crafting a proposed bond package to be presented to City Council.



Estimated timeline: May – June 2012

Council Approval of Final Ballot Language

The Austin City Council will decide on the final ballot language for the Bond propositions and set the date of the Bond Election.

Estimated timeline: August 2012