

Process to Revise Austin's Land Development Code

City Council
November 1, 2012

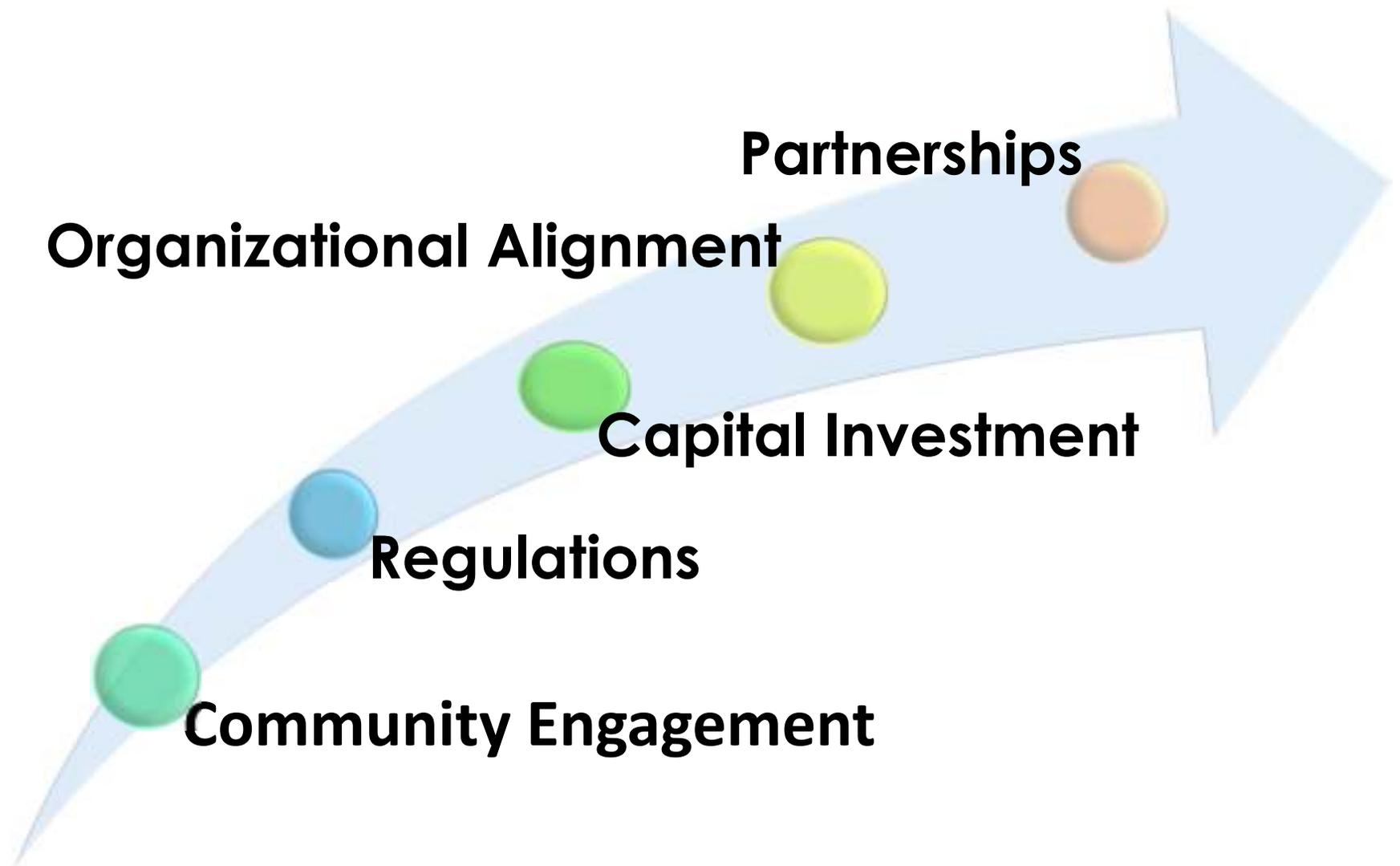
A priority program of **IMAGINEAUSTON**

Garner Stoll, Planning and Development Review Department
George Adams, Planning and Development Review Department



- Why revise the code?
- What to revise?
- Who will revise the code?
- How will the code be revised?
- When will the project be complete?

Why?



Implementing Imagine Austin

- Last comprehensive revision was in 1984
- 181 proposed code amendments since 2005
- Multiple overlay districts on a single property
- Too many lot-by-lot “custom” zoning cases (Ex. *CS-1-MU-V-CO-NP*)
- Multiple duplicative and conflicting requirements

It's Time to Revise the LDC when...

- Over 60 zoning districts
- Only a handful of people know the answers to a question about the code
- Complexity convolutes the permitting and approval process
- BOA variances used as planning tools
- It's not user-friendly

It's Time to Revise the LDC when...

Imagine Austin offers clear direction for code revisions

- Vision statement
- 30+ policies
- 40+ actions
- Priority Program #8

Imagine Austin Provides Opportunity

Priority Program #8

Revise Austin's development regulations and processes to promote a compact and connected city.

- Complete neighborhoods and expanded housing choices
- Neighborhood protection
- Household affordability
- Environmental protection
- Efficient service delivery
- Clear guidance and user-friendly

Imagine Austin's LDC Revision Goals

What?

Regulations relating to...

- Procedures for review & approval
- Zoning
- Subdivisions
- Site Plans
- Drainage
- Transportation
- Environment
- Signs

On the Table for Reconsideration

Euclidean/Conventional—Separates land uses into discreet, separate zones such as residential, commercial, industrial, etc.

Performance—Uses performance-based or goal-oriented criteria (e.g., traffic flow, density, noise, and access to light) to establish review parameters for proposed projects

Form-Based—Addresses the relationship between building facades and the public realm; the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another; and the scale and types of streets and blocks

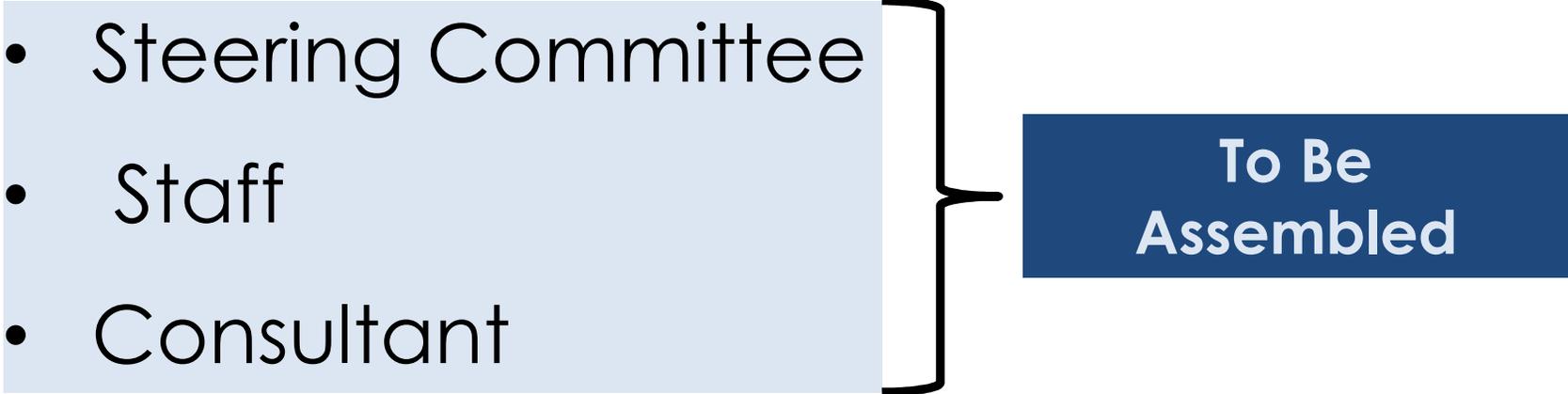
Hybrid—Combines one or more types of codes such as Form-Based and Euclidean

Types of Zoning Codes

Who?

Putting the Team Together

- City Council
- Planning Commission
- Steering Committee
- Staff
- Consultant



To Be Assembled

Code Revision General Steps

- Committee consists of 11 members
- Council appoints 7 members, Staff appoints 4 members
- Steering Committee meets regularly throughout process

Steering Committee

- Three new staff positions in the PDRD FY 2012/2013 budget
- Support from multiple PDRD divisions and other departments as needed
- Up to \$2M for consultant services and related expenses

Staff & Consultant Resources

- Deep knowledge and experience in revising big city land development codes
- Ability to listen to the public and explain highly technical and complex subjects (*Explainer-in-Chief*)
- Highly responsive to community issues and needs while retaining professional neutrality

What should the consultant bring?

- Expertise in different types of codes
- Courageous and straightforward in discussing likely outcomes and unintended consequences

What should the consultant bring?

How?

Briefings

Planning Commission—September 11

Zoning and Platting Commission—October 2

**Comprehensive Plan and Transportation
Committee**—October 8

City Council—November 1

Review the General Approach

- Preliminary outreach to key stakeholders— development and business community, affordable housing, neighborhoods, environment/sustainability, etc.
- Steering committee appointed
- “Code 101” and best practices through the end of Step #1
- “Headliners” ongoing throughout the process
- Release RFQ in early November 2012
- Hire consultant—Phase 1 contract (Listening and Education)

Organizing the Process

Step 1—Listening, Issue Identification,
and Education

Step 2—Diagnosis and Outline

Step 3—Preliminary Draft Code

Step 4—Code Adoption

Code Revision—Four Steps

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

- Public Review and Comment
- Steering Committee Review and Comment
- Planning Commission Recommendation
- City Council Approval

Step 4

- Planning Commission Recommendation
- City Council Approval

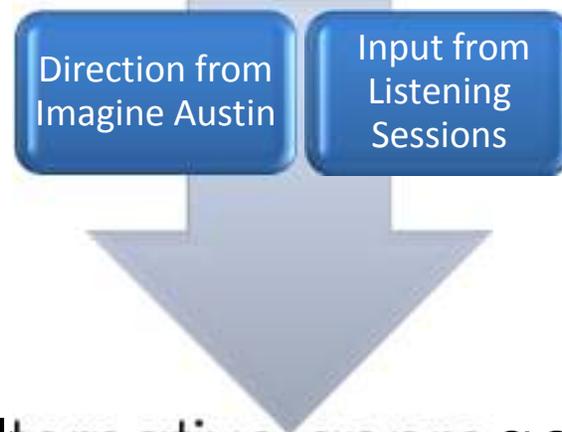
Ongoing Review and Oversight

Step 1

- Designing listening sessions—Steering committee, consultant, and staff
- Conduct listening sessions (what works, what doesn't work, identification of critical issues & divisive topics)
- Generate contact list of interested parties for ongoing outreach and information
- Results of listening sessions compiled and provided to consultant team

Code Diagnosis *(Generated by consultant)*

Step 2



- Discussion of alternative approaches to critical issues with Steering Committee
- Prepare draft diagnosis (what's left alone, what's to be revised, and what to explore further)
- Steering Committee and staff review
- Public and Boards and Commissions review
- **Planning Commission recommends and City Council approves diagnosis**

Code Diagnosis & Outline

Annotated Outline

(Generated by consultant)

- Summary organization of the revised code
- Community dialogue on alternative approaches to critical issues
- Steering Committee and staff review
- Boards and Commissions review
- **Planning Commission recommends and City Council approves outline**

Initial Draft of Code

(Generated by consultant)

- Based on annotated outline
- Conduct workshops on draft sections of the code
- Develop roll-out process for mapping
- Broad events to allow public to explore and comment on code
- Steering Committee and staff review
- Public and Boards and Commissions review
- Adoption draft of code based on input

Preliminary Draft Code

Public Hearings

Planning Commission recommends and
City Council adopts

- Austin's land development regulations and process need a holistic review
- Imagine Austin provides a clear, community-based vision
- Consultant team authors work products
- Iterative, step-by-step process and community review
- Planning Commission recommendations and City Council approvals throughout process

Summary of Proposal

- On time and within budget
- Open to all
- Engaging people who use the code
- Respectful and fair
- Informative and educational
- Focus on common ground to move forward
- Don't make assumptions
- Don't let perfection get in the way of improvement

**A clear, predictable, user-friendly code that
implements *Imagine Austin***

What Does Success Look Like?

- Future development will reflect the community's vision
- Permit process is fair, clear, predictable, and timely
- Property owners know what they can and cannot do with their property
- More people able to more easily meet their daily needs with shorter trips
- Expanded housing choices to meet the needs of an ever changing city
- Easier to do right thing and harder to do the wrong thing

Potential Benefits of the New Code

When?

- Steering Committee appointed—December 2012
- Consultant on board—April 2013
- Listening sessions completed—Summer 2013
- Diagnosis approved by City Council—February 2014
- Annotated Outline approved by Council—June 2014
- Preliminary draft code approved—March 2015
- Adoption draft code complete—September 2015

Next Steps

Questions?