

**CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA ITEM REVIEW SHEET**

**ITEM:** Briefing and possible action to endorse the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement and the inclusion of additional elements to be incorporated into the plan.

**PLANNING COMMISSION DATE:** August 10, 2010

**SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Recommend endorsement of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement and the inclusion of additional elements to be incorporated into the plan.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:**

At their August 10, 2010 the Planning Commission recommended endorsement with changes of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement as forwarded them by the Comprehensive Plan Citizens Advisory Task Force.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS / BACKGROUND:**

**VISION STATEMENT**

On October 12, 2009 the Kick Off public meeting to gather public input for the Imagine Austin Comprehensive planning process was held at the Austin Convention Center. Starting at this meeting an initial online and paper survey was also made available through March 31, 2010. During the week of November 9, 2009 six public meetings (Community Forum Series #1 [CFS #1]) were held across the Austin to continue the process of collecting public input. In addition, a Meeting-in-a-Box (MIAB) was made available for people to hold their own meetings at their convenience. The MIAB mirrored CFS #1 and the initial survey. Through this phase of the public involvement process, there were 5,637 total inputs consisting of meeting attendees, survey responses, and people who participated in a MIAB. The results of the public involvement were also compared to a statistically valid community survey of 1,200 people either living in Austin or its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). The results of this survey strongly corresponded to the public input.

The results of the public input were reviewed, aggregated, and synthesized by the lead consultant team from Wallace, Roberts, & Todd LLC (WRT) and summarized in the Common Ground Working Paper. At their March 9, 2010, meeting, the Citizens Advisory Task Force worked with drafts of the Common Ground Working Paper, Strategic Issues Report (an overview of key issues facing Austin, based on the Community Inventory and the consultant team's stakeholder interviews), and the results of a statistically-valid survey to develop the core concepts of the vision statement. Based on the core concepts and the Common Ground Working Paper WRT and Planning and Development Review Department staff created and revised the draft components of a vision statement.

During the second round of community input meetings (Community Forum Series #2 [CFS #2]) held on April 27-28 and on May 1, 2010 and with the associated MIAB the public was able to comment on the draft components of a vision statement. Both attendees and MIAB participants indicated strong overall support for the components.

The components were presented to the Task Force at their April 13, 2010 meeting. At this meeting, it was determined that the Task Force's Analysis and Communications Committees would work on revising the draft vision statement. Over the course of ten joint committee meetings a revised draft vision statement was crafted. At their July 13, 2010 meeting the task force reviewed and commented on the draft vision and recommended edits for a final version to be presented to the Planning Commissions Comprehensive Plan Committee at their July 19 meeting. At the July 19 meeting the discussion of the Vision Statement was postponed until their August 10 meeting. On August 10, the Planning Commission made several changes to the Vision Statement to address stakeholder input and concerns and recommended endorsement of the modified Vision Statement to the City Council.

#### ADDITIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

The Austin City Charter requires that a comprehensive plan be adopted by ordinance and specifies that it contain ten mandatory elements: 1) Future land use; 2) Traffic circulation and mass transit element; 3) Wastewater, solid waste, drainage, and potable water element; 4) Conservation and environmental resources; 5) Recreation and opens space element; 6) Housing element; 7) Public services and facilities elements including a capital improvement program; 8) Public buildings and related facilities element; 9) Economic element for commercial and industrial development and redevelopment; 10) Health and human service element. The Charter also allows additional elements but requires that they be "coordinated and internally consistent" with both the 10 mandatory elements and optional elements

An Urban Design element was identified early in the planning process by Planning and Development Review Department staff and the consultant team. This recommendation is based on recent City land use ordinances (most prominently, Residential Design & Compatibility and Commercial Design Standards and the Station-Area Plans.) In addition, the *Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan* also contained an Urban Design section. Planning Commission recommended the Historic and Cultural Preservation; Arts, Culture, and Creativity; and Children, Families, and Education elements during the Phase I of Imagine Austin planning process. Subsequently, public input during the first Community Forum Series, a statistically-valid survey, and Community Forum Series #2 confirmed that the public viewed these subject areas as essential to Austin's future. On June 24, 2010 the City Council endorsed the *CreateAustin Cultural Master Plan*. The resolution endorsing the plan directed the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan process to, "embrace creative enterprises as a vital and economically beneficial component to be formally included in the economically beneficial component to be formally included in the comprehensive planning process and that final recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan integrate the *CreateAustin Cultural Master Plan*."

At their August 10 meeting, the Planning Commission recommended to the City Council four additional elements to be included into the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan:

- Historic and Cultural Preservation
- Children, Families, and Education
- Arts, Culture, and Creativity
- Urban Design

The inclusion of these elements reflected importance of these items as reflected in the community input gathered through the process to date.

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