

Innovation Office

Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission
January 2022



Who we are

The City of Austin's Innovation Office works with **City teams** to identify and test solutions to complex challenges facing Austin.

We hold space for **early-stage ideas and solutions. We facilitate teams, research problems, and design services to make progress toward Austin's strategic goals**

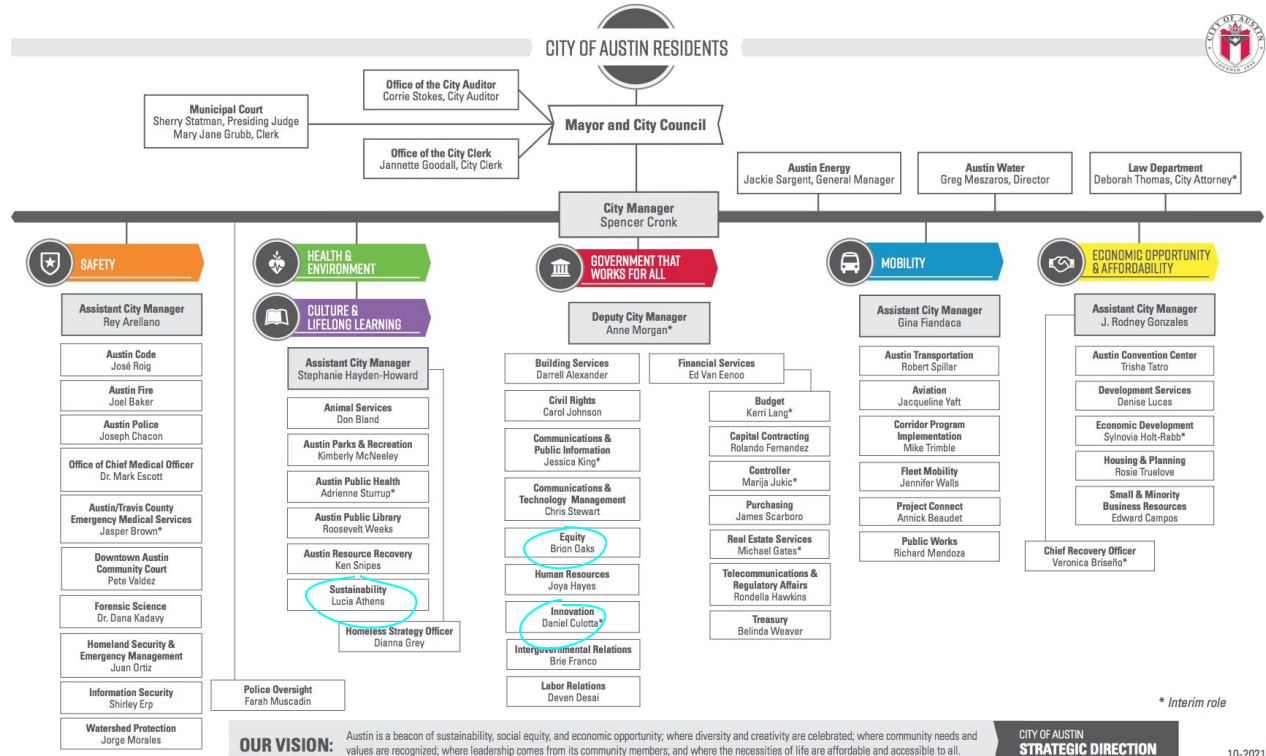
We define innovation as any project that is new to you with an uncertain outcome, and we're aimed at addressing pressing challenges that affect our community. We practice

human-centered innovation, which is a new approach to exercising authority and decision-making that starts with the needs, behaviors, and experiences of our community, and continues through a process of questioning assumptions, engaging with empathy, stewarding divergent thought, reflecting, and learning.

Primary Strategic Direction 23 alignment:

GTWFA Strategy 13: Establish a workplace culture of high performance, continuous improvement, and human-centered innovation that encourages employee growth and inclusive collaboration. In addition, embrace technology, rapidly prototype potential solutions, and improve business processes to increase efficiencies and reduce red tape.

Organizational orientation



STRATEGIC ANCHORS

ACROSS OUR OUTCOMES

Values that Support Quality of Life in Austin.

EQUITY

To advance equitable outcomes, the City of Austin is leading with a lens of racial equity and healing. Race is the primary predictor of outcomes and it is time to recognize, understand, and address racism at its various levels: personal, institutional, structural, and systemic. Equity is the condition when every member of the community has a fair opportunity to live a long, healthy, and meaningful life. Equity embedded into Austin's values system means changing hearts and minds, transforming local government from the inside out, eradicating disparities, and ensuring all Austin community members share in the benefits of community progress.

AFFORDABILITY

Austinites deserve to experience the necessities of life as affordable and accessible. Simply put, this means a household can afford rent or mortgage, transportation, child care expenses, utilities, and taxes. This strategic direction lays out strategies to increase economic opportunities and affordable choices across Austin, so that Austinites, families, businesses, City employees, and all generations can thrive.

INNOVATION

In Austin, we define innovation as any project that is new to you with an uncertain outcome. Aimed at addressing pressing challenges that affect our community, human-centered innovation means a new approach to exercising authority and decision-making that starts with the needs, behaviors, and experiences of our community, and continues through a process of questioning assumptions, engaging with empathy, stewarding divergent thought, reflecting, and learning. Innovation is future-oriented around what outcomes could be created together, rather than an analysis of already formed alternatives.

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

Being a sustainable and resilient community requires proactive steps to protect Austin's quality of life now, and for future generations. A sustainable city finds a balance among three goal areas: (1) prosperity and jobs, (2) conservation and the environment, and (3) community health, equity, and cultural vitality. Resiliency is the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems to survive, adapt, and grow from difficult times. In Austin, we bounce back stronger.

PROACTIVE PREVENTION

The City of Austin embraces the dual responsibility of being responsive to emerging challenges while also dialing up efforts to prevent problems on the front end. For example, this translates into addressing social determinants of health outcomes, rather than only treating the disease. This means investing in preventative maintenance of public assets like bridges, service vehicles, and community facilities. An intentional focus on prevention today leads to a brighter future.

COMMUNITY TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS

Austin is a place where leadership comes from the people. We believe in honoring the spirit and soul of Austin and creating opportunities for civic engagement that are easy, meaningful, and inclusive, and that lay a foundation for lasting relationships. Trust must be earned and through strengthening partnerships with the community, we will make more progress together to advance these six outcomes.

Innovation capabilities

Qualitative and quantitative research

Data science

Design and prototyping

Evidence-based practices

Grant applications

Impact evaluations

Community-based accelerators

Co-creation facilitation

Community organizing

Networking and partnering with community, technology, and nonprofit orgs

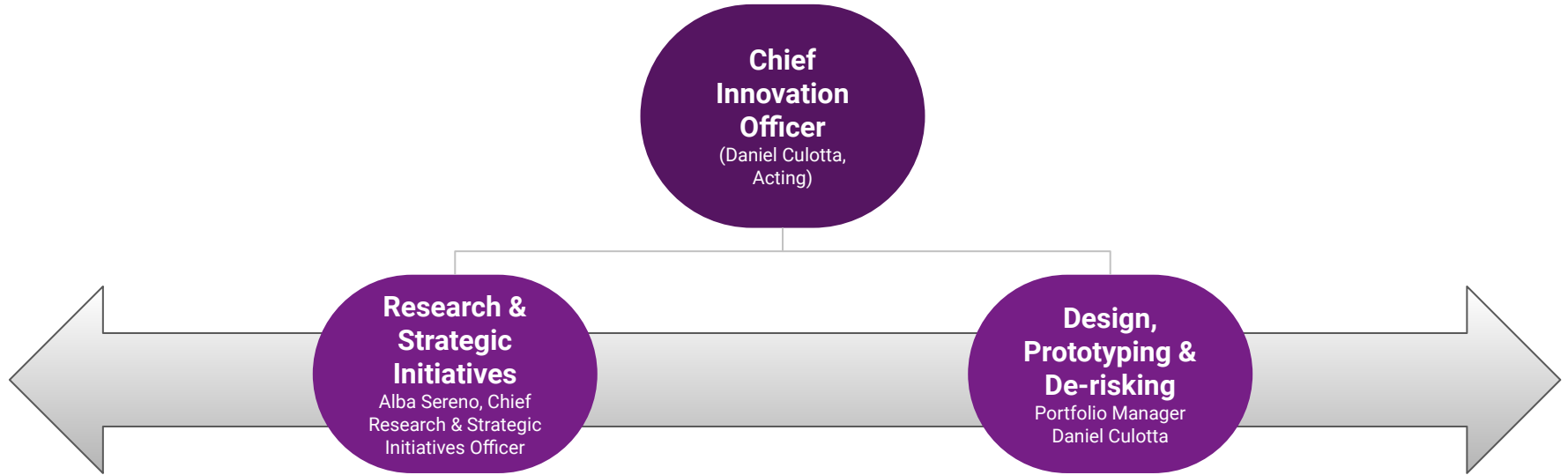
Systems design and mapping

Theories of change in complex systems

Proving things that haven't been done, yet

Business modeling, program design

Office structure



Digital equity/community tech related projects

(Recent Past)

LifeFiles: Grant funded project to build distributed ledger to help residents control and share their identity documents facilitating their access to social and health services, especially those vital to ending homelessness such as housing, public benefits and access to medical care. Digitally certified and encrypted, LifeFiles allows for the decentralized distribution of certified documents, allowing for remote verification and secure shareability. Code is open source for those who wish to implement the solution. **Contact: Daniel**

Culotta, OOI

<https://rwjflandingpage.webflow.io/>

Open Data Portal: This portal provides easy access to open data and information about your city government. We encourage the use of public data that the City of Austin has published to spark innovation, promote public collaboration, increase government transparency, and inform decision making. We are preparing a scope for a next phase of refinement to the portal & its accompanying internal Open Data Meetup.

Staff Contact: Charles Purma III

Urban Air Mobility Working Group: Several City departments operate drones and related technologies for purposes of improving service performance and delivery. This working group seeks to unify policies, technology guidelines, and management best practices under a formal governance structure. The core team and Executive Sponsor (CTM CIO Chris Stewart) has been identified to lead this and are currently developing their Charter, list of enterprise-wide priorities, and roadmap for achieving their goals. **Contact: Kirk Scanlon, ATD**

Infrastructure for Advanced Services (IAS): A cross-department team has worked to identify municipal purpose, gather current and future use cases, and initiate the community relationships needed to explore how we might leverage intelligent infrastructure to improve City operations and deliver advanced services to our communities. **ATD** is taking the lead to prove out this space through pilots aligned with their Smart Mobility program. **Contact: Jason JonMichael, ATD**

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Thank you!

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