

As it approaches its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Austin is ~~poised to become~~ 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.

### Austin is Livable:

One of Austin’s foundations is its safe, well-maintained, stable, and attractive neighborhoods and places whose character and history are preserved. Economically mixed and diverse neighborhoods across all parts of the city have a range of affordable housing options. All residents have a variety of urban, suburban, and semi-rural lifestyle choices with access to quality schools, libraries, parks and recreation, health and human services, and other outstanding public facilities and services.

- Development occurs in connected and ~~walkable pedestrian-friendly~~ patterns supporting transit and urban lifestyles, while protecting and enhancing neighborhoods, reducing sprawl and negative impacts on neighborhoods
- Downtown ~~and other urban neighborhoods~~ offers a safe, vibrant, day and night time urban lifestyle for residents, workers, and visitors.
- Development occurs across the city in a manner friendly to families with children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.
- Austin’s unique character and local businesses are recognized as a vital part of our community.
- Clear rules guide sustainable development and preservation, and they provide compatibility and certainty for residents and the business community. Guidelines that support quality development that sustains and improves Austin’s character provide certainty for residents and the business community.
- Austin’s diverse population is active and healthy, with access to locally-grown, nourishing foods, and affordable healthcare.

### Austin is Natural and Sustainable:

Austin is a green city. We are environmentally aware and ensure the long-term health and quality of our community through responsible resource use as citizens at the local, regional, and global level. Growth and infrastructure systems are well-managed to respect the limitations of our natural resources.

- We enjoy an accessible, well-maintained network of parks throughout our city.
- We protect the beauty of the Colorado River watershed, Hill Country, and Blackland Prairie and value our farmland that nurtures local food production.
- Our open spaces and preserves shape city planning, reduce infrastructure costs, and provide us with recreation, clean air and water, local food, cooler temperatures, and biodiversity.
- We conserve water, energy, and other valuable resources.
- Austin is a leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- We use and inspire new technologies that create more sustainable communities while reducing our dependence on environmentally costly practices.

### Austin is Mobile and Interconnected:

Austin is accessible. Our transportation network provides a wide variety of options that are efficient, reliable, and cost-effective to serve the diverse needs and capabilities of our citizens. Public and private sectors work together to improve our air quality and reduce congestion in a collaborative and creative manner.

- Interconnected development patterns support public transit and a variety of transportation choices, while reducing sprawl, congestion, travel times, and negative impacts on existing neighborhoods.
- Our integrated transportation system is well-maintained, minimizes negative impacts on natural resources, and remains affordable for all users.
- Austin promotes safe bicycle and pedestrian access with well-designed routes that provide connectivity throughout the greater Austin area. These routes are part of our comprehensive regional transportation network.

### Austin is Prosperous:

Austin’s prosperity exists because of the overall health, vitality, and sustainability of the city as a whole—including the skills, hard work, and qualities of our citizens, the stewardship of our natural resources, and developing conditions that foster both local businesses and large institutions. Development carefully balances the needs of differing land uses with improved transportation to ensure that growth is both fiscally sound and environmentally sustainable.

- Our economy is resilient and responsive to global trends thanks to its diverse and thriving mix of local entrepreneurs, large and small businesses, educational institutions, government, and industry.
- Innovation and creativity are the engines of Austin’s economy in the arts, research and development, and technology.
- Our ecology is integrated with our economy—the preservation of the environment and natural resources contribute to our prosperity.
- Equitable opportunities are accessible to all through quality education, training, and good jobs.

### Austin Values and Respects its People:

Austin is its people. Our city is home to engaged, compassionate, creative, and independent thinking people, where diversity is a source of strength and where we have the opportunity to fully participate and fulfill our potential.

- Austin government is transparent and accountable.
- People across all parts of the city and of all ages and incomes live in safe, stable neighborhoods with a variety of affordable and accessible homes, healthy food, economic opportunity, healthcare, education, and transportation.

- Austin ensures that no person is without such basic necessities as healthy food, clothing, shelter, physical and mental health care, or basic civil rights.
- We stand together for equal rights for all persons, especially acknowledging those who have been denied full participation in the opportunities offered by our community in the past.
- The history of the people of the Austin area is preserved and protected for future generations.

### Austin is Creative:

Creativity is the engine of Austin’s prosperity. Arts, culture, and creativity are essential keys to the city’s unique and distinctive identity and are valued as vital contributors to our community’s character, quality of life and economy.

- As a community that continues to stimulate innovation, Austin is a magnet that draws and retains talented and creative individuals.
- Our creative efforts reflect, engage with and appeal to the ethnic, gender and age diversity of Austin and to all socioeconomic levels.
- Residents and visitors participate fully in arts and cultural activities because the opportunities are valued, visible, and accessible.
- Our buildings and places reflect the inspirational and creative spirit of who we are as Austinites, through good design excellence, public art and beautiful, accessible public spaces.

### Austin is Educated:

Education is the hope for Austin’s future. Austin provides everyone with an equal opportunity for the highest quality of education that allows them to fully develop their potential. Networks of community partnerships support our schools and ensure that our children receive the resources and services they need to thrive and learn.

- Our school campuses provide safe and stable environments enabling future success.
- Neighborhood schools and libraries serve as centers for community collaboration, recreational, and social events, as well as learning opportunities.
- In partnership with private entities and the broader community, institutions of higher education continue to be incubators for innovation in the cultural arts, medicine, industry, business, and technology.
- Every child in Austin has the chance to engage with other cultures, communities, and languages, providing pathways for healthy development, and the critical thinking skills students need as future citizens of Austin and the world.

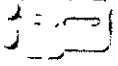
# Steps to create the <sup>Public</sup>Imagine Austin Vision

OCTOBER 2010

Community Forum Series #1

5,892

Participants were asked:



What are Austin's **strengths** and **weaknesses** and **what should it be like in 2039?**

## Common Ground Working Paper

Summary of the results of public input in Community Forum Series #1, organized into key themes.

## Statistically valid survey

1,311

Randomly selected sample of residents of Austin and its ETJ.

## What is a Vision statement?

A Vision is a brief statement of what Austin should be like in the future. Creating this Vision at the beginning of the Imagine Austin process allows it to be used as a point of agreement on what the plan is, trying to achieve before settling into the detailed work of policies and recommendations. As such, the Vision is mainly a summary of what the Austinites of today want the Austin of the future to be like.

## How to read the Vision

Because the Vision statement is about what the Austin of the future should be like, it does not prioritize or rank different parts of the statement. Instead, all of its parts are considered equally important. Despite being written as separate sections, the Vision should be read a single piece. This means that each part of the Vision contributes to and influences all of the other parts.

## Endorsing the Vision

On July 13, the Task Force forwarded the Vision to Planning Commission, to begin it's journey to be endorsed by City Council.

8,968

Participants in the Vision

1,205

Participants in other exercises (chip exercise, Speak Week, etc.)



MARCH 2010

## Task Force Big Ideas Workshop

Working in small groups, the 36-member Task Force reviewed the public input to identify 3 to 5 big ideas to structure the Vision around.

## Components of a Vision Statement

Staff and the consultant created the Components to consolidate public input into six themes based on the Task Force's Big Ideas.

APRIL—JUNE 2010

Community Forum Series #2

1,765

Participants rated their agreement with the Components of the Vision Statement.

"Overall, what do you think of the proposed components for this Vision?"

60%

40%

20%

0%

88%

combined agreement

Strongly Agree

Somewhat Agree

Somewhat Disagree

Strongly Disagree

## Crafting the Vision

Two Committees of the Task Force met multiple times across three months to review the Components and craft them into a final Vision Statement.