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CHAPTER

American
Society of
Landscape
Architects

October 6, 2014

Honorable Mayor Leffingwell and Council Members
City of Austin
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767

Dear Mayor Leffingwell and Council Members,

As President of the Texas Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (TXASLA), I am sending this letter in support of ASLA Austin's Recommendations for CodeNEXT. Nationally, ASLA's members are promoting and implementing the very same sustainability goals that the Austin hopes to achieve. ASLA's recently issued Green Infrastructure Guidelines and the successful adoptions of infill green codes in Washington, DC and Seattle, WA are at the vanguard of urban design policies and practices. TXASLA has been actively engaged with the Austin Section's efforts to share our profession's commitment to improving built and natural environments locally.

Imagine Austin offers a bold and forward thinking plan for sustainability. The land development code—which is critical for making this shared vision become a reality—must be as ambitious and as thoughtful. We strongly advocate that the priority programs of "Sustainably Managing Our Water Resources" and "Using Green Infrastructure to Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas" be integrated throughout the revisions made in the CodeNEXT process. Specifically, we recommend a combination of use-, form-, and performance-based codes that address: (1) water conservation and management, (2) the mitigation of urban heat island effects, (3) infill regulations that minimize loss of pervious ground cover and tree canopy, (4) the promotion of urban agriculture, and (5) use of green buffers to separate incompatible land uses. These actions will help achieve the integration of Nature and City that is a foundational principle in *Imagine Austin*.

TXASLA endorses the recommendations of ASLA Austin:

- that the role of specific city entities be strengthened in CodeNEXT such as the Green Infrastructure Regulatory Team and the Environmental Board;
- that ASLA Austin be designated a key stakeholder in the process;
- that the groups mentioned above collaborate on a CodeTALK on the relationships between Nature and City;
- that a key team member, who is a licensed Landscape Architect in the State of Texas, be designated to ensure that the core green infrastructure and sustainable water priority programs are integrated into the code.

Landscape Architects in Texas creatively combine extensive understanding of our regional ecology, responsive insight on our communities' cultures, and demonstrated technical skill for building vibrant and resilient communities. Experiences working with private clients and public stakeholders provide our members with an informed, professional perspective that can contribute to the making of a viable and robust code. We understand that the CodeNEXT process offers a tremendous opportunity to improve the City of Austin. It will also be a model that influences land development discussions in other Texas cities and in communities across the nation. TXASLA and ASLA Austin are motivated and prepared to contribute to this very important endeavor.

Thank you for your consideration,

Timothy May

Timothy May, PLA—Texas Registration #1227
TXASLA, Chapter President