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## AGENDA ITEM REVIEW SHEET

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

**P.C. DATE:** July 27, 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.

**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

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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.

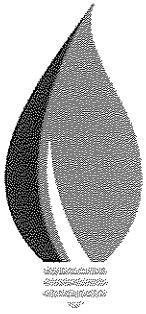
#### ADDITIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS

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*.”

**CASE MANAGER:** Garner Stoll

**PHONE:** 974-2397



# IMAGINE AUSTIN

## comprehensive plan

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### Total participation

Totals	
Participation Workshop	70
CFS#1	5,892
CFS#2	4,211
<b>All Imagine Austin</b>	<b>10,173</b>

### Participation by opportunity

Opportunity	Total participants
<b>COMMUNITY FORUM SERIES #1</b>	
Meetings	546
Kick-Off Survey	3,828
Angelou Stakeholder Survey	276
Meetings-in-a-Box	1,242
<b>TOTAL COMMUNITY FORUM SERIES #1</b>	<b>5,892</b>
<b>COMMUNITY FORUM SERIES #2</b>	
Meetings	195
Follow-on chip exercise	262
Vision Survey	1,427
Statistically Valid Survey	1,311
Meetings-in-a-Box	143
Speak Week	873
<b>TOTAL COMMUNITY FORUM SERIES #2</b>	<b>4,211</b>

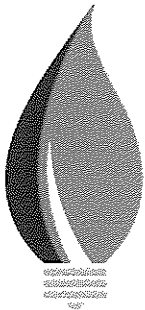
### Other outreach touches

Speaker's Bureau: 1,655

Facebook friends: 1,453

Twitter followers: 146

Email list: 2,140



# IMAGINE AUSTIN

## comprehensive plan

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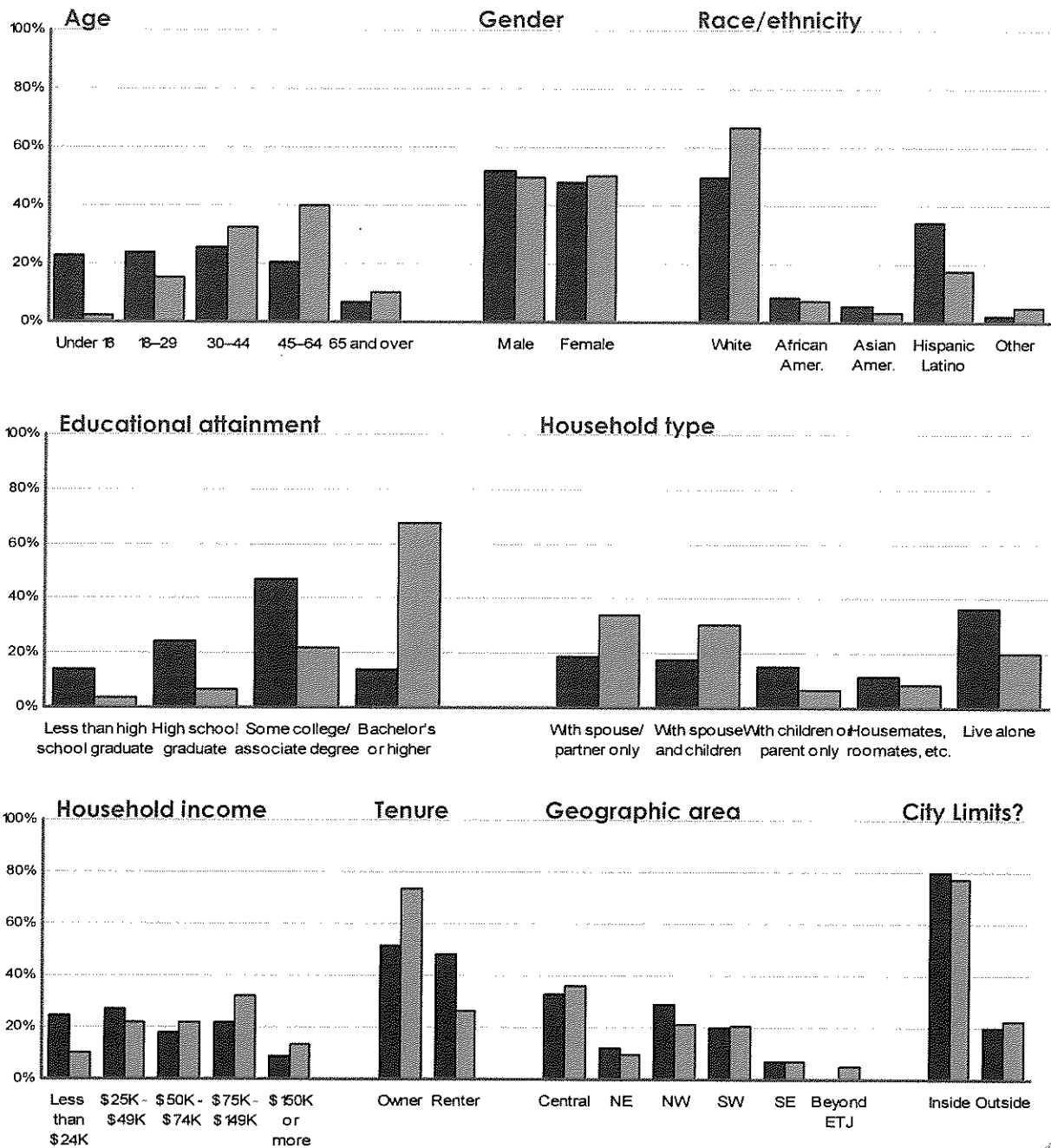
### Demographics

The charts below show the demographic breakdown of Imagine Austin participants through July 8 compared with the overall demographic breakdown of Austin.

### Total Participants

City of Austin (2007)

Imagine Austin participants



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# IMAGINE AUSTIN

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**DRAFT Strategic Issues Working Paper**  
for City Staff and Citizen's Advisory Task Force  
Review and Discussion



March 2010

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As described in the introduction, this draft is intended as a “work-in-progress” that summarizes the current understanding of issues to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. As a starting point for discussion, it is presented in a flexible format that can be revised and added to over time to reflect input from the public, Citizens’ Advisory Task Force, city staff, etc.

Prepared by:

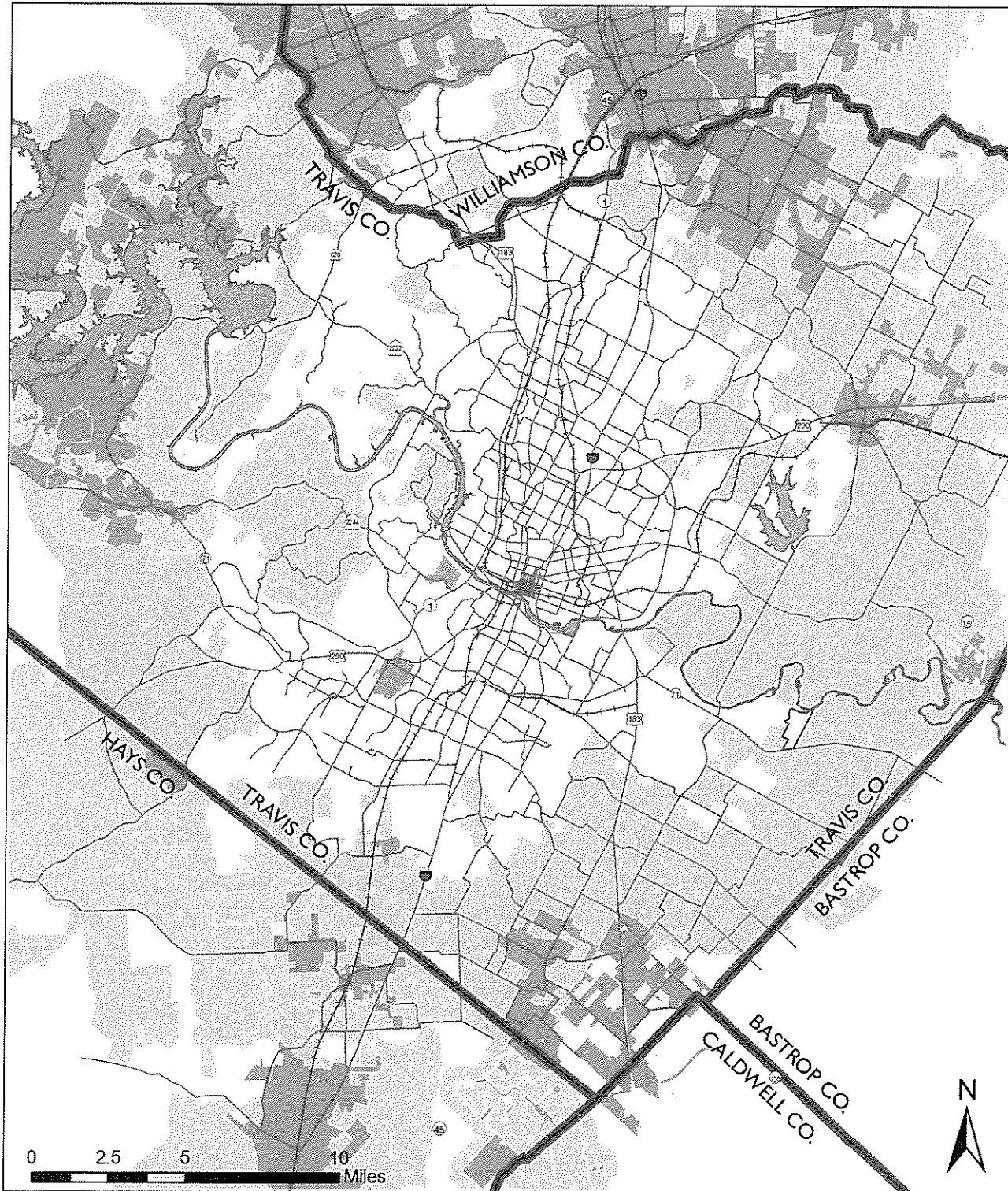
**Wallace, Roberts, Todd, LLC,**

**AngelouEconomics**

**Kimley Horn & Associates**

**Raymond Chan & Associates**

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## City of Austin Jurisdiction and Neighboring Municipalities

### Legend

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| Austin - City Limits                    | Other City Limits |
| Austin - Extra-territorial Jurisdiction | Other ETJs        |

Figure 1. City of Austin Jurisdiction and Neighboring Municipalities



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# INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

The Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan will establish 1) a vision for Austin's future derived from community input and 2) a "game plan" to achieve the vision through action by the City and its partners. An understanding of the conditions and trends that are shaping Austin today and its evolution in the future is necessary to provide context for the vision, policy framework, and action plan that will be developed through the planning process. The foundation for this understanding is provided by the Community Inventory, which provides data about demographic and household trends, Austin's natural environment, land use and zoning, and other topics relevant to the Comprehensive Plan. This Strategic Issues Report provides a summary of key issues for Austin's future based on a review of the Community Inventory as well as public input to date, including public meetings, surveys, stakeholder interviews, etc.

This report is intended not as a definitive product but as a "work-in-progress" that summarizes the current understanding of important issues to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. As a starting point for discussion, it is presented in a flexible format that can be revised and added to over time to reflect input from the public, Citizens' Advisory Task Force, city staff, etc., including as further elements are added. As the planning process moves from visioning to developing policies and actions, the format can be expanded to incorporate ideas (implementation strategies, case studies from other cities, etc.) to address each issue.

## Sustainability

The report organization largely mirrors the content of the Comprehensive Plan elements required by the Austin City Charter (future land use, traffic circulation and mass transit, housing, etc.). It should be noted, however, that there is much overlap between elements (e.g., land use and transportation). Sustainability has been identified by City Council as an overarching goal of the Comprehensive Plan and thus can be used help identify interrelationships and synergies between issues identified for different plan elements. The comprehensive planning process is designed, in large part, to engage the community in defining what a sustainable future for Austin means. To help inform this process, this report characterizes the dimensions of sustainability in terms of the three "E's" – Economy, Environment, and Equity. The basic tenet of this triple bottom line approach is that sustainable communities are those that address economic prosperity, environmental quality, and social equity in a mutually supportive manner. To broadly depict the interrelated dimensions of sustainability, the report identifies one or more of the three E's for each strategic issue. For example, land use issues are wide-ranging in nature and thus touch on all three dimensions of sustainability, while issues identified for Environmental Resources primarily impact environmental quality.

Locally, the University of Texas Environmental Science Institute defines the foundation of sustainability using the often cited Brundtland Commission definition: *the ability to provide for the needs of the world's current population without damaging the ability of future generations to provide for themselves*. In addition, the University of Texas applies the triple bottom line approach to its sustainability studies programs and decision making efforts across departments.

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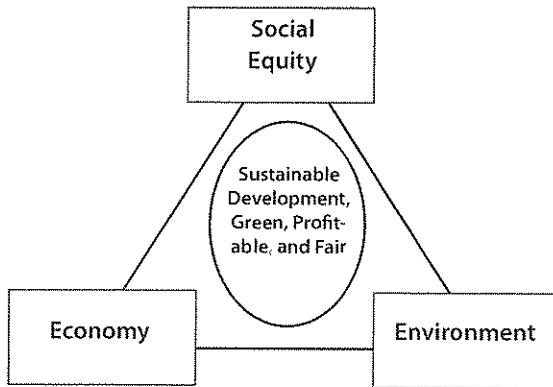


Figure 2. University of Texas Sustainability Graphic

At the October 2009 Imagine Austin Open House participants were asked to define what sustainability means for Austin and the region. While responses ranged from affordability, to reducing sprawl, to living wage jobs, the most frequently cited responses point to effective public transportation, pedestrian/bicycle friendly development, and protecting the natural environment. As the comprehensive planning process continues, Austin residents will continue to shape exactly what a sustainable future looks like Austin, using the three “E’s” as building blocks.

The “three-legged stool” is a useful concept that has been used as the foundation of a number of community plans. The following five sustainability principles (developed by WRT) is another example of a conceptual framework for sustainable community planning and may be useful as Austin develops its own definition of a sustainable future:

1. **Energy:** Reduce fossil fuel usage and carbon emissions through the planning and design of communities, sites, and buildings.
2. **Resiliency:** Reduce vulnerability to external environmental and economic threats through planning, design, and increased reliance on local resources, goods, and services.
3. **Mobility:** Locate and design transportation system components to reduce automobile dependency and promote use of alternative transportation modes.
4. **Stewardship:** Preserve and restore natural, cultural, and historic built resources. Integrate natural and human ecological systems in the planning and design of communities.
5. **Equity:** Provide housing, transportation, and employment opportunities for persons of all socioeconomic backgrounds and abilities.

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## Stakeholder Engagement

As referenced above, the consultants are conducting stakeholder interviews to gain a broad range of input in defining strategic issues. A list of organizations and departments interviewed thus far is summarized below. In addition to interviews, Austin City departments were invited to provide their thoughts on strategic issues from the perspective of each department.

### Imagine Austin Stakeholder Interviews Conducted to Date (October 2009 – February 2010)

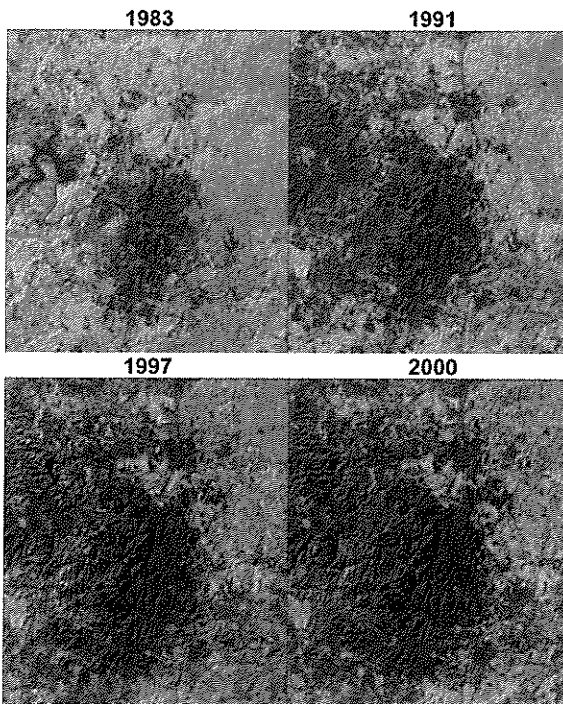
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Austin Economic Forecast Event and Survey (January 2010)</li> <li>• Asian American Cultural Center</li> <li>• Austin Board of Realtors (ABOR)</li> <li>• Austin Chamber of Commerce (<i>economic development, business retention, government relations, and transportation representatives</i>)</li> <li>• Austin City Council &amp; Plan Commission Members</li> <li>• Austin Community College (ACC)</li> <li>• Austin Convention and Visitor's Bureau (ACVB)</li> <li>• Austin Electric (AE)</li> <li>• Austin Independent Business Alliance (AIBA)</li> <li>• Austin Independent School District (AISD)</li> <li>• Austin Neighborhood Council</li> <li>• Austin Water Utility (AWU), City of Austin</li> <li>• Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG)</li> <li>• Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO)</li> <li>• Capital Metro Transportation Authority (CapMetro)</li> <li>• Concordia University</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downtown Austin Alliance</li> <li>• Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD)</li> <li>• Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office (EGRSO), City of Austin</li> <li>• Hill Country Conservancy</li> <li>• Immigrant Services Network (ISN)</li> <li>• Leadership Austin</li> <li>• Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA)</li> <li>• Meals on Wheels and More</li> <li>• Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Office (NHCD), City of Austin</li> <li>• Real Estate Council of Austin (RECA)</li> <li>• St David's Community Health Foundation</li> <li>• Texas Nature Conservancy</li> <li>• Travis County Health and Human Services</li> <li>• Urban Coalition</li> <li>• UT Sustainability Center</li> <li>• Watershed Protection and Development Review (WP-DRD), City of Austin</li> <li>• Watershed Protection District (WPD), City of Austin</li> </ul> |
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# LAND USE AND POPULATION

**Land Use Issue #1:** The growth dynamic in Austin and the surrounding region has been characterized by population growth, land consumption, and outward expansion.

- Much of the growth of Austin and the larger region has been lower density development outside of established centers, resulting in separation of uses, greater travel times and associated traffic congestion, consumption of open space, and other impacts.
- While still the largest jurisdiction in the MSA, Austin's share of regional population and employment is decreasing. Austin currently comprises nearly 50% of the MSA's population but that figure is projected to decline to one-third by 2040 (*source: U.S. Census and City of Austin*).<sup>1</sup>



Source: U.S. Geological Survey

Figure 3. Recent Land Consumption, 1983-2000, Source: Austin Community Inventory, U.S. Geological Survey

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Environment,  
Equity**

## LAND USE/POPULATION INDICATORS AND TRENDS

- Before 2000, Austin's population grew at an annual rate of about 3.5% per year (close to doubling every 20 years). The recent annual growth rate has slowed to about 1.6%.
- Between 2000 and 2008, Austin's population grew at a rate of 13%, which was less than Travis County (17%), the Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Statistical Area<sup>1</sup> (MSA) (24%), and Texas (14%), but greater than the national average (7%).
- About 46% of rangeland in the Austin-Round Rock MSA was converted to urban uses between 1983 and 2000.
- Austin's population is projected to grow at an annual rate of about 1.5% - 2% over the next 30 years, compared to about 3.5% per year projected in the Austin-Round Rock MSA as a whole.
- About 18% (73,000 Acres) of the ETJ are undeveloped without environmental constraints. However, this land is seeing increased development pressure.

<sup>1</sup> The Austin-Round Rock MSA includes Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, and Williamson Counties.

<sup>1</sup> This projection does not account for any future annexations by the City, meaning that Austin's population may actually grow at a faster rate.

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**Land Use Issue #2:** While the general direction of growth has been outward expansion, there is considerable potential for redevelopment and infill development within Austin.

- Sources such as demolition permit records and analysis of improvement to land ratio<sup>2</sup> indicate that there has been a significant amount of redevelopment in Austin and that redevelopment is likely to continue in the future.
- Commercial corridors such as Lamar Boulevard, Burnet Road and Airport Boulevard are examples of locations with potential for infill and redevelopment of older retail uses.



Figure 5. Example of Improvement to Land Ratio (ILR), Commercial and Multi-Family Parcels (See Community Inventory for more detail). Based on analysis, parcels with an ILR of less than 1.0 (shown in dark red) are more likely to redevelop.

**Economy,  
Environment**

<sup>2</sup> Improvement to land ratio is the appraised value of the improvements on a parcel divided by the value of the land. The theory is that property owners will seek to maximize the value of their investment when the value of the improvement is less than the value of the land.

<sup>3</sup> The ETJ covers the unincorporated area within five miles of the present city boundary.

**Land Use Issue #3:** Population growth and land use within Austin affects the larger region and vice versa, underscoring the need for coordinated planning.

- In the past Austin's land area experienced major growth through annexation (from 30.9 square miles in 1940 to over 300 square miles in 2009). The area beyond the city boundary within which Austin can maintain some control, including the potential for annexation, is referred to as its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) and is part of the study area for the comprehensive plan.<sup>3</sup> In recent decades, state legislation, the creation of Municipal Utility Districts, and the presence of other growing municipalities limit the potential for future annexation, particularly to the north.
- Jurisdictional limitations on annexation are less pronounced to the east and south of Austin's current city boundary. This area of Austin and its ETJ has a relatively high proportion of undeveloped land with minimal environmental constraints and has been designated as Austin's "Desired Development Zone" by City Council. However, development in Round Rock / Williamson County is shifting the momentum of growth north away from Austin and GIS analysis indicates that this trend may continue in the future (see *Susceptibility to Change* section).
- Two regional transportation initiatives highlight how planning for Austin and the region as a whole are inextricably linked (see *Transportation* section):
  - » The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (CAMPO) People, Planning and Preparing for the Future: Your 25 Year Transportation Plan, scheduled for release in June 2010; and
  - » Capital Metro Transit's All Systems Go Plan.

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Equity**

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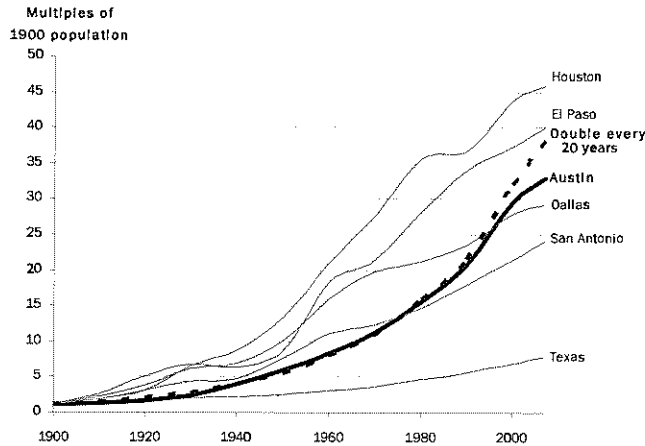


Figure 6. Population for Austin, Texas, and other large Texas cities (1900-2000), Source: U.S. Census, Austin Community Inventory.

**Land Use Issue #4:** A complex set of plans, policies, and regulations impact land use and development in Austin.

- The City has an active neighborhood planning program. A number of neighborhoods have completed or are in the process of developing plans and future land use maps intended to guide zoning changes to implement the plan. However, many others lack neighborhood plans and future land use maps (see *Housing and Neighborhoods Issue #4*).
- Austin has numerous zoning designations ranging from single use districts (residential, commercial, industrial) to special purpose base districts to overlay/combining districts. Zoning is not necessarily a good predictor of future land use because rezonings are common, particularly in areas without an adopted neighborhood plan and future land use map.
- A number of past and current planning initiatives have influenced and will continue to influence land use patterns in Austin. For example, the Barton Springs Watershed regulations enacted pursuant to the 1992 Save Our Springs initiative resulted in reduced density but did not prevent development within the Drinking Water Protection Zone (see *Environmental Issue #1*). Examples of more recent planning initiatives include the Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Redevelopment (2000), the Corridor Planning Program (2001), the University Neighborhood Overlay (2004), Transit-Oriented Development Ordinance (2005), and Commercial Design Standards (2006).
- What is lacking is an overall framework that ties all of these plans, policies, regulations, and initiatives together in a unified direction for the future. This is a key purpose of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan.

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# HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

**Housing and Neighborhoods Issue #1:** Housing prices have increased significantly over the last ten years without similar increases in household income.

- Many Austin households experienced large increases in household income during the 1990s at a time when Austin housing prices were considered relatively affordable. However, over the last ten years housing costs have risen by 85%, while household incomes have remained stagnant or declined. The declining median family income trend is most prevalent in Hispanic and African-American households, compared with the overall population.<sup>4</sup> As the percentage of homes affordable to Austin residents is declining, families are forced to look elsewhere in the region for housing. Austin has a need for more moderately priced homes (i.e., \$113,000 to \$240,000). Attached housing, which often fills this need in other cities, is limited in Austin.
- Austin residents have consistently supported creating and maintaining affordable housing, which is reflected in City policy. In 2006, voters approved the use of \$55 million in General Obligation Bonds to increase homeownership and rental opportunities for low-to-moderate income households. Austin's Five-Year Consolidated Plan describes priorities and funding recommendations for the City's housing and community development activities.

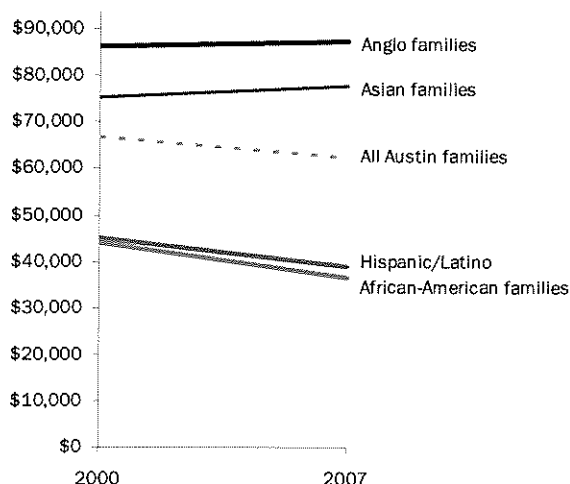


Fig 7. Median Family Income (2000-2007), 2007 dollars, Source: Census, 2000, 2007, Austin Community Inventory.

## HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS INDICATORS AND TRENDS

- In 2008, median household income in Austin (\$51,004) was less than the MSA (\$57,973), but slightly higher than Texas (\$49,078). Per capita income in Austin (\$30,429) was higher than in the MSA, Texas, and the U.S. in 2008.
- Between 1998 and 2008, the median single-family home price increased by 90% from \$129,900 to \$240,000. The percentage of all single family homes considered affordable (to households earning 80% of the median family income as defined by HUD), declined to 28% from 42% in 1998.
- Austin is a majority renter city (54%) and has a need for affordable housing rentals (e.g., there is a shortage of rental units for households with incomes less than \$20,000).
- Austin's Hispanic/Latino and Asian populations are growing. According to the Census, 6% of Austin's population is Asian, which is a higher percentage than the region, state, or nation. The largest number increase occurred in the Hispanic population, which grew from 106,148 in 1990 to 260,535 in 2007. Austin's Hispanic population (35%) is slightly less than in Texas (36%), but higher than the MSA (30%) and the nation (15%).

( Equity )

<sup>4</sup> From 2000-2007 in 2007 dollars. Source: Austin Community Inventory, 2000 Census, 2009 American Community Survey.

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## Housing and Neighborhood Issue #2:

Austin's Hispanic/Latino and Asian communities have grown significantly since 1990; however, their growth has not been evenly distributed throughout the City.

- Since 1990, the racial/ethnic makeup of Austin's population has shifted. Around 2005, the City's Anglo population (non-Hispanic white) decreased to 49% of the total population, while the Hispanic population grew to 35%. Austin's African-American population grew in absolute numbers, but its percentage decreased from 12% to 8%. Austin's Asian community grew (both in numbers and in percentage) and increased in diversity. According to the 2007 Census, 6% of Austin's residents were Asian.
- While the Hispanic/Latino is growing, lower-income Hispanic households are becoming increasingly concentrated in three areas: lower east Austin, greater Dove Springs, and St. John.

*Equity*

## Housing and Neighborhood Issue #3:

In terms of age, Austin is a relatively young city; however, since 1990, the percentage of the population in the 20-34 age groups has decreased, while the percentage in the 45-64 age groups has increased.

- In 2008, the largest segment of Austin's population (21%) fell into the 25-34 age range. The median age in Austin was 31.4, compared to 33.2 for the state of Texas, and 36.7 for the United States.
- While there hasn't been a major shift in the distribution of age groups in Austin, the growing percentage of residents in the 45-64 year old groups may lead to a shift in housing type need (e.g., higher-priced homes) and need for health and other social services in the future.

*Economy, Environment*

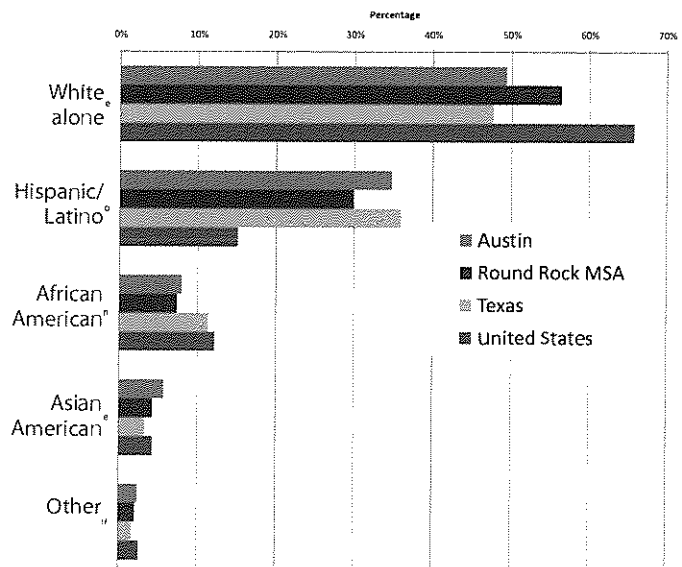


Figure 8. Population by Racial/Ethnic Composition, Source: Census, 2000-2007.

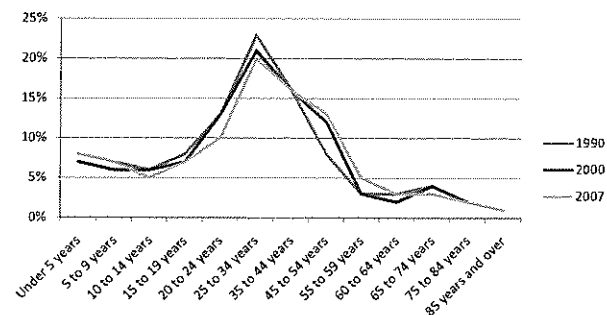


Figure 9. Age Groups (1990-2007), Source: Census.



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## Housing and Neighborhood Issue #4:

Austin is a city of strong neighborhoods that contribute greatly to community character and quality of life. Maintaining the character of these neighborhoods is a key concern of residents.

- Austin's older neighborhoods, particularly those built before World War II, are characterized by their walkability, compact character (typically smaller houses and lots), architecture, and sense of place.
- Neighborhoods developed since the 1950s have been more suburban in character as Austin expanded outwards from its central core.
- The City has an active neighborhood planning program and a number of neighborhoods (Brentwood/Highland, Central East Austin, North Burnet/Gateway, and South Congress, to name a few) have adopted neighborhood plans. While the issues addressed by these plans vary by neighborhood, examples of common goals include protecting existing neighborhood character; preventing encroachment from adjacent commercial corridors; maintaining safe, pedestrian-friendly streets while limiting cut-through traffic; protecting natural resources and providing parks and open spaces; and maintaining affordability and accessibility.

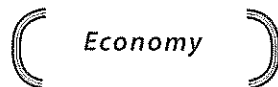
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# ECONOMY

**Economic Issue #1:** Existing transportation mobility and quality are identified by the business community as a major challenge to economic growth.

- As the labor force grows and new industry opportunities arise, there is a need for physical infrastructure to keep pace and align with industry requirements. For example, direct air service and connectivity to both coasts is extremely limited for a city of Austin's size and inhibits the city's ability to recruit high-end office users (e.g. corporate headquarters) with frequent travel needs.
- Roadway congestion impacts commute-time for workers and also places a burden on economic activity (e.g., 93% of freight coming in and out of central Texas travels on roadways). While providing new transit options (CapitalMetro All Systems Go Plan) will help relieve roadway congestion, the pace of implementation is a concern (*see Transportation section*).
- Transportation infrastructure was the most frequently ranked challenge and necessary improvement by respondents at the Austin Economic Forecast event.<sup>5</sup>
- Currently, there is no rail infrastructure in Austin to load/unload freight. This could become an important issue if the light industrial employment sectors continue to expand (e.g. logistics & distribution, etc.).
- Anticipated growth in the office and industrial sectors of the city economy may lead to more infill and redevelopment in Austin. These industries have a common desire for "clustering" near similar firms, but also require transportation access and mobility.



## ECONOMIC INDICATORS AND TRENDS

- Between 2001 and 2008, the Austin MSA gained over 76,104 jobs in the professional services, trade, hospitality, and education sectors.
- Austin has established the following target growth sectors in technology and creative industries: nanotechnology, life sciences, corporate headquarters, software/tech support, digital media, communication, clean technology, and advanced manufacturing.
- The percentage of workers with college degrees has increased dramatically in the last two decades (49% of Austin's workers, compared with 32% in Texas, and 36% in the nation).

<sup>5</sup> Survey respondents included a mix of regional private sector industry representatives, realty groups, banks, and other economic interests (e.g., Austin Community College, University of Texas, Austin Tech Incubator, Sematech, etc.).

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**Economic Issue #2:** The City is well-suited to recruit and grow businesses in Austin's target employment sectors.

- Over the last 30 years, Austin major employment sectors transitioned from university, government, and military to a high-tech computer hardware and software employment center. The manufacturing and electronic sectors continue to decline and the greatest growth is occurring in professional services, trade, and leisure/hospitality.
- While the current recession has resulted in a high vacancy rate (20%) in the office market, Austin's technical and creative industries provide opportunity to grow the City's tax base and generate new jobs. Growth in these industries will require an educated workforce and a mix of available office, flexible light industrial, and research and development space.
- There is potential for significant growth in the medical and life sciences sectors. The proposed development of a medical school in Austin and the City's expanding senior population could lead to greater expansion in the health services sectors.
- Austin is emerging as a national center for clean energy technology and employment. Local and national incentives provide the potential for significant numbers of well-paid jobs in the industry (e.g., solar insulation and manufacturing, energy services, and sustainable building).<sup>6</sup> In Austin, key projects like Pecan Street and UT's Clean Energy Incubator are providing strategic thinking and resources for capitalizing clean energy technology. Regional stakeholders (e.g., city officials, local utility companies, business groups, economic and workforce developers, higher education institutions) are beginning to formally collaborate to strengthen the region's competitiveness.

*Economy*

<sup>6</sup> Renewable energy generation (i.e. wind, solar, biofuels), in particular, is anticipated to be a \$325 billion industry nationally by 2018 and Central Texas is well positioned to play a major role.

<sup>7</sup> The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) recently awarded a \$10.4 million grant to the Mueller/Pecan Street project to act as a national demonstration site for development of an advanced smart grid system. This project will monitor electricity and water use and generate clean energy further supporting Austin's growth in renewable energy industries.

**Economic Issue #3:** The City is experiencing a rapidly expanding and more educated labor force, which in turn is strengthening Austin's economy. Educational attainment levels are especially important to high-growth companies.

- Growth in new target industries will expand the need for job training in areas such as business management, entrepreneurship, and health services to meet expected industry demand (e.g., at Austin Community College, University of Texas, and regional institutions). Interviews suggest there is a need for improved coordination between employers and regional education/job training development (i.e., to match post-secondary institutions with skills most needed by high-growth industry sectors).
- Despite a growing percentage of the population with college degrees, high drop-out rates among the minority community in the Austin Independent School District (AISD) have significant economic development implications. Businesses cannot necessarily hire locally and the drop-out rate impacts the overall competitiveness/attractiveness of the region to employers and families.

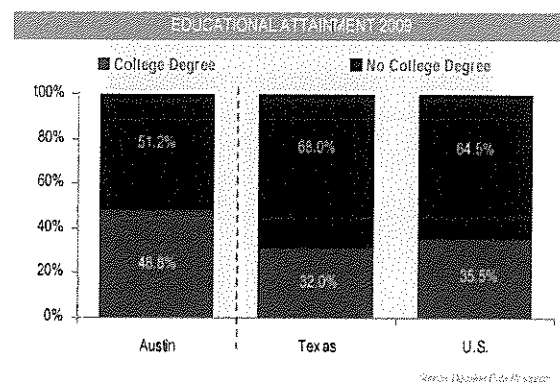


Figure 10. Educational Attainment, 2009, Source: Decision Data Resources

*Economy*

C/20

**Economic Issue #4:** Small businesses and start-up companies face challenges that may inhibit their growth (e.g., rising business costs, regulatory barriers, lack of affordable rental space).

- Despite recent improvements, land development codes and permitting processes are seen as complex, making it difficult for small business owners and start-up businesses to navigate. In addition, the codes and processes do not necessarily support mixed-use development patterns.
- Creative industries (arts, film, music, etc.) are an important niche industry sector that contributes jobs, strengthens the tax base, and enhances the city's quality of life. However, a number of factors inhibit the growth of this sector. The limitations for these small businesses include physical space, health care options, affordable housing, and affordable rents for venue owners.
- For Austin high-tech start-ups, two primary concerns are insufficient lab/incubation space and availability of later-stage financing. Given the importance of high-tech entrepreneurship to Austin's future economy, there is an opportunity for the City to position itself to address these issues in preparation for the economy's rebound.

**Economic Issue #5:** As the City continues to grow, increased investment and coordination to ensure adequate infrastructure provision (e.g., electric power) will be critical.

- Given Austin's strong technology sector, affordable and reliable electricity for industrial and commercial consumers is essential. Utility reliability is also a concern for high-volume electricity users (e.g. data centers, hospitals, large manufacturers, etc.).
- Austin Energy's newly diversified power portfolio (which includes increased contribution from renewable resources) may create higher electricity rates and increased costs for resident and industry customers making the city less competitive in terms of cost, at least in the short-term.
- Professional service firms are another key future industry sectors. While not necessarily large power consumers, these businesses demand high-quality buildings with adequate buffer from non-compatible uses, clear access to major highways, and often on-site amenities such as hike and bike trails and nearby entertainment amenities.

*Economy*

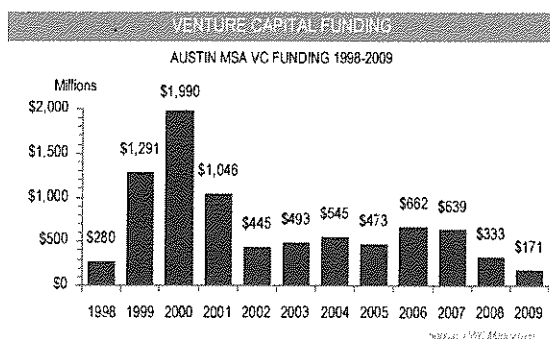


Figure 11. Austin MSA Venture Capital Funding, 1998-2009

*Economy,  
Equity*

C1  
21

**Economic Issue #6:** There is a need for regular business/industry trend analysis of economic, labor market, and demographic data issues impacting Austin businesses.

- Interviewees identified a need to measure and quantify employment and per capita income in target industries and continue to calculate fiscal impact in the overall context of economic effects and any environmental impacts. In addition, while there are positive relationships between economic development entities in Austin, there is a need for better coordination between the organizations.

*Economy,  
Environment*

C1/22

# ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

**Environmental Issue #1:** As one of the fastest growing regions in the U.S., a major challenge facing Central Texas is the protection of the region's watersheds, waterways, and water supply.

- In an effort to protect sensitive watersheds, impervious coverage limits range from 15-25% in the Barton Springs Zone and Water Supply Rural watersheds. Through regulation and policy, Austin is working to protect and enhance the region's water supply. Since 1997, development has been limited in the designated Drinking Water Protection Zone (DWPZ) watersheds and encouraged in the Desired Development Zone (generally the City of Austin and the south and eastern areas of the ETJ) (see *Figure 12*).
- Impervious cover limits are imposed by both watershed classification and zoning classification. However, stricter regulations are not in place on grandfathered tracts, or on tracts where certain development agreements exist. Development in restricted watersheds has still occurred at lower densities with more open space. Undeveloped land in the DWPZ continues to face development pressure (see *Land Use Issue #1*).

( Environment )

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES INDICATORS AND TRENDS

- Austin is located along the Colorado River, where it crosses the Balcones Escarpment, an area notable for its diversity in terrain, soils, habitats, plants, and animals.
- The most significant physiographic transition in Central Texas is marked by the change from Hill Country and Edwards Plateau on the west to the prairies on the east.
- Austin and the region are known for the water resources of the Colorado River and Highland Lakes system (e.g., Lake Travis, Bull Creek, Barton Creek, Lake Austin, Lady Bird Lake, Walnut Creek, and McKinney Falls).
- Barton Springs, the fourth largest spring in Texas, discharges an average of 27 million gallons of water a day from the Barton Springs Segment of the Edwards Aquifer. The springs feed Barton Springs Pool, one of the most popular and visited attractions in Central Texas.
- Despite abundant water resources, Austin's Watershed Protection Master Plan (2001) estimated over \$1.2 billion in capital funds needed to address flooding, erosion, habitat degradation, and damaged creek biology.
- The City measures the environmental integrity (EI) of watersheds on a two-year cycle. While 2006 scores were higher than 1996 scores overall, they were generally lower than both 2000 and 2003 scores, a decline which may be attributable to prolonged drought conditions and/or urban development.

C/23

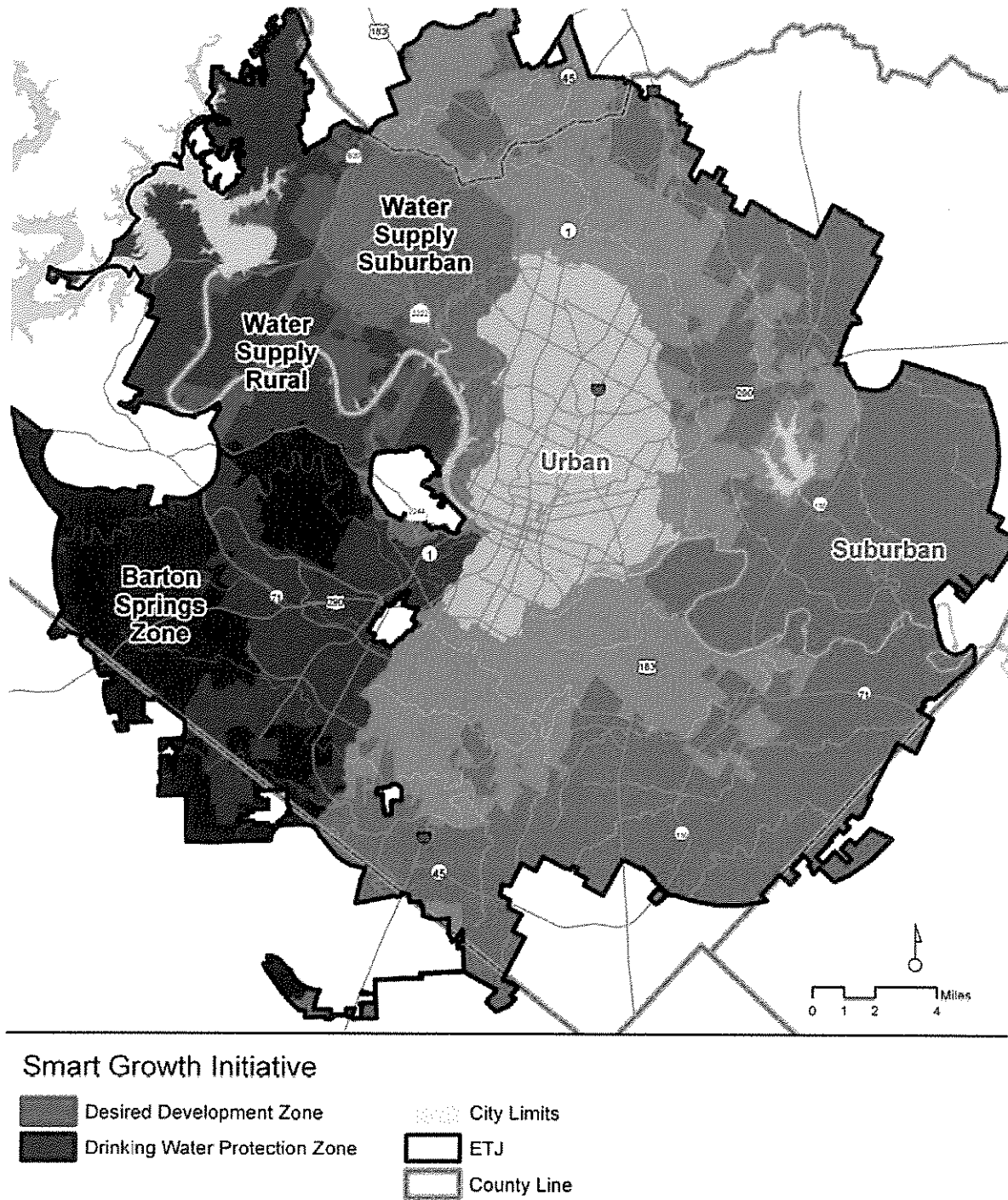
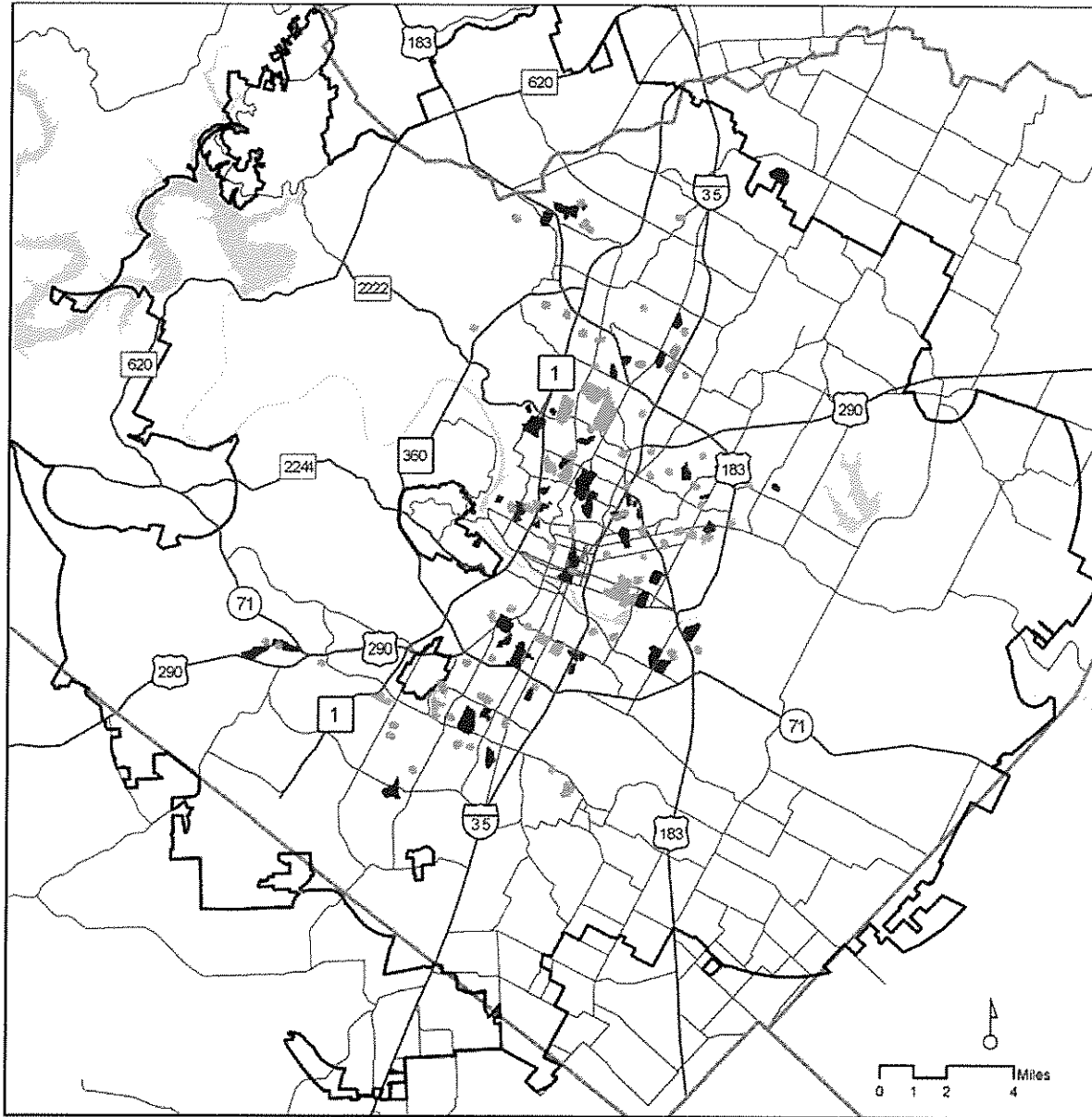


Figure 12. City of Austin Desired Development Zones, Source: Austin Community Inventory, GIS.

C/24



### Localized Flood







- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Current Capital Improvement Projects     |  City Limits |
|  Future Capital Improvement Projects      |  ETJ         |
|  Additional Localized Flood Problem Areas |  County Line |

Figure 13. City of Austin Localized Flooding, Source: Austin Community Inventory, GIS.



C1/25

## Environmental Issue #2: Regional planning and coordination is needed to provide adequate water-related infrastructure and protect environmentally sensitive areas and floodplains.

- Regional population growth and development (including demand for water and wastewater treatment and groundwater pumping) threaten public water supply. Austin participates in regional water quality planning, public education, and is acquiring open space.<sup>8</sup> In addition, interdepartmental cooperation is increasing in an effort to promote increased use of recycled water for xeriscapes and other landscapes (see *Land Use Issue #1*).
- The Watershed Protection Department (WPD) is continuing its efforts to restore headwater streams, riparian areas, and erosion hazard zones. Tools such as conservation subdivision, transfer of development rights (i.e., designated sending and receiving areas, protection of sensitive areas and prime farmland), and enhanced floodplain management regulations are being considered.

( **Environment** )

## Environmental Issue #3: Watershed problems are widespread and will worsen if corrective action is not taken. Urbanization and drought are causing a decline in watershed health due to changes in hydrology (e.g., loss of baseflow, eroding stream-banks, and increased flooding).

- Austin closely monitors watershed issues and demand for projects addressing stream erosion far exceeds the City's resources. In addition, creek flooding poses a recurring citywide risk to public safety and property (see *Figure 13*).
- Localized flooding threatens property across the City due to undersized, deteriorated, or clogged drain systems. The Austin Water Utility (AWU) has a program to replace aging infrastructure and continuously upgrades infrastructure through its capital improvement plan. The City will need additional resources to improve and maintain aging infrastructure in areas where infill and redevelopment occur (e.g., in the urban core and along transit corridors).
- WPD is continuing to investigate methods to maximize on-site stormwater retention and is considering incentives or requirements to retrofit flood controls in areas that were developed without adequate drainage infrastructure.<sup>9</sup> Other actions include: exploring ways to increase the use of green infrastructure in public and private development; supporting conversion of enclosed streams to naturalized streams; educating the public about flash flood dangers and water quality; and considering erosion studies of the downstream system to better understand and prevent negative impacts.

( **Environment** )

<sup>8</sup> Water Quality Protection Lands and the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve.

<sup>9</sup> Existing financing methods for watershed improvement projects include: the Drainage Utility Fee, General Obligation Bonds, Regional Stormwater Management Fee, and the Urban Watershed Ordinance Fee.

C1  
26

**Environmental Issue #4:** Potential impacts of climate change in Central Texas include increased drought, more severe weather events, elevated temperatures, and air pollution.

- The likelihood of increased drought and storms increases the vulnerability of the region's arid climate and reliance on rainwater to recharge the aquifer. Higher temperatures may result in an increase in energy use to cool homes and businesses, which also results in more air pollution. Increased costs (e.g., as region seeks to address air quality) and health risks are associated with the potential impacts.
- Austin's Climate Protection Plan (2007) seeks to make the City of Austin a national leader in local action to address climate change.<sup>10</sup> The Climate Action Team has completed a greenhouse gas inventory and update, reduced output by the equivalent of the electricity used by 26,100 homes per year, and continues to focus on collaboration, education, mitigation, and innovation. Regional cooperation is needed to implement climate change solutions.

*Economy,  
Environment*

**Environmental Issue #5:** While Central Texas complies with all federal air quality standards, the region is in danger of exceeding the ground-level ozone standard.

- Based on stricter EPA standards, depending on 2009 ozone levels, the region may not meet air quality standards for ozone levels. Not meeting federal air quality standards impacts the health of area residents, the cost of healthcare, and may damage Austin's reputation as a "green city."
- The region has a record of taking proactive voluntary measures to reduce ozone-forming emissions and Austin's air quality efforts have focused almost entirely on the reduction of ozone levels. Still, a non-attainment designation triggers federal requirements for transportation and industry that can increase costs for businesses and delay federal transportation projects. Many of these requirements apply for twenty years after the area regains compliance. EPA will announce its decision by spring of 2010.

*Economy,  
Environment,  
Equity*

<sup>10</sup> The Climate Protection Plan sets broad goals (e.g., make all City facilities, vehicles, and operation carbon neutral by 2020; meet all energy needs with renewable resources by 2020).

C1/2X

**Environmental Issue #6:** Despite Austin's landscape requirements and tree protection ordinances, Austin's tree canopy continues to decline as urbanization occurs.

- Tree canopy is notably absent in commercial, multi-family, and industrial areas. Canopy losses from conversion of eastern prairie lands to farmland are also apparent, with bottomland areas along creeks and the Colorado River remaining patchily forested with large sections of exposed riparian zones along creeks.
- Austin's City Arborist has been working with a Task Force to address concerns regarding protection of the trees and the natural environment. City staff is currently working to define the existing tree canopy baseline and establish quantifiable benefits that can be achieved from improved protection of the tree canopy.

***Economy,  
Environment,  
Equity***

**Environmental Issue #7:** As development continues to occur in or near environmentally sensitive areas of the region, ongoing preservation and conservation efforts will be required.

- In 2002, voters passed a bond issue for open space acquisition and subsequent grants enabled the purchase of additional land and conservation easements. The same year, the Wildland Conservation Division (of AWU) was created by City Council.
- The Wildlands Conservation oversees land that provide key benefits to the Colorado River and its aquifers, in addition to re-establishing and protecting natural and plant species and habitats of the larger ecosystem.
- Land within the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP) conserves habitat for eight endangered species and is owned through a partnership system. Major owners/partners include: the City of Austin, Travis County, The Nature Conservancy of Texas, the Lower Colorado River Authority, the Travis Audubon Society, and other private BCP partners.

***Economy,  
Environment***

C1/28

# TRANSPORTATION

**Transportation Issue #1:** While transit use is increasing, automobiles remain the dominant travel mode in Austin and the larger region.

- Transportation choices and trends are closely related to land use patterns. Much of the region's growth has occurred in low-density development at the edge of the existing urban areas. As a result, the Austin MSA has a relatively high percentage of people driving alone to work compared with other metro cities (e.g., San Francisco, Seattle, Portland, Chicago, and Los Angeles).
- More roads are required to support lower density development patterns. During 1980-2000, the total vehicles miles traveled increased in all of the five counties surrounding Austin. The annual vehicle miles traveled (VMT) continued to increase (36% between 1980-2005), but at a slower rate after 2000. The average daily miles traveled per person actually decreased in the MSA after 2000.
- Although factors such as fuel price, transit usage, and population density have shown to reduce total VMT, and in turn improve air quality, addressing the land use/transportation connection has been shown to play a significant role in reducing vehicle trips and VMT in other metropolitan areas.
- While the percentage of workers driving to work increased since 2000, the percentage of workers taking transit to work in Austin is estimated to have also increased to 4.9%, which is higher than the MSA or State average.

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Environment,  
Equity*

## TRANSPORTATION INDICATORS AND TRENDS

- Over 76% of all workers in the MSA travel to work alone by car, compared with 71% of all workers in Austin. Compared with other major cities (e.g., Los Angeles, Chicago, Seattle), Austin has a high relatively low percentage of people commuting to work by transit.
- Both the percentage of workers driving to work and taking transit to work is estimated to have increased since 2000, while the percentage carpooling decreased.
- In 2005, the average trip in the region was 7.8 miles long and took 12.9 minutes. However, nearly 25% of trips are fewer than two miles or take under five minutes.
- Capital Metro's All Systems Go Long Range Transit Plan weaves together a number of existing and proposed transportation modes. At full realization, the transit system will include: MetroRail (red line with diesel-electric engine trains) and potential connector lines, the Regional Commuter Line (Austin-San Antonio), Capital Metro Rapid (high-tech bus service), Express and Local Bus service, and Circulator Streetcars (connected to MetroRail).
- Capital Metro Rail (red line) is preparing for service to begin as soon as March 2010. The system will run on 32-miles of existing freight tracks between Leander and Downtown Austin, with service every 35 minutes.

C1/29

**Transportation Issue #2:** In Austin, roadway congestion and related costs (e.g., increased commuter time) have been increasing since the 1980s.

- From 1982 to 2006, in 90% of areas surveyed in Texas demand for roadway capacity grew faster than supply.
- Adding capacity to roadways is not a stand-alone solution to transportation congestion. Impacts of added capacity include increased construction and maintenance costs, the negative environmental impacts of new roads, and increased regional vehicle miles traveled.

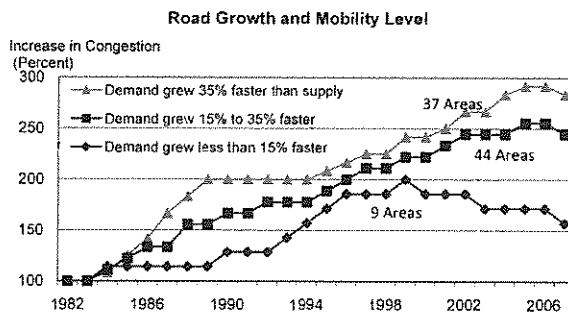


Figure 14. Road Growth and Mobility, Source: Texas Transportation Institute, Urban Mobility Report.

**Transportation Issue #3:** There are 11 separate agencies that have the authority to plan, construct, or operate various modes of transportation in Austin and the ETJ, which can make coordination between agencies difficult.

- Regional agencies include: Capital Areas Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO); Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT); Capital Metro Transportation Authority; Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA); Austin San Antonio Intermunicipal Commuter Rail District (ASAICRD); Capital Area Rural Transit (CARTS); and the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG). The following municipalities are also responsible for planning, construction, and implementation in their jurisdictions: City of Austin; Travis County; Williamson County; and Hays County.
- All of these agencies, with the exception of CAMPO and CAPCOG, have the responsibility for implementing and operating as well as planning their mode or system.

( *Economy,  
Environment,  
Equity* )

C1/30

**Transportation Issue #4:** The recently adopted Austin Bicycle Plan identified barriers along existing bicycle routes as a key issue impacting bicycle commuting and use.

- In 2007, the League of American Bicyclists designated Austin a Silver-level Bicycle Friendly Community reflecting the community's commitment to providing safe, efficient, and accessible bicycle facilities to residents.
- Austin's 2009 Bicycle Plan established a number of objectives to meet the goal of significantly increasing bicycle use and safety across Austin over the next ten years. The Plan seeks to reduce the number of barriers along existing routes (e.g., crossing of major highways such as MoPac, IH-35, US 183, and US 290; crossing of the Colorado River at Pleasant Valley Road) as a priority in completing the city's bicycle network.

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Environment,  
Equity*

**Transportation Issue #5:** According to the recently adopted Sidewalk Master Plan, Austin has 3,500 linear miles of absent sidewalk and 5,500 curb ramps.

- The 2009 Sidewalk Master Plan estimates the total cost for building out the sidewalk network (i.e., filling in gaps) at \$750 million. The Plan identifies priorities for improving the network across the City and in different neighborhoods.
- Priority areas for sidewalk improvements are distributed the City. However, the highest concentrations were identified in the Central East Austin, East Cesar Chavez, Holly, and South River City neighborhoods.

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Environment,  
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CJ/31

## PUBLIC UTILITIES

**Public Utilities Issue #1:** Much of Austin's stormwater system in the Urban Watersheds (the most densely populated areas) is undersized and in poor condition.

- The City's stormwater system is in need of upgrades and infrastructure improvements. The identified stormwater capacity improvement areas are likely to increase as infill and development occurs (see *Environment Issue #3*).

*Economy,  
Environment*

**Public Utilities Issue #2:** While Austin has initiated measures to reduce water use and demand for treated water, Austin Water Utility (AWU) projects that the demand for treated water will exceed the current treatment capacity within approximately six years.

- Since 1983, Austin's Water Conservation Program has focused on reducing water use by reducing peak day demands through incentives, education, water use evaluations, and audits.<sup>11</sup> The city's top water conservation successes, in order of ten-year estimated savings are: 1) watering restrictions (6.16 MGD), 2) reclaimed water use (5.95 MGD), 3) utility water rates (5.0 MGD), 4) reducing water loss (4.8 MGD), and 5) mandatory toilet retrofit program (2.1 MGD).
- AWU's Water Reclamation Initiative has provided reclaimed water for irrigation since the 1970's. Reclaimed water from two plants provides non-potable water for irrigation, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses. Plans to expand this system are in place.
- The nationally recognized Beneficial Biosolids Reuse Program is designed to treat wastewater byproduct by composting it into an EPA-approved fertilizer (i.e. Dillo Dirt), which is then reused at the City's parks and sold to the public through garden retailers.

### PUBLIC UTILITIES INDICATORS AND TRENDS

- **Austin Water Utility (AWU) has a total service population of approximately 854,000. Water is drawn from the Colorado River (on Lake Austin) into two treatment plants (Davis and Ullrich) located in Central Austin.**
- **The Water Protection Department (WPD) has identified more than 420 areas needing stormwater capacity updates in the urban core.**
- **Austin currently has the combined wastewater treatment plant capacity to treat 285 million gallons per day (MGD).**
- **In 2007, the Solid Waste Services diversion rate was 29% and recycling participation was around 71% citywide.**

Peak Day Water Savings Amounts (Listed in order)	Ten Year Estimated Peak Day Savings	WCTF FY 2008 Projected	FY 08 Actual
Watering Restrictions	6.16	0.0	5.0 to 9.0
Reclaimed Water Use	5.95	0.0	0.0
Utility Water Rates	5.00	0.0	0.0
Reducing Water Loss	4.80	0.0	1.31
Mandatory Toilet Retrofit	2.10	0.29	0.0
Annual Irrigation System Audits	1.47	0.45	0.0
Residential Irrigation Standards	1.32	0.13	0.07
Commercial Irrigation Standards	0.74	0.07	0.0
Enhanced Irrigation Audit Program	0.63	0.21	0.04
Pressure Reduction Program	0.29	0.03	0.001
Car Washes	0.15	0.00	0.00
Total (MGD)	32.65	1.18	6.4 to 10.4

Figure 15. Water Conservation Successes, Source: Austin Water Utility, City Council Briefing 2009.

*Economy,  
Environment*

<sup>11</sup> City Council passed the Water Management Ordinance (2007), which resulted in a higher than expected reduction in peak outdoor water use the following year. Over the next ten years, the Ordinance establishes a goal of saving an average of 1% in water use per year to achieve a total savings of 25 MGD.

C1/32

**Public Utilities Issue #3:** To meet energy efficiency goals set by Austin Electric and the Climate Protection Plan, the City needs to reduce peak energy demand by 700 MW by 2020.

- From 1982 through 2003, Austin Electric (AE), the largest City of Austin department, reduced peak electric demands by 600 MW through conservation, efficiency, and load-shifting programs. AE's goal is double their efforts and reduce peak demand further by 2020.
- Peak demands occur in the summer and during winter evenings. Reductions during these peak periods provide both AE and its customers with costs savings and reductions in power plant emissions.

*Economy,  
Environment*

**Public Utilities Issue #4:** At present rates of demand growth, the trend in water usage suggests Austin customers will exceed long-range water supply as currently contracted with the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) by the year 2050.

- To meet future demand for water, based on present rates of growth, Austin would need 376,000 acre-ft of water in year 2050, or about 51,000 acre-ft per year more than the current contract amount with LCRA. Conservation and water reclamation programs will be required to make up the shortfall (source: AWU, Raymond Chan Engineers).

*Environment*

**Public Utilities Issue #5:** To implement the goals set by the City's Zero Waste Plan (i.e., reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills by 90% in the year 2040), Austin will need to increase recycling rates, increase the type of materials recycled, increase capacity, and increase residential and commercial composting.

- Austin operates a "pay as you throw program" that provides a volume-based system for garbage collection tied to fees charged to customers.
- The City has a relatively high (71%) participation in recycling rate and has set aggressive targets to further reduce waste and increase the landfill diversion rate. Significant increases in recycling rates for multi-family, commercial, institutional, industrial, and manufacturing uses are needed to meet the target. In addition, the types of materials (e.g., electronics, furniture) residential and commercial customers recycle must be increased. If recycling rates increase, the City currently does not have adequate containers and space to store and manage the increased volume of material and will need to develop local Material Recovery Facilities with capacity to handle large volumes of unique materials. Finally, increased public participation in composting and home and work is needed to meet the diversion target.

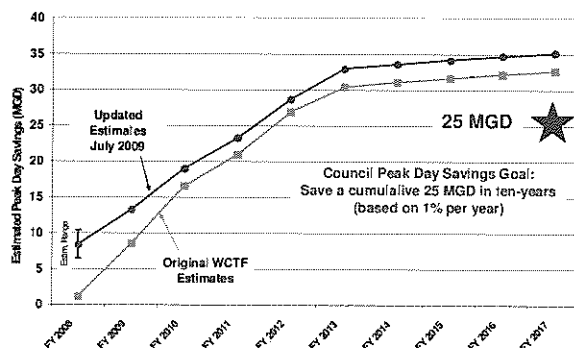


Figure 16. Projected peak day water usage savings (MGD)

*Economy,  
Environment*



CL/33

# COMMUNITY SERVICES

## Community Services Issue #1:

Continued outward growth and annexation and/or increased density and infill affects the ability of public safety providers (i.e., Austin Fire Department, Austin Police Department) to maintain levels of service.

- Texas state statutes require the immediate provision of fire protection and emergency service response to newly annexed areas of a municipality. Annexations may divert funding for improvements and maintenance from existing service areas or limit the City's ability to move forward with proposed annexations. Both police and fire departments require additional staff, facilities, and equipment to maintain level of service standards in developing areas.
- Austin's Fire Department building infrastructure is aging and may require renovation, reconstruction, or consolidation to accommodate modern equipment and increased personnel. For example, 12 fire stations cannot accommodate the larger fire truck apparatus required to improve level of service standards and response capabilities and nearly half of AFD stations are more than 40 years old.

( Economy )

### COMMUNITY SERVICES INDICATORS AND TRENDS

- Austin Fire Department is rated Class 2 by the Insurance Services Office (ISO), the second highest level on a scale of 1-10. Ratings are based on factors such as water supply and distribution, fire department apparatus and equipment, distribution of fire companies, staffing and training of fire personnel, fire alarm processing, and fire prevention efforts.
- According to the Central Texas Sustainability Project, after a long decline, most municipalities in the five-County region saw an increase in crime in 2007.
- The Austin Police Department has established targets for 2010 aimed at reducing crime and traffic fatalities, as well as increasing the percentage of residents who feel safe in their neighborhoods during the day and night (e.g., from 70% to 75% based on surveys).
- The Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services (A/TCEMS) serves the entire county and is jointly funded by the City of Austin and Travis County.
- There are 12 Independent School Districts and a growing number of private and charter schools operating in the Austin ETJ.
- Austin Independent School District (AISD), the largest school district in Austin, has 8 nationally recognized blue ribbon schools.

CL  
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## Community Services Issue #2:

Regionalization, cooperation, and sharing of resources among public safety and other providers can maximize efficiencies in the use of available resources.

- Regionalization of fire protection and emergency service response can occur through mutual and/or automatic aid agreements. A benefit of regionalization is increased communications and development of policies to improve the sharing of limited resources and reduce potential duplication of services. In addition, trends point to an increase in the type of crimes occurring across municipal and state borders, further supporting the need for improved coordination between municipal, county, and state police and emergency service providers.
- The Austin Fire Department has indicated that state disaster response plans are beginning to place more emphasis on statewide cooperation in the event of a large-scale disaster (e.g., wildfires, floods) to reduce the burden on local and regional fire and emergency response departments.

( *Economy,  
Equity* )

## Community Services Issue #3:

The two school districts serving the largest area in the Austin ETJ (Austin ISD and Del Valle ISD) are facing challenges related to population growth, immigration/language needs, poverty, and transient families.

- Austin ISD is the largest school district in the ETJ with an enrollment of 82,074 students on 110 campuses. AISD has a diverse student body (e.g., 57 different languages) and about 20% of students enter the district as non-English speakers.
- Del Valle ISD is experiencing significant growth in its student body resulting in overcrowded schools. Nearly 80% of students are considered economically

disadvantaged. The District covers southeastern area of the Austin ETJ, generally east of I-35 and includes developing areas near the airport. The District is adding a middle school and elementary school, however securing funding for continued growth will be a challenge.

- Overall student test scores at both school districts are close to, but slightly below state averages. Generally, test scores at AISD have increased over the last four years. Both AISD and Del Valle ISD are rated "academically acceptable" by the State Education Agency (source: *GreatSchools.net*)

( *Equity* )

## Community Services Issue #4:

Stakeholder interviews suggest that blue ribbon and other high-ranking schools are attracting upper-income families, while lower-income families are moving to other areas of the region to seek out high performing schools in more affordable neighborhoods (e.g., Red Rock) or remain in under-performing schools.

- Students have the option to attend their neighborhood school, another school in the district, or a magnet school (specific admission requirements). Students enrolled in low-performing schools (as rated by the Texas Education Agency) may also transfer to another school district.
- Still, the 2009 Central Texas Indicators project found inequalities in graduation, drop-out, and test statistics based on race and income in Central Texas school districts. Graduation rates are disproportionately low among Hispanic and African-American students in the region. Further, Hispanic and African-American students remain less likely than white students to attend an "Exemplary School" as defined by the State Education Agency.

( *Economy,  
Equity* )

C1/35

# PARKS AND RECREATION

## Parks and Recreation Issue #1:

Population growth and changing demographics is creating a growing need for open space in the urban core, neighborhood and regional parks in developing areas, and trails and greenway projects across the region.

- The 2010 Long Range Plan found that there is a need for more park space within walking distance (1/2-1 mile) of urban core neighborhoods. In addition, the plan identifies priority park trail projects and greenway acquisition.
- Based on the recommendation of the Long Range Plan, Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) has shifted parkland acquisition to include "infill" or pocket parks within already developed areas of the city. This shift may result in lowering Austin's ratio of 24 acres of parkland/1,000 people (due to acquisition of smaller, more expensive land areas), but will further the goal of making parkland available within one-mile of all residential neighborhoods.
- In addition to meeting urban needs, land acquisition planning is ongoing in developing areas where the gap analysis revealed the greatest need, areas with significant environmental features, new Transit Oriented Developments, and the North Burnett/ Gateway Neighborhood Planning Area.
- Trail-related activities (e.g., walking, running, biking) continue to be the most popular recreational activities in Austin. PARD has identified priority trails and greenway projects (e.g., trail connections from Blunn and West Bouldin Creek to Lady Bird Lake and the Red Line railroad ROW Trail) and continues to acquire land to close the gaps within existing greenways.
- The 2010 Long Range Plan also identified a need for: development of off-leash dog parks, skate parks, neighborhood tennis courts; protection of environmentally sensitive areas; increased connectivity from neighborhoods to parks, greenways, and trails; and installation of park benches, tables, and trash receptacles.

### PARKS AND RECREATION INDICATORS AND TRENDS

- Austin has over 200 parks and preserves totaling more than 17,000 acres, including district parks, neighborhood parks, and activity centers. The park system includes facilities such as museums, an art center, a botanical garden, and cultural centers.
- According to the Parks and Recreation Long-Range Plan for Land, Facilities, and Programs Austin has 24 acres of parkland/1,000 persons, which on an overall basis exceeds national guidelines.
- The standard service area for a neighborhood park in Austin has been defined as 1 mile; however, ½ mile is considered desirable for walking areas. There is a need for more parkland within walking distance in urban core neighborhoods and developing areas in southwest, north, northeast, and northwest Austin.
- Austin is accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), a national benchmark for parks and recreation departments.

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## Parks and Recreation Issue #2:

There is a growing need to repair, restore, and replace older park facilities.

- The improvement and repair of park facilities in and around Downtown Austin is an emerging need, in part resulting from an increase in population in Central Austin. Priority projects include the improvement of parkland along Lady Bird Lake, preservation of historic squares, conversion of Holly Street Power Plant to a park, and improvement of Zilker Park/Barton Springs Pool. Another goal is to install more park benches, checkerboard tables, and trash receptacles in existing parks.

*Environment*

## Parks and Recreation Issue #3:

Austin's park system has doubled in size over the last 20 years, but funding for the maintenance and operation of new parks and facilities has not kept pace with growth.

- PARD's long range plan indicates that the department will need to increase its reliance on partners and volunteers to more efficiently provide recreational services. Planning for new parks needs to be closely coordinated with other providers given fiscal constraints. The rising cost of fuel also impacts the operations of PARD and park users. As more people stay close to their homes, local recreational resources are becoming increasingly important to residents.

*Economy,  
Equity*

CL 37

# HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**Health Issue #1:** There are a growing number of children and families without health insurance in Travis County.<sup>12</sup>

- While the percentage of Travis County residents with health insurance (85%) is greater than the national average, there is great discrepancy based income across the region.
- According to a survey for the Central Texas Sustainability Indicators Project, the number of Travis County respondents without health insurance decreased from 2004 to 2008 (18% to 15%), which may indicate a positive trend in percentage of insured.
- The Indicators Project also found the demand in Central Texas for public mental health providers has increased since 2006, without similar increases in capacity/programs. The number of adult residents served by public mental health providers increased after 2006, spiking in the first half of 2009. These increases could be attributed to the stresses associated with the current economic recession.

*Economy,  
Equity*

## HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES INDICATORS AND TRENDS

- The Austin region has two major health care systems: St. David's and Seton Healthcare networks.
- In Central Texas in 2008, over 35% of households earning less than \$35,000 a year did not have health insurance.
- In 2008, approximately 18% of children and youth under age 18 in Travis County were uninsured and nearly 20% were living in poverty.
- The Central Texas Sustainability Indicators Project is increasing its monitoring of trends such as childhood obesity. For example, distribution of Body Mass Index (BMI) scores for middle schools in Austin indicate nearly all clusters of obesity are located in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in North, East, and South Austin.
- The number of immigrants in Travis County is growing; between 1990 and 2005, the foreign-born population grew by 230% (about 45,000 to 148,000) (Source: Immigrant Services Network of Austin).

<sup>12</sup> Sources: Community Action Network, American Community Survey (Census), Central Texas Sustainable Indicators Project.

CV  
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**Health Issue #2:** Texas has the fastest growing population under 18 in the nation and in 2008, nearly one in five children in Travis County was living poverty.

- Nationally, one-third of children raised in poverty remain in poverty as adults. The region's rapidly growing population of young children (under 5 years old) is especially vulnerable to poverty and its effects.
- Food insecurity is more likely in children in low-income households.
- As housing becomes more expensive in Austin, some middle/low-income families are seeking housing outside of the City and farther from jobs. Proximity to transportation, employment, healthcare, and childcare can greatly benefit families dealing with poverty (see *Housing Issue #1*).
- Austin has a very active social service network. In 1995, city and county school districts came together to address the large amount of funds being spent on social services. The Community Action Network (CAN), a board of 18 partner organizations, now meets on a regular basis to strengthen partnerships develop collaborative strategies to health and other social issues. CAN is developing a set of priority indicators for children and youth to measure progress.
- As mentioned above, the Central Texas Sustainability Indicators Project tracks measures of health/human services as part of the overall sustainability measure. Still, stakeholder interviews indicate there is more collaboration on solutions to health and human services issues at the regional level.

( Economy, Equity )

**Health Issue #3:** Stakeholder interviews indicate that there is a need for more urgent (non-emergency) care facilities and better access to primary care facilities in Austin.

- As of 2009, all Central Texas counties were classified as "medically underserved" by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This designates a shortage of personal health services in the five-county region.
- While the two healthcare systems have sufficient emergency care, there is a lack of urgent care facilities in Travis County.<sup>13</sup>
- The Community Action Network (CAN) is considering strategies to better connect public transportation services and health and human service providers. This effort would help to better inform case workers and others involved in social services of existing networks (e.g., churches with van pool) and identify areas that are in need of transportation and access improvements.

( Economy, Equity )

## How Are We Doing? Trends

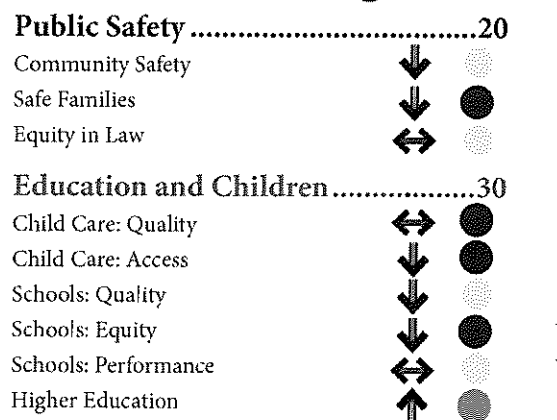


Figure 17. Central Texas Sustainability Indicators Project (Excerpt from 2009 Report).

<sup>13</sup> Urgent care refers to ambulatory or walk-in care outside of a traditional emergency room. Urgent care centers across the country are primarily used to treat patients with an illness or injury (e.g., ear infection) that requires immediate care, but is not serious enough to warrant an emergency room visit. These centers often provide significant savings compared with hospital emergency care options.

C1/39

**Health Issue #4:** There is a need to address barriers (e.g., cultural, language, safety concerns, etc.) that hamper participation of immigrants in the larger Austin community.

- Austin's immigrant population is growing. As of 2008, the majority was Spanish speaking (80%). The other 20% included an increasing number of refugees from countries such as Bhutan, Burma, Iraq, and Turkey as a result of Austin's status as a preferred settlement community. Nationally, the Austin-San Marcos region is classified as an "pre-emerging immigrant gateway" - or an area with a previously small foreign-born population that is now experiencing rapid growth (Brookings Institute, 2004).
- Austin's Asian community is growing rapidly. Some households in this community, (e.g., Vietnamese families) have few or no English speakers and therefore face language barriers (*see Housing Issue #2*).
- In addition to language barriers, immigrant families can experience economic hardships, separation between parents and children, isolation, and emotional stress. These issues often place a strain on school resources, faith-based organizations, and other community organizations. Recent immigrants, across educational levels, may also experience difficulties finding employment (source: Immigrant Services Network).

**Economy,  
Equity**

C1/40

# SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE

Susceptibility to Change is used to broadly indicate the likelihood that an area will change in the foreseeable future. Change can include new development on previously undeveloped land, redevelopment, change of use, or intensification of use. Characterizing the probability of such change (typically in three categories – high, medium, and low) is useful for a comprehensive planning process in order to help understand the dynamics of growth and change in the community. This analysis will inform development of Comprehensive Plan strategies and actions (i.e., to influence change in highly susceptible areas in the direction of the Vision).

Susceptibility to Change in the study area (the City of Austin and its ETJ) was determined by spatially overlaying eleven factors (indicators of change) from the City's GIS database:

- owner occupancy
- land status
- improvement to land ratio
- zoning and overlay districts
- projected growth in employment
- water service
- transit corridors
- road access
- property violations
- year built
- development cases

## Conclusions

In general terms, the Susceptibility to Change analysis reveals the following:

- Areas most susceptible to change are concentrated in a north-south "spine" within the study area, particularly from downtown Austin north to Williamson County. This confirms the conclusion of Land Use Issue #3 that the momentum of growth in the region appears to be in a northward direction.
- The predominant classification of areas in the eastern and southern portions of the study area is moderately susceptible to change.
- The predominant classification of areas in the western portion of the study area is least susceptible to change.

For the purposes of this analysis, the study area was divided into 10-acre grid cells. Every cell received a normalized value for each factor between 0 and 1, with 0 being the least susceptible to change and 1 being the most susceptible to change. All factors were then added together with equal weights to produce a final susceptibility score. The accompanying series of maps show the results for each factor and the synthesis of all factors. The synthesis map totals the susceptibility scores for each cell and divides the result using logical breaks into three categories: areas most susceptible to change, areas moderately susceptible to change, and areas least susceptible to change.

The draft synthesis map and description of each factor is provided below.



C1/H1

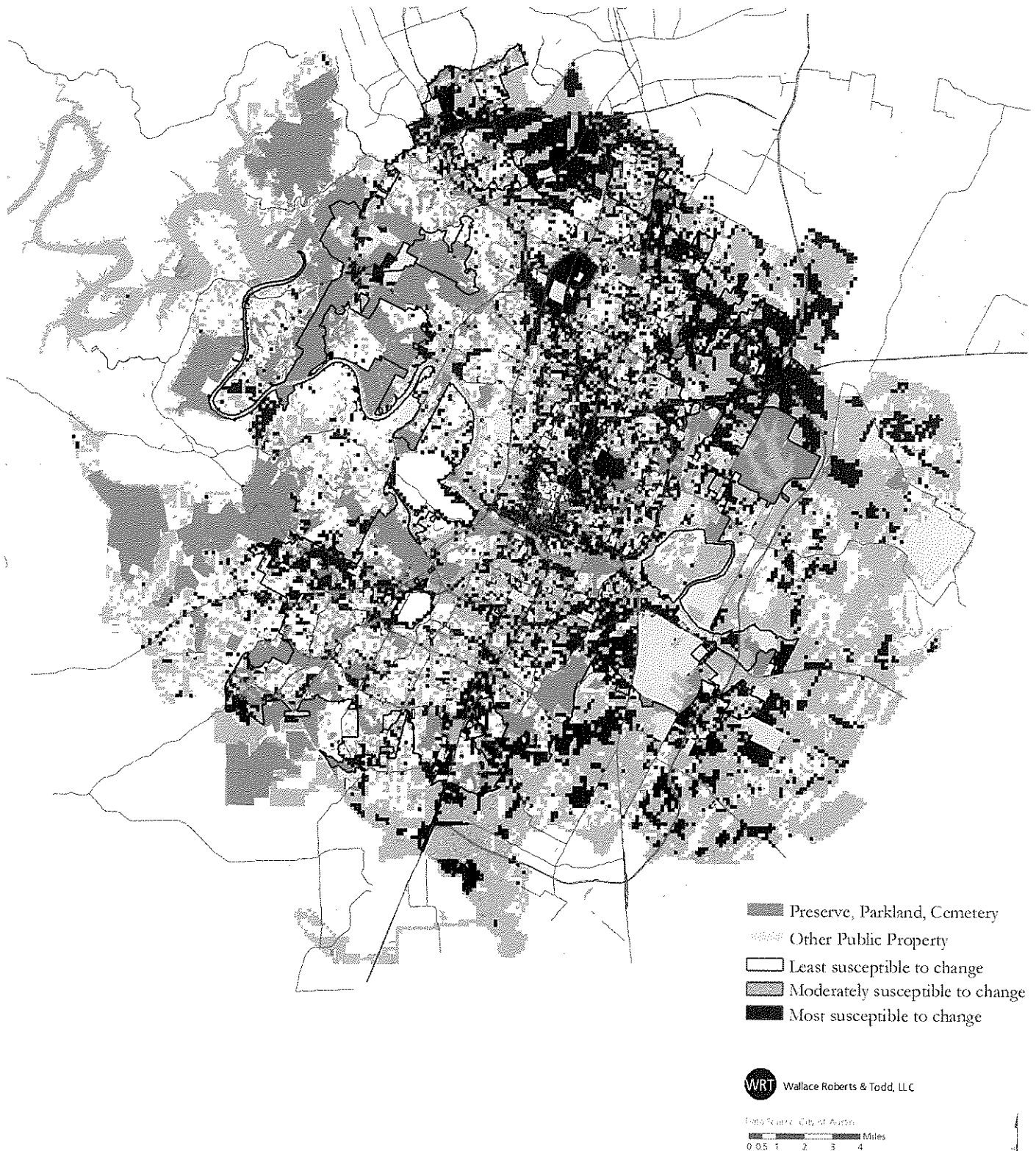


Figure 18. Draft Susceptibility to Change Analysis, February 2010

C1/42

## Susceptibility to Change Factors

### Owner Occupancy

Most susceptible	1	not owner-occupied or not residential
Least susceptible	0	owner-occupied residence

Owner occupancy is based on the homestead exemption flag in Austin's land database.

### Land Status

Most susceptible	1	undeveloped, no constraints
	0.67	developed, no constraints
	0.33	undeveloped, constraints
Least susceptible	0	developed, constraints

### Improvement to Land Ratio

Most susceptible	1	ILR > 1.5	
Least susceptible	0	ILR = 0, or non-commercial property	
All possible values in-between			
Example		0.67	ILR = 1

Improvement to Land Ratio (ILR) is the appraised value of an improvement divided by the value of its land. The theory is that land owners will seek to maximize their investment in the land by developing or redeveloping when the value of the improvement is less than the land.

### Zoning and Overlay Districts

Most suscep- tible	1	areas in vertical mixed use, mixed use, planned unit development, transit-oriented development, or North Burnet/ Gateway districts;
		areas in North Burnet/ Gateway, transit-oriented development, university, urban renewal, or central urban redevelopment overlay districts; and
		areas with high-density mixed use, major planned development, mixed use, mixed use/ office, neighborhood mixed use, or transit-oriented development future land use designations
	0.5	not in any of the above or below districts
Least suscep- tible	0	areas in historic or neighborhood conservation combining districts

### Projected Growth in Employment

Most suscep- tible	1	greatest growth in employment density (jobs / acre)
Least suscep- tible	0	least growth in employment density (jobs/acre)

All possible values in-between

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**Water Service**

Most susceptible	1	areas currently served by water mains
	0.75	retail water area served 2009
	0.5	impact fee service area boundary
	0.25	outside impact fee service area, in desired development zone
Least susceptible	0	outside all areas above

**Transit Corridors**

Most susceptible	1	areas closest to most transit corridors (well served by transit)
Least susceptible	0	areas outside all transit corridors (not well served by transit)

All values in-between

*This layer is the result of a sub-overlay analysis that combined transit corridors. For each of the following transit corridors, a cell was given a value equal to its distance from the corridor. Distance values given up to a half mile away for CapMetro Red Line and rapid bus routes, Austin-San Antonio Commuter Rail corridor, and MoKan corridor. Distance values given up to a quarter mile away for Core Transit Corridors, express and local bus routes.*

**Road Access**

Most susceptible	1	areas with greatest density of arterial roadways (best road access)
Least susceptible	0	areas with least density of arterial roadways (worst road access)

All values in-between

*The road network included in this analysis combines existing roadways with those proposed in the 2025 Austin Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan.*

**Property Violations**

Most susceptible	1	most property violations
Least susceptible	0	no property violations

All values in-between

**Year Built**

Most susceptible	1	built in or before 1900 or undeveloped
Least susceptible	0	built in 2000 or later
All values in-between		
Example	0.19	built in 1981

**Development Cases**

Most susceptible	1	areas with development cases
Least susceptible	0	areas without development cases or developed

**To: Citizen Advisory Task Force (CATF)**

**Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan  
Update to Common Ground Working Paper**

3.2.10 Draft Revised

- Community Forum Series #1 (week of 11.9.09)
- Online Survey Results (October 12, 2009 through February 1, 2010)
- Meetings-in-a-Box (results from 50 boxes), over 190 distributed
- Speakers Bureau and Community Events

## **1. Introduction**

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The first of four community forums series (CFS #1) to develop the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan was held in November 2009. This forum introduced the public to the planning process and led participants through a group visioning activity. Community Forum #1 asked two primary questions: 1) Describe Austin today (i.e., in terms of its strengths, weaknesses, and challenges for the future; and 2) Imagine Austin's Future (i.e., ideas that will set Austin on the path to becoming one of the world's most exceptional cities by 2039).

Community Forum #1 consisted of six meetings held during the week of November 9, 2009 in the following locations:

- Baty Elementary School (36 persons signed in)
- Westwood High School (35)
- St. David's Episcopal Church (73)
- Bowie High School (60)
- Reagan High School (59)
- Travis High School (53)

Following the meetings held in November, continuing public input was solicited through a variety of opportunities for engagement (i.e., meetings-in-a-box, online surveys, speakers bureau, and informational booths). Opportunities for ongoing public input are described below:

- **MEETINGinaBOX (MiaB):** A portable version of CFS #1. The MiaB exercise allows any interested person to hold an informal meeting with a group of 5-10 neighbors, friends, co-workers, etc. and walk through the CFS #1 exercise. This portable meeting concept has proven to be popular with participants. At the request of the CATF, the City extended the deadline to March 31, 2010 allowing more time for public input. *As of February 5, over 190 MiaB were picked up or downloaded from the Imagine Austin website. This analysis includes results from 50 boxes.*
- **Online Surveys:** Spanish and English Imagine Austin surveys. Online respondents are asked to list strengths, weaknesses/challenges, and ideas for improving Austin's future. The online survey deadline was also extended through March 31, 2010. *As of March 2, 2010, 2,247 online surveys had been completed. This analysis includes the full results from 1,001 surveys received prior to February 1, 2010.*
- **Speakers Bureau:** City staff, community leaders, and/or CATF members present an overview of the Comprehensive Plan, Austin's evolution to the city it is today, and why the plan is important. Any community organization, neighborhood association, church group, or professional organization can request a speaker and presentation at a regular meeting.

C1  
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Over the last several months, the speakers bureau provided presentations for a variety of groups (e.g., Asian American Cultural Center, Real Estate Council of Austin, AISD Social Studies Teachers, Art in Public Places Program, Bicycle Advisory Council, Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, etc.). Participants are invited to fill out surveys and take part in a meeting-in-a-box, as well as attend future meetings and follow the Plan through Facebook and Twitter.

- **Community Events:** City staff, CATF members, and consultants attend and solicit input in the planning process. Recent events include: Austin Climate Protection Conference and Expo, LGBT Community Alliance, African-American Quality of Life Community Meeting, Lunar Celebration, Feria Para Aprender (The Learning Fair), University of Texas Public Affairs Forum, the Austin Mobility Forums, and farmers markets.

In this update to the Common Ground Working Paper, CFS #1 results have been supplemented by input received since the November meetings. This draft will be updated with the final results of the MiaB and online surveys in April 2010. This collective community input will be used as a basis for developing a shared vision for what Austin should be in 30 years (2039), the next major step in the process of Developing the Austin Comprehensive Plan.

The CATF has a key role to play in this step by evaluating the input received for incorporation into a Vision Statement that expresses the consensus-based values and aspirations of the community for Austin's future. To assist in this process, this working paper presents a synthesis of the results of CFS #1 and the subsequent input, focusing on Segment B: Imagine Austin's Future, thus far.

To begin this synthesis, all comments recorded on post-it notes by CFS #1 meeting participants were reviewed and grouped into general categories. The categories and comments were then further organized into a series of "themes" expressing desired directions for Austin's future. As part of this exercise, similar comments were grouped into "sub-themes" under each theme. This paper was then updated with the results from the MiaB exercise and online surveys as of February 1, 2010. Analysis of the broader results largely echoed the overall themes from CFS #1. However, some new or changed themes emerged. The most significant variations are summarized as follows:

- Roadway congestion and need for roadway improvements emerged as a new sub-theme (under Multi-Modal Austin)
- The concepts of the cost of growth tied to infrastructure cost and controlling population growth emerged as a sub-theme (under Growth Management)
- A strong interest in community engagement, involving residents in planning, and defining clear planning goals for the Comprehensive (and other) plans is emerging (under Engaged Austin)

The results of this combined analysis (CFS #1 and ongoing public input analyzed through February 2010) **indicate consensus for Austin's desired future forming around 12 broad themes.** These themes have been assigned the following working titles, and reordered based on the number of individual comments for each theme:

- Multimodal Austin
- Green Austin
- Growth Management Austin (*renamed from Compact Austin*)
- Engaged Austin
- Recreational Austin
- Prosperous Austin
- Healthy Austin

CL  
H#7

## 2. Imagine Austin's Future: Summary Themes

### Notes:

- The total counts under theme and sub-theme represent the total number of times each item was suggested, not the total number of respondents. In other words, one person or group may have referenced three or four different ideas in one of their responses.
- Second, at this point, only the top five ranked MiaB ideas for the future are included in the totals. Each group response is counted once.
- Themes and sub-themes will be updated with outstanding surveys and MiaB responses as they are returned and processed.

### Theme 1: Multimodal Austin (930 Statements)\*

Sub-Themes	All	CF#1	Surveys	MiaBs	Alternate Views
<b>Accessibility and complete streets</b> – Austin is accessible and safe for bikers, pedestrians, transit users, and drivers	59	27	27	5	
<b>Commuting</b> – connected rail and bus system, schools in walking distance for kids, continuous bike lanes	60	9	51		
<b>Downtown transportation</b> – new rail system connects neighborhoods to Downtown, Austin is a world-class capitol w/equitable multi-modal transit, address negative impact of I-35	31	13	18		
<b>Bike commuters</b> – increased number of commuters, better connected bike lanes, improve safety	52	4	48		Don't cater to cyclists (2), remove bike lanes (1)
<b>Comprehensive and effective multimodal transportation system</b> – fast, safe, efficient, rail system supports downtown and other areas, improve options for walkers and bikers, improve airport travel	145	40	83	22	No cars on the road at all (2), Do not proceed with metro system (3)
<b>Improved public transit system</b> – Integrated network allows mobility, increased lifestyle choices, TOD Living, easy to get around, no need for car, affordable, fewer cars on road/fewer people own cars and public transit offers a better option than owning a car, high speed rail connects transit hubs, reduced pollution, live-work activity at transit nodes	263	53	196	14	Do not subsidize/fund public transit over roads (2)

C/48

Sub-Themes	All	CF#1	Surveys	MiaBs	Alternate Views
<b>Road and highway improvements</b> – reduce congestion, improve existing roads (e.g., more lanes), better accessibility, smart street lights, more parking	135	3	131	6	
<b>Pedestrian and bike safety</b> – sidewalks in all neighborhoods, designated protected bike lanes on all major routes, traffic slowing, pedestrian crosswalks, connected bike trails expanded to current city limits, implementable	73	20	52	2	
<b>Shift in transportation hierarchy</b> – Pedestrians and bikers are treated better than cars, walking above driving/parking lots/freeways) / mass transit is heavily used and there is less overall congestion, reduce emissions (VMT)	86	14	68	4	
<b>Transportation serves compact, walkable neighborhoods</b> – stores, services, schools, etc. are close	16	8	8		
<b>High-speed regional transit system</b> – Austin / Houston / Dallas / San Antonio	18	12	6		

\* Alternate views totals are not included in total statements figure

C1  
49

## Theme 2: Green Austin (413 Statements)

Sub-Themes	All	CF#1	Surveys	MiaB	Alternate Views
<b>Conserve water and other natural resources</b> – rain barrels, reuse water, conservation mentality is the norm, limit fertilizer use, safe supply	60	16	34	10	
<b>Energy efficiency</b> – LEED buildings, low carbon emissions, reduce VMT, zero carbon/zero waste	62	26	35	1	
<b>Energy independence</b> – Austin produces its own energy through renewable sources, no fossil fuels, focus on self-reliance in energy production/help power other cities	23	16	3	4	
<b>Environmental protection</b> – renewable resources are used, low pollution, better air quality, preservation of natural resources (i.e., water, animal species, mature shade trees), growth management	93	28	52	13	Overcrowding leads to degraded natural areas and limited resources (1)
<b>Local food production</b> – community gardens, farms are located close to consumers, education in schools about food, local food is widely available, food composting and neighborhood resource centers, farmers markets in all neighborhoods, self-reliant	40	21	18	1	
<b>Native plants and landscaping</b> – to conserve water, limit invasive species	23	8	15		
<b>Whole communities</b> – quality of life is improved through better environment, begin environmental education early, each neighborhood has access to jobs, services, retail, schools, etc.	12	3	5	4	
<b>Recycling and composting</b> – the norm (90%+) for every household	27	4	21	2	Review health issues of using recycled waste (1)
<b>Sustainability leader</b> – considered one of the top environmental leaders in the country, greenest city, model for economy, Austin tops the "most livable city lists", implement Climate Protection Plan	73	33	32	8	Less focus on City as green leader (1), Scrap the Climate Protection Plan (1)



CL/50

### Theme 3: Growth Management Austin (408 Statements)

Sub-Themes	All	CF#1	Surveys	MiaB	Alternate Views
<b>Dense, compact city</b> – with superior transportation, interconnected neighborhoods, for work, live, play, compact neighborhoods	93	40	50	3	Building height restrictions (i.e., height compatible with adjacent uses), (5)
<b>Density downtown</b> – including dense center city neighborhoods), thriving, economically diverse, Downtown connected by an excellent transportation system	89	19	69	1	Less downtown development (4); Fewer condo and hotel projects downtown (9)
<b>Growth pays for itself and population growth slows</b> –developers pay fair share (e.g., infrastructure), eliminate incentives, preserve quality of life for existing residents, slow growth, reduce impact on natural and water resources	31	3	27	1	
<b>Diverse and unique neighborhoods</b> – compact, preserve historic sites and character, keep traditional feel, distinct “personalities”, maintain appropriate densities	58	23	29	6	
<b>Mixed-use development</b> – walkable neighborhoods with a range of densities in each neighborhood, stores and services that residents and others can walk to	37	28	7	2	
<b>Neighborhood centers</b> – urban villages through the City, connected by transit; diversity of households that allow aging in place	46	27	17	2	
<b>No sprawl</b> – designate an urban growth boundary, greenbelt, growth is well-managed; Austin expands and grows, but also preserves unique character (does not look like every city); no hilltop construction, no visual pollution/billboards	54	12	42		

C1/51

**Theme 4: Engaged Austin** (288 statements)

Sub-Themes	All	CF#1	Surveys	MiaB	Alternate Views
<b>Volunteerism/Support for Local Charities</b> – neighbors helping neighbors, identify with neighbors, philanthropic city	9	4	4	1	
<b>Citizen cooperation</b> – education and civic projects, culture of civic engagement, inspire proactive sense of citizenship	18	8	8	2	
<b>Many people participate and are engaged citizens</b> – Austin residents embody Austin ideals, bridge gaps, diverse participation	54	9	36	9	
<b>Government leaders work together</b> – get things done, bold and imaginative long-term vision, reach agreements on priorities, communicate with citizens	26	3	15	8	
<b>Higher voter turnout</b> – grassroots efforts, voting districts, same day voter registration	4	4	0		
Change the way <b>Council Districts are set up</b> - single-member districts or combination of at-large/single-member to ensure accountability	36	9	27		
<b>Higher ethical standards</b> for elected officials	7	1	6		
Efficient, clear, <b>predictable planning goals and process</b> , involve citizens, coordinate comprehensive plan with neighborhood plans and zoning	134	1	128	5	

CL  
52

## Theme 5: Recreational Austin (199 Statements)

Sub-Themes	All	CF#1	Surveys	MiaB	Alternate Views
<b>Accessible parks</b> – within a 10-minute walk of residential neighborhoods and commercial areas, pocket parks, increase parks in underserved areas	29	9	18	2	
<b>Well-maintained and safe parks and open space</b>	50	15	32	3	
<b>Preserve Austin's lakes, preserve and create greenbelts</b> – urban wild/natural areas and connect them	40	12	25	3	
<b>Interconnected green space system focused on mobility</b> – pedestrian and bike trails, sidewalk system, street trees, greenways	33	10	22	1	
<b>Develop a stronger park system</b> – increase funding for neighborhood parks, connected greenspace, and a variety of options such as trails, parks, natural areas, dog parks, etc., shared sense of nature and culture in open space	40	12	21	7	
<b>Increase greenspace</b> , set a greenspace target - e.g., 20% of ETJ, strive for more than any metro area, require dedicated open space, work with landowners to preserve rural areas	7	1	4	2	

C/53

**Theme 6: Prosperous Austin** (196 statements)

Sub-Themes	All	CF#1	Surveys	MiaB	Alternate Views
<b>Encourage small business incubators, entrepreneurs, and innovative businesses</b> - e.g., high-tech renewable energy, research and design centers; target industries identified by City and Chamber of Commerce; large business alongside small businesses	42	12	24	6	Limit business incentives (1)
<b>Diverse economic base</b> – UT & State government remain central to economy, more minority and small businesses to add to diversity	51	14	35	2	
<b>Employment opportunities</b> – for a range of backgrounds, education opportunities (e.g. medical school), narrow the gap between rich and poor people and communities, low unemployment	21	15	6		
<b>Most businesses are locally owned and supported</b> – few chain stores, residents shop at local businesses/restaurants, the City focuses incentives on long-term sustainable jobs, locally grown, small scale manufacturing, micro-businesses, live-work opportunities	55	16	31	8	
<b>Growing middle-class</b> – poverty lessened, low unemployment	6	2	2	2	
<b>Removal of regulatory hurdles</b>	16	0	12	4	
<b>Leader in Green Economy</b> ( <i>also see Sustainability Leader under Green Austin</i> )	5	0	5		

C1/B4

**Theme 7: Healthy Austin (166 Statements)**

<b>Sub-Themes</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>CF#1</b>	<b>Surveys</b>	<b>MiaB</b>	<b>Alternate Views</b>
<b>Healthy population</b> – active and happy people, places to exercise and walk are convenient for everyone	29	15	10	4	
<b>Eliminate homelessness</b> – better care for mentally challenged and homeless, adequate services (throughout the City, not only downtown)	19	2	15	2	
<b>Family-friendly community</b> – awareness of older citizens, trust, small-town feel	11	10	0	1	
<b>Access to healthy, locally-grown food</b>	10	2	7	1	
<b>Ethnic and culturally diverse</b> – multi-lingual, living in harmony, socially equitable, tolerant city, shared spaces, equal support for different neighborhoods, cultural awareness	55	25	14	16	
<b>Access to affordable health care and services</b>	17	2	12	3	
<b>Social services</b> – for aging population, disabled population, mentally ill, working poor	15	3	11	1	
<b>Increased community health and animal health clinics</b>	10	3	7		

CL/5b

**Theme 8: Creative Austin** (153 Statements)

Sub-Themes	All	CF#1	Surveys	MiaB	Alternate Views
<b>Vibrant arts scene</b> – including diverse arts and cultural offerings, incentives for arts/artists, urban arts programs, affordable space for artists, entertainment, live music	27	5	17	5	
<b>Recognized cultural center</b> – Austin is well known for arts, music, family-oriented cultural events, options for seniors, museums, diverse and multi-cultural	21	5	8	8	
<b>Culture, history, and heritage are preserved</b> – Including "Old Austin", historic buildings, city's character and creativity	36	11	21	4	
<b>Support for visual arts / creative economy</b> – artists, creative community, public art, citywide focus, support artists	28	6	15	7	
<b>Preserve Austin's character</b> – still unique, still weird, still music capital and the city expands and grows, Austin does not look like everywhere else	38	13	20	5	
<b>Creative and diverse restaurants, culinary attractions</b>	3		2	1	

CL/56

## Theme 9: Educated Austin (151 Statements)

Sub-Themes	All	CF#1	Surveys	MiaB	Alternate Views
Austin attracts <b>high-quality teachers</b> – and pays them <b>high salaries</b>	10	2	7	1	
<b>Educational equality</b> – great schools are located throughout the City and in all communities, without regard for income, neighborhoods, ethnicity; the east/west inequalities no longer exist, access to technology	23	10	8	5	
<b>Higher educational opportunities</b> – access to higher education, affordable higher education, technical/vocational options, traditional colleges	28	17	11		
<b>Improve public schools</b> – lower drop-out rate and higher graduation rate, quality education is offered to all students, greater connection between UT and public schools in Austin, increase funding, arts education	57	14	28	15	
<b>Better education leads to job opportunities</b> to keep young people in Austin, career mentors	8	2	4	2	
<b>Schools as centers of community / lifelong learning</b> – centers and community gathering places, cultural education	13	5	5	3	
<b>Great public libraries</b> – centers of community (meeting rooms, best in the state, offer community classes)	12	4	8		

CL/57

**Theme 10: Affordable Austin** (145 Statements)

<b>Sub-Themes</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>CF#1</b>	<b>Surveys</b>	<b>MiaB</b>	<b>Alternate Views</b>
<b>Affordable housing</b> – Including “green” housing, throughout city and downtown, for all income levels, household types, options for previously homeless residents, lower-income housing is not concentrated in one area, affordable daycare	87	21	55	11	Eliminate affordable housing subsidies (1), reduce obstacles to developers (1)
<b>Economically mixed neighborhoods with diverse incomes</b> – melting pot preservation, neighborhoods that have something for all ages and interests, community centers, east/west separation no longer exists	20	4	12	4	
<b>Lower taxes</b> – a more progressive tax structure with less reliance on property taxes	19	3	15	1	More services, tax incentives for people to live in the City (1)
<b>Living wage</b> – opportunities for education and a living wage for every resident	8	3	5		
<b>Increased home ownership</b> – cost of buying a home is more affordable for everyone	5	1	4		
Provide <b>transitional housing</b> for formerly homeless population	6	4	2		



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## Theme 11: Safe Austin (124 Statements)

Sub-Themes	All	CF#1	Surveys	MiaB	Alternate Views
<b>Reduce crime and theft</b> – through a strong police force and strive for zero crime and drug offenses, better DUI enforcement	37	12	22	3	Drug legalization (4)
<b>Austin is clean and safe</b> , no graffiti, increase first responders, well-funded services	20	5	15		Graffiti is allowed (1)
<b>Increase community awareness</b> – neighborhood associations work with police force, many eyes on the street	6	1	4	1	
<b>Neighborhoods are safe and strong</b> – family-friendly activities, including neighborhoods east of I-35, downtown, and UT	22	7	13	2	
<b>Eliminate panhandling</b>	35	2	32	1	
<b>Juvenile delinquency is eliminated</b> – instead schools and vocational programs support teens, support for families in poverty	4	1	3		

## Theme 12: Fiscally Responsible Austin (85 statements)

Sub-Themes	All	CF#1	Surveys	MiaB	Alternate Views
<b>Fiscal responsibility</b> – in provision of quality services, better coordination between offices, cut back on spending, fiscally responsible infrastructure spending, address aging infrastructure	38	7	27	4	
<b>Lower, more affordable tax structure</b> – e.g., taxes for seniors are lower, rethink property tax structure, provide quality services within fiscal responsibility	29	4	25		
<b>Utility services</b> – are built, maintained, and delivered efficiently with proper planning and forecasting	12	1	11		
<b>Technology to improve public services</b>	6	4	1	1	

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**3. Describe Austin Today: Summary Strengths**  
*(CFS #1 and Surveys as of Feb 1, 2010, MiaB to be completed)*

Strengths	All	CFS #1	Surveys
<b>Arts, live music, creative community</b> , entertainment, night life, tradition of weird, culture	559	180	379
<b>Natural resources</b> (e.g., beauty, landscape, water, lakes, trees, environmental resources, native landscape) and the physical environment	541	113	428
<b>People, friendliness</b> , families, laid-back attitude, <b>unique character</b> , small-town atmosphere, emphasis on <b>community</b> , <b>quality-of-life</b> , neighborhoods	533	117	416
<b>Parks</b> , open spaces, recreation, trails	437	177	260
<b>Diversity</b> (broad range of people, ethnic and cultural diversity, unique perspectives, open-minded)	362	171	191
<b>Environmental awareness</b> , clean water, energy conservation, renewable energy (could be enhanced), desire for sustainability, City's focus on clean energy, water conservation, utilities	293	87	206
<b>Higher educational</b> opportunities (UT, ACC, college/university town, university as the economic driver, extension classes) and educated population	285	57	228
<b>Diverse and strong economy</b> (vibrant, able to attract venture capital, high-tech careers, jobs, business climate, movie industry, newspapers)	211	43	168
<b>Local business</b> (local business culture, incubators, variety, unique businesses, entrepreneurial community, DIY culture)	186	90	96
<b>Progressive, engaged population</b> , community involvement, involved government, radio stations, volunteerism	159	42	117
<b>Vibrant downtown</b> (housing, live music, night life, proximity to neighborhoods and university, density, State Capitol, potential to be more vibrant, great skyline, walkable)	137	61	76
<b>Neighborhoods</b> (older areas, character, scale, density, unique areas, small-town feel, diversity, outdoor/public space, neighborhood zoning, associations)	123	71	52
<b>Places and Events</b> (music and other festivals, outdoor places)	105	8	97
<b>Climate, weather</b> , geographic location, access to region	95	30	65
<b>City government</b> (strong, low taxes, environmental codes, seat of government)	83	13	70
<b>Active lifestyle opportunities</b> (outdoor activities, emphasis on recreation and open space, fit community, sports, recreation), <b>healthy living</b> , health care	76	27	49
<b>Restaurants and locally grown food</b> (BBQ tradition, great restaurants, farmers market, community gardens)	70	13	57
<b>Affordable housing</b> , great housing options, cost of living, relative cost of housing	68	31	37
<b>Recycling program</b> (single-stream, Dillo Dirt, waste management, leader), <b>energy initiatives</b> , green buildings	63	20	43

CL  
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<b>Strengths</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>CFS #1</b>	<b>Surveys</b>
<b>Public school/K-12</b> (diversity, strong schools, opportunities for all)	60	13	47
<b>Historic and Cultural Resources</b> (historic buildings, architecture, preservation, historic squares, cultural institutions)	58	33	25
<b>Bicycle and pedestrian friendly</b> city	37	13	24
<b>Clean and safe city</b> , relatively low crime	36	10	26
<b>Public transit</b> (convenient, future plans, enhanced mobility)	33	19	14
<b>Tourism and location</b> in central Texas, regional attractions	20	4	16
<b>Street circulation</b> (and scheduled improvements), ease of getting around	18	6	12
<b>Ability to grow and expand</b> , balance between development and open space, growth rate	15		15
<b>Library system</b>	12	4	8
<b>Shopping</b> , retail options	12		12
<b>Locally grown food</b> (growing interest, community gardens, food programs)	5	5	0
<b>New Airport</b>	5	2	3
Total	4,692	1,455	3,237

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#### 4. Describe Austin Today: Summary Challenges

(CFS #1 and Surveys as of Feb 1, 2010, MiaB to be completed)

Challenges	All	CFS #1	Surveys
<b>Traffic, congestion</b> , road safety, toll roads, east-west connections, signage	491	89	402
<b>Public transit</b> (i.e., beyond downtown, mass transit, light rail, inadequate, safety, speed, connection with other cities, not enough modes, routes not convenient, lack of unified/comprehensive mass system, E/W connections, rapid bus lanes, support for public transit)	297	83	214
<b>Affordable housing</b> (i.e., define, lack of, near business/services, downtown, spread throughout the City, for all education/income levels, cost of living)	253	122	131
<b>Lack of multi-modal choices</b> (i.e., roadways are too geared to autos, more options, safe and convenient modes, connections, reduce auto dependence, end of oil – need new solutions)	246	176	70
<b>Elected representation</b> (need single-member districts, accessible government, stronger local government, politics, at-large council), state interference	201	63	138
<b>Need to protect environment</b> (e.g., preservation of natural areas, resources, air, water, soil, trees, challenge of sprawl vs. preservation, loss of mature trees, pollution) and strained water supply	178	101	77
<b>Racial, economic, and cultural</b> stratification (achievement gaps, east/west divide, income segregation, lack of diversity in neighborhoods, racism)	174	72	102
<b>Pedestrian and bicycle options</b> (e.g., barriers in neighborhoods, along major roadways, few safe bike trails/lanes - 620, 360, MoPac, S. Congress Ave, need to link neighborhoods via trails, accessibility, improve safety, connectivity, education)	161	54	107
<b>Sprawl</b> (i.e., roadway system over taxed, reduce sprawl and protect resources, wasteful land use, suburbs more attractive for development, poor development on urban fringe, loss of resources, car dependant)	157	70	87
<b>Education</b> (e.g., public schools, all levels, quality, improve compared to nation, strong system, improve grad rate, special services, equal education across the City, eliminate income divide)	153	84	69
<b>Smart development/growth</b> (e.g., preserve undeveloped land, redevelop existing low-density dilapidated housing into more mixed-use, higher density, concentrate density in core, self-sufficient neighborhoods with a mix of uses/businesses, incentives, control growth boundaries, rethink building footprint/cover, TOD, better urban design)	147	71	76
<b>Community character and preservation</b> , how to keep Austin “feel” and still manage growth (i.e., preserve local color, local people, keep Austin weird, preservation of neighborhoods, balance, preserving sense of community, maintain quality of life), preserve local businesses	133	72	61
<b>Greenspace/parks</b> (e.g., trails, connections, neighborhood parks, urban forest, greenspace and water, dog parks in neighborhoods, Hill Country)	119	64	55
<b>Crime</b> (drugs, public safety, vandalism, litter)	99	22	77
<b>Civic engagement</b> , voter turnout, apathy, disagreements	90	64	26
<b>Neighborhood conflicts</b> , NIMBYism, sticking to neighborhood plans, politics	87	32	55
<b>Homelessness</b> (across Travis County, social services, address problem,	87	21	66

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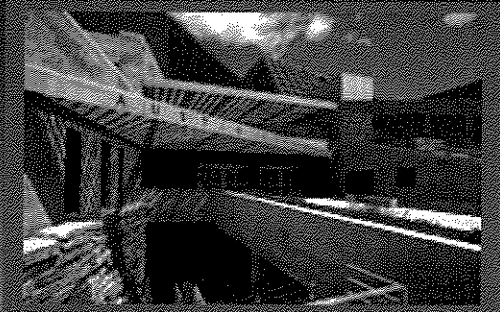
Challenges	All	CFS #1	Surveys
shelters), panhandling			
<b>Deteriorating Infrastructure</b> (roads, curbs, sewers, adequate sewer treatment, aging, electricity goes out during storms, streetscape improvements including East Austin), <b>public services</b>	86	24	62
<b>Increasing tax burden</b> (property taxes, sales tax, cost of growth, need equitable tax system)	85	34	51
<b>Planning and Implementation</b> (inability to implement previous plans, too much planning without implementation, no adopted plan for 20 years, how will neighborhood plans remain valid, evaluation), need better planning	83	13	70
<b>Balance/diverse housing types</b> (e.g., across the city, middle-class housing, more SF ownership, for all income levels, lifestyle choices - urban/suburban/rural, town centers, maintain open space)	71	47	24
<b>Employment Diversity</b> (distribute high tech around City, need more diverse industries, training, high-paying quality jobs)	63	29	34
<b>Sustainability</b> (local food, diverting from landfills, balance of growth and resources, leadership, conservation, economic and social diversity), more green buildings	62	35	27
<b>Jobs</b> (bad economy, attract business, keep people in Austin, lower unemployment, higher-paying jobs), develop economic plans (deal with unstable business, ways to make Austin affordable, change growth oriented economy to other, awareness/education)	56	32	24
<b>Population boom</b> (where will people live, impact on natural resources, sense of place, crime, healthcare, overcrowding)	47	24	23
<b>Insufficient development regulations</b> (need to improve zoning, County regulations or lack of, developer influence), planning	44	32	12
<b>Need to provide public/community services</b> to all residents (equality across city, increase spending on arts, libraries, public theatre, police, emergency planning, events)	44	44	0
<b>Increase renewable energy</b> (non-renewable and impacts, alternative energy sources, energy conservation, smarter power, infrastructure)	39	29	10
<b>Health care</b> (improve facilities, funding, mental health, access, senior services, disabled population)	33	14	19
<b>Support for low-income families</b> (i.e., child-care, access to healthy food, housing support, education and safety issues, recreation for kids, after-school care, summer programs, eliminate drugs in schools)	31	31	0
<b>Gentrification</b> (lose of affordable housing, working-class neighborhoods)	31	10	21
<b>Preservation of view corridors</b> and open space (e.g, Capitol View Corridor, Lady Bird Corridor, Town Lake, public waterfront, Ladybird Lake, preserve valuable farmland, "skyline sprawl")	29	29	0
<b>Comprehensive recycling</b> (including apartments, need local drop-off facility in Austin)	26	17	9
<b>Demographic shift</b> (more diverse, accommodate new people/values without losing Austin, aging population, children, need to embrace change)	17	17	0
<b>Effective regional planning</b> (disconnect between CAMPO and City of Austin, outgrown current form of government)	16	16	0
<b>Over-regulation of development</b> , regulations driving up cost of living	15	15	0
<b>Schools as community centers</b> (i.e., center of neighborhood, tutoring,	12	12	0

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Challenges	All	CFS #1	Surveys
adult education, libraries, technology)			
<b>Downtown parking</b> / overall parking	9	6	3
<b>Immigration</b>	7		7
<b>Climate Change</b>	6	6	0
<b>Landscape</b> (intensive plantings, lawns, maintain urban forest, tree preservation)	6	6	0
<b>College education</b> (affordable, UT balance growth with growth of City)	6	6	0
<b>Preservation</b> (i.e., greenspaces, historic buildings, diverse culture, local and historic preservation, historic parks)	6	6	0
<b>Economic support for arts and culture</b> , creative business, venues, live-work space for artists, affordable cultural/arts venues	6	6	0
<b>State Government moving</b> , county office moving	5	5	0
<b>Satellite suburbs</b>	4	4	0
<b>Reduction in electric and waste rates</b> (for low-income households, urban farms/community gardens)	4	4	0
<b>Assess the true cost of growth</b>	3	3	0
Too much acceptance of <b>population growth projections</b>	3	3	0
<b>Problems associated with density</b> (e.g., crime, stress, conflict, utility failure, inadequate services, increased cost of living)	3	3	0
<b>Taxes are too low</b>	2	2	0
Lack of <b>community gardens</b>	1	1	0
Total	4,034	1,826	2,209

# *Community Survey*

Final Report



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Submitted to  
*The City of*  
*Austin, Texas*

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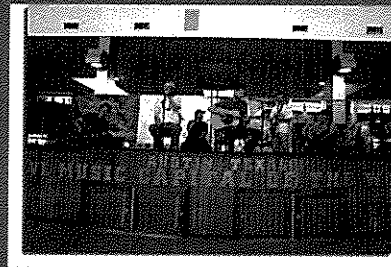
by

**ETC Institute**

725 W. Frontier

Olathe, KS 66061

(913) 829-1215



**Wallace, Todd & Roberts, LLC**

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## ***2010 Community Survey*** **Executive Summary Report**

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### **Overview of the Methodology**

The City of Austin conducted a Community Survey as part of a comprehensive long range plan during February and March of 2010. The purpose of the survey was to gather citizen input as a cornerstone of the long range planning effort. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the City of Austin. The survey was administered by a combination of mail and phone.

ETC Institute worked extensively with City of Austin officials, as well as members of the Wallace, Roberts & Todd LLC project team in the development of the survey questionnaire. This work allowed the survey to be tailored to issues of strategic importance to effectively plan the future system.

ETC Institute mailed surveys to a random sample of 6,000 households throughout the City of Austin. Approximately three days after the surveys were mailed, each household that received a survey also received an electronic voice message encouraging them to complete the survey. In addition, about two weeks after the surveys were mailed ETC Institute began contacting households by phone. Those who indicated they had not returned the survey were given the option of completing it by phone.

The goal was to obtain a total of at least 1,200 completed surveys from City of Austin households, including at least 200 from each of the five reporting areas. These goals were accomplished, with a total of 1,311 surveys having been completed, including 245 or more from each of the five reporting areas. The results of the random sample of 1,311 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/-2.7%.

The following pages summarize major survey findings.

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## Major Survey Findings

- **Strengths of the City of Austin.** The aspects that the highest percentage of households rated as a “major strength” or “strength” for the City of Austin are: availability of arts, music and cultural amenities (79%), the University of Texas (76%), the State Capital (75%), unique local identity (74%), availability of parks and open space (73%), and quality of local businesses (73%).
- **Importance of Living Near Various Facilities and Amenities.** The facilities and amenities that the highest percentage of households rated as being “very important” or “somewhat important” to live near are: fire stations (93%), grocery stores (92%), hospitals and medical facilities (91%), parks, sports, and recreation facilities (87%), shopping areas (84%), place of employment (82%), sidewalks, biking and hiking trails (80%), and good schools (80%).
- **Potential Areas for Growth and Development.** The areas where households most support growth and development occurring are: near public transportation stations, stops, and routes (56%), centers outside of downtown (50%), and along roadway corridors (43%).
- **Transportation Issues That Should Receive the Most Emphasis.** Based on the sum of their top three choices, the transportation issues that households feel should receive the most emphasis from city leaders over the next two years are: ease of travel by car on freeways (49%), ease of north/south travel in Austin (37%), quality of public transportation – bus service (33%), ease of travel by car on major streets (31%), and ease of east/west travel in Austin (30%).
- **Allocation of \$100 Among Various Transportation Improvements.** Respondents would allocate \$27 out of \$100 for improvements to freeways. The remaining \$73 was allocated as follows: improvements to major streets throughout Austin (\$18), improvements to public transportation – bus service (\$14), improvements to public transportation – rail service (\$14), improvements to neighborhood streets (\$13), improvements to walking and biking systems (\$12), and “other” (\$2).

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- **Future of Austin.** Based on the sum of their top four choices, the ideas that best represent households' vision for the future of Austin are: quality public schools (38%), affordable tax rate (32%), affordable housing (28%), high paying jobs/employment opportunities (27%), and reduced traffic congestion (26%).
  
- **Allocation of \$100 Among Various Capital Improvement Initiatives.** Respondents would allocate \$25 out of \$100 to improve the transportation system. The remaining \$75 was allocated as follows: develop health and human service facilities (\$21), repair and restore deteriorating infrastructure (\$16), develop public safety facilities (\$13), develop parks and recreation and facilities (\$9), develop community facilities (\$8), acquire open space (\$6), and "other" (\$2).

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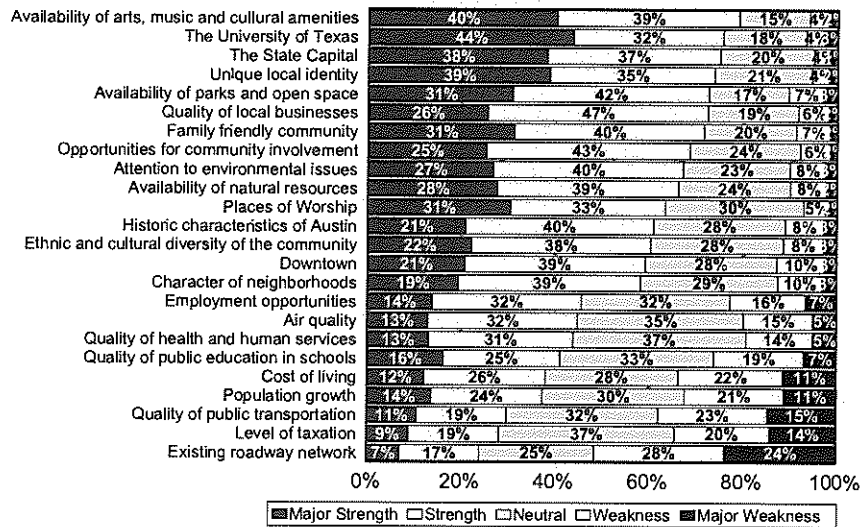
## ***Section 1:*** ***Charts and Graphs***

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## Q1. Level of Strength of Various Aspects of Life in the City of Austin

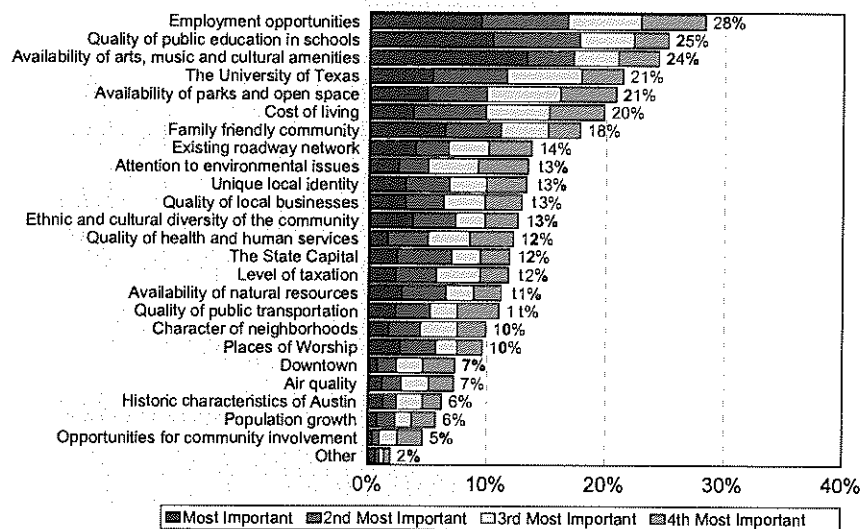
by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

## Q2. Aspects That Households Feel Are Most Important to be Major Strengths for the City of Austin

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices

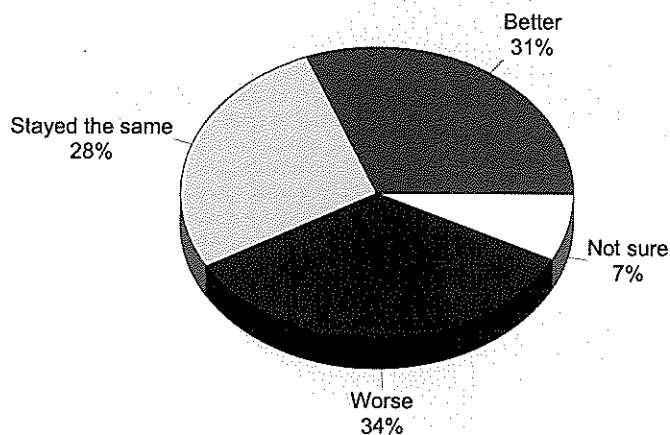


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

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**Q3. Since You Have Lived in the City of Austin, Do You Generally Think the Quality of Life Is Better, Has Stayed the Same, or Is Worse?**

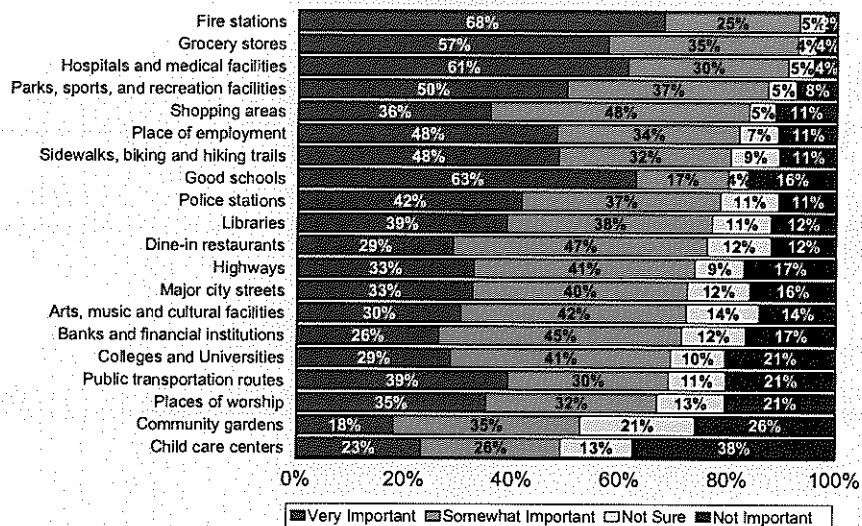
by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

**Q4. Importance of Living Near Various Facilities and Amenities**

by percentage of respondents

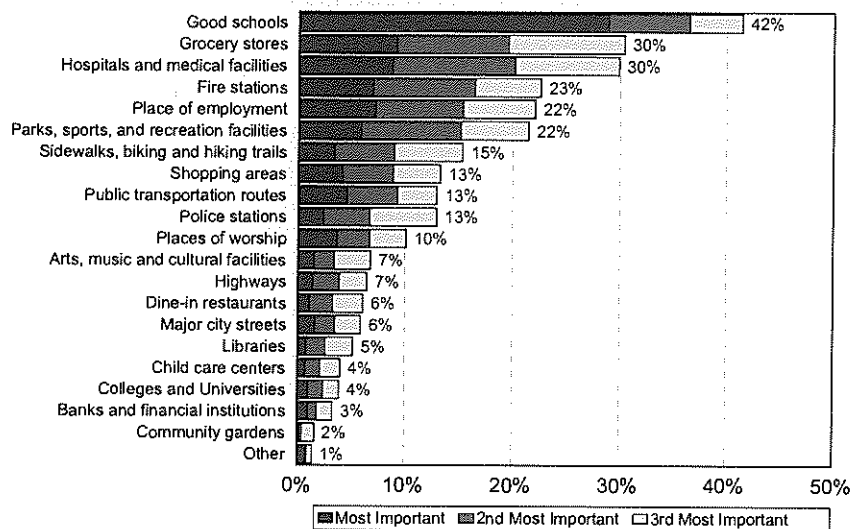


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

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### Q5. Facilities and Amenities That Are Most Important for Respondents to Live Near

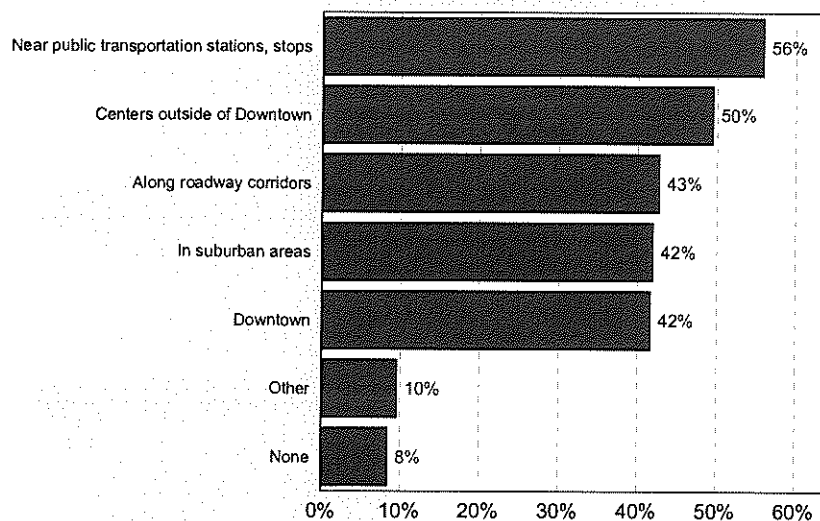
by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top three choices



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

### Q6. Areas Respondents Most Support Growth and Development Occuring

by percentage of respondents (multiple choices could be made)

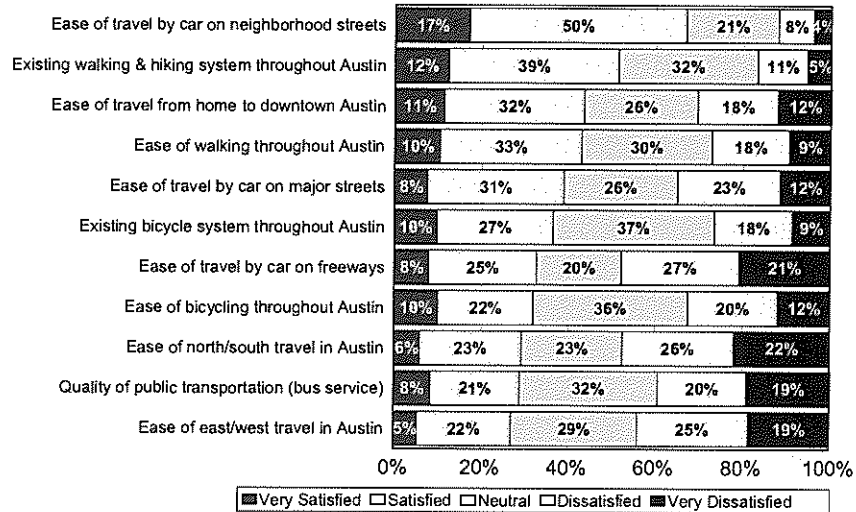


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

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## Q7. Level of Satisfaction with Various Components of the City's Transportation System

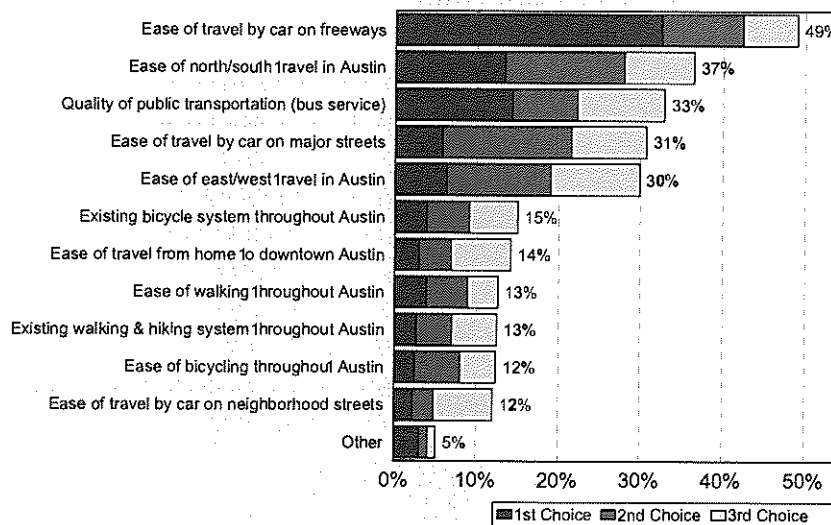
by percentage of respondents (excluding "don't know" responses)



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

## Q8. Transportation Issues That Should Receive the Most Emphasis from City Leaders Over the Next Two Years

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top three choices



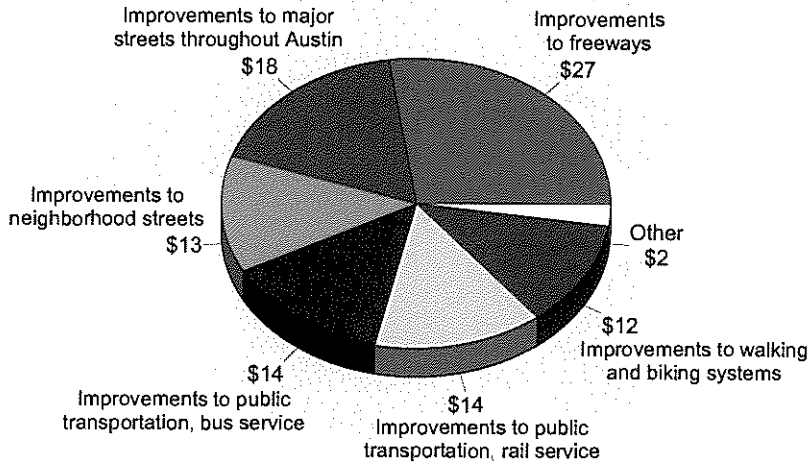
Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)



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### Q9. Allocation of \$100 Among Various Transportation Improvements

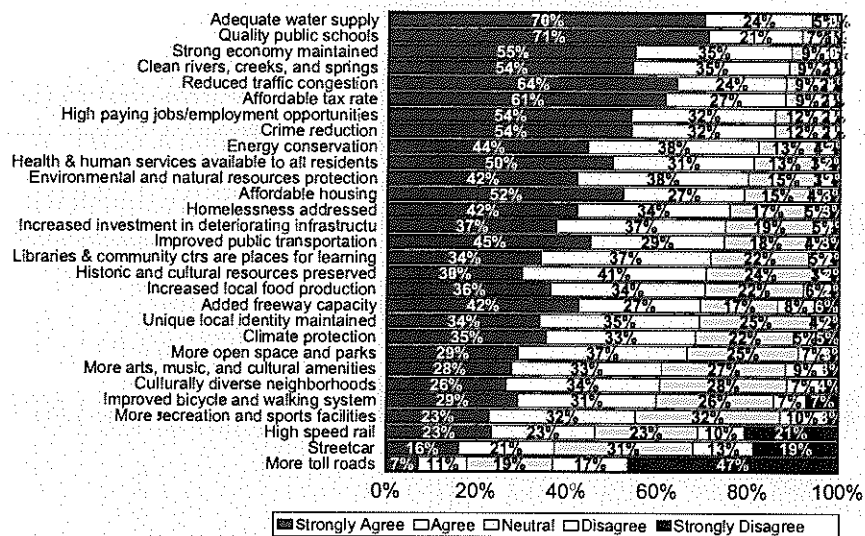
by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

### Q10. Level of Agreement That the City of Austin's Future of Should Include the Following:

by percentage of respondents

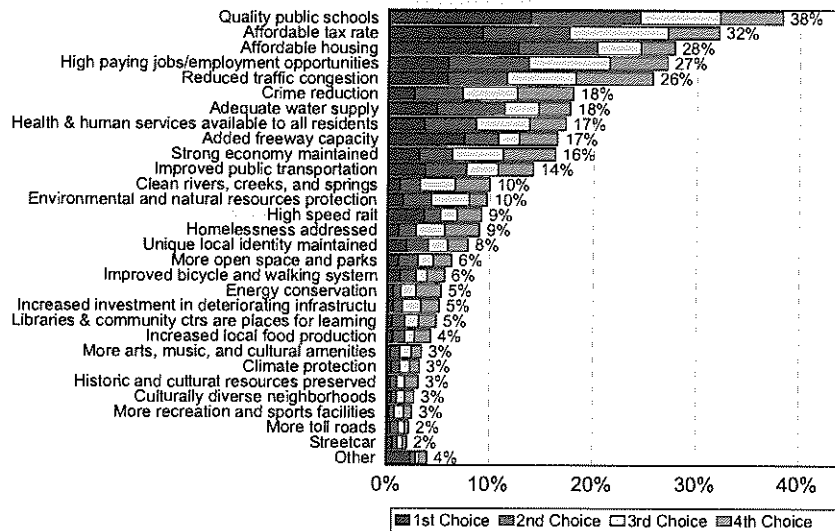


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

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### Q11. Assets That Best Represent Respondents' Vision for the Future of the City of Austin

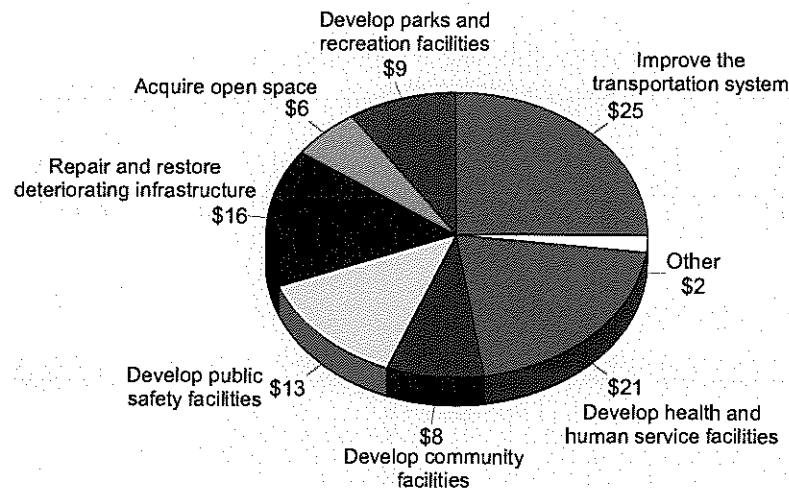
by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

### Q12. Allocation of \$100 Among Various Capital Improvement Initiatives

by percentage of respondents

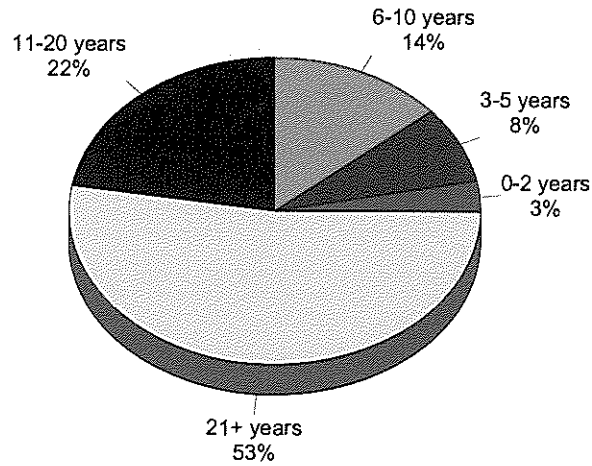


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

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### Q13. Demographics: How Long Have You Lived in Austin?

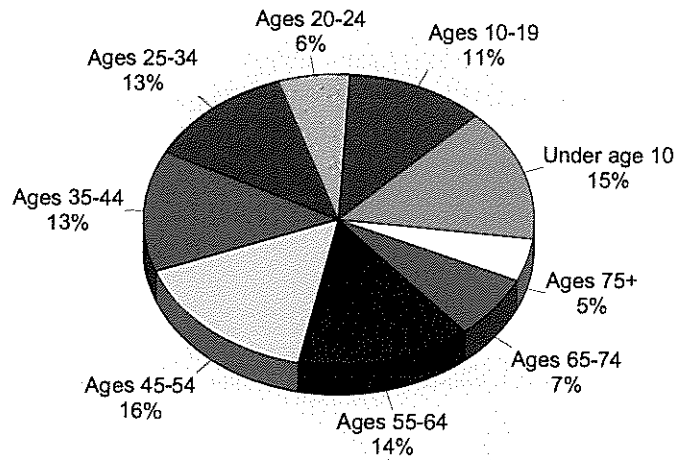
by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

### Q14. Demographics: Ages of People in Household

by percentage of household occupants

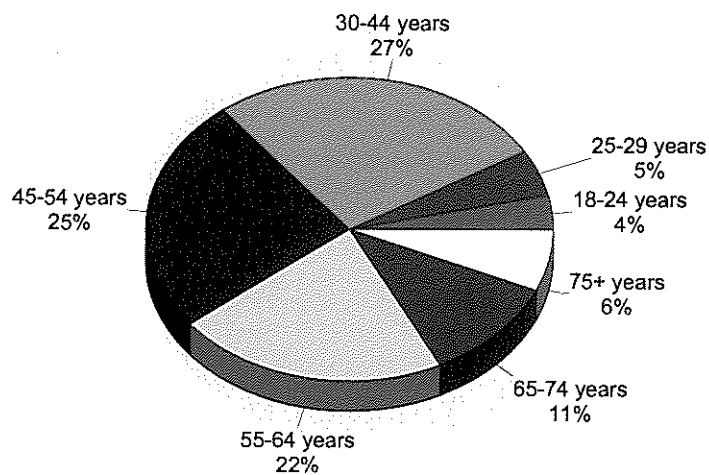


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

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### Q15. Demographics: Age of Respondents

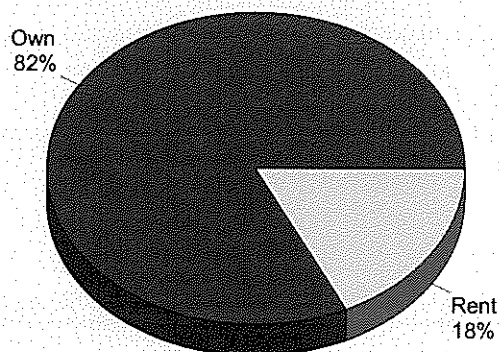
by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

### Q16. Demographics: Do You Own or Rent Your Home?

by percentage of respondents

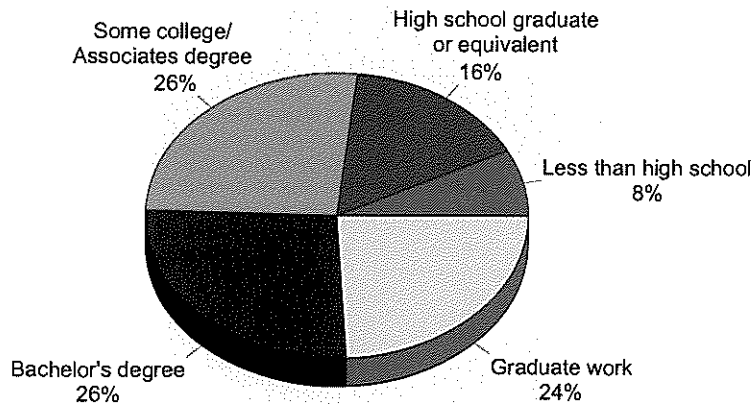


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

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### Q17. Demographics: What Is Your Highest Level of Education?

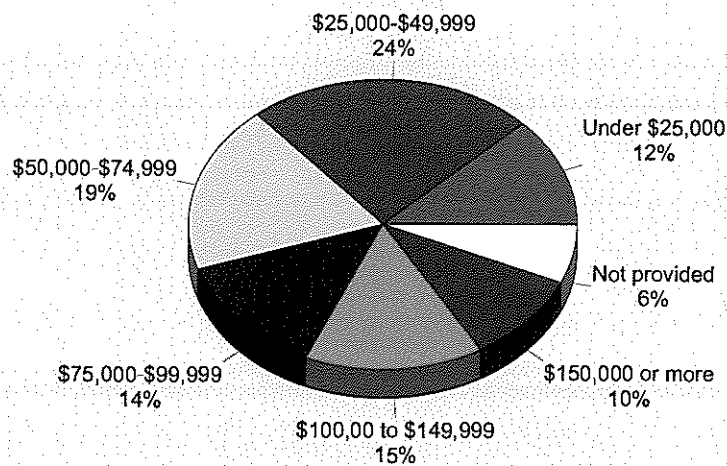
by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

### Q18. Demographics: Total Annual Household Income

by percentage of respondents

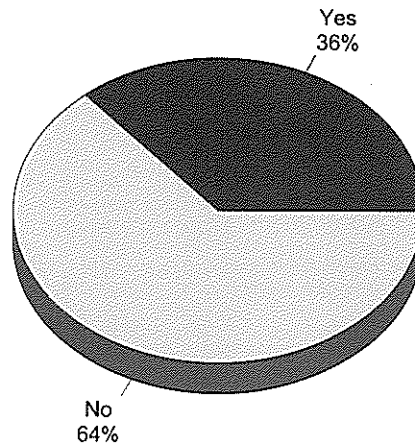


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

C/19

**Q19. Demographics: Are You or Members of Your Household of Hispanic or Latin Ancestry?**

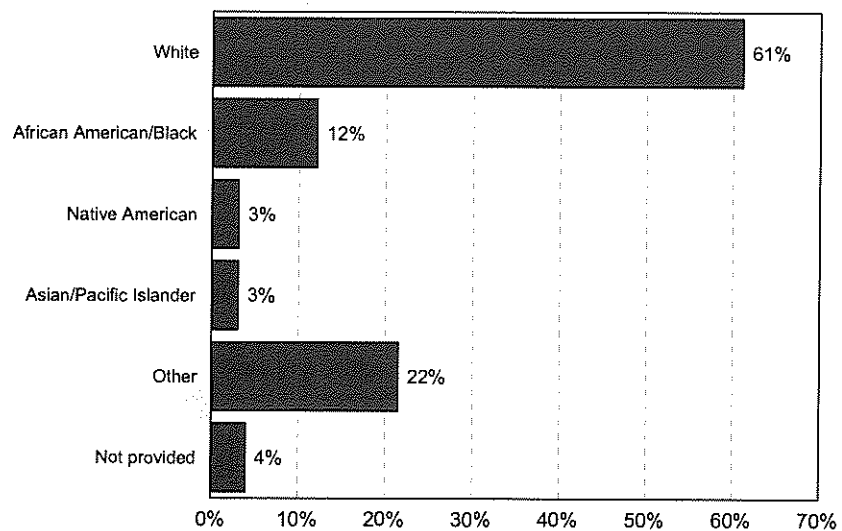
by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

**Q20. Demographics: Race**

by percentage of respondents (multiple choices could be made)

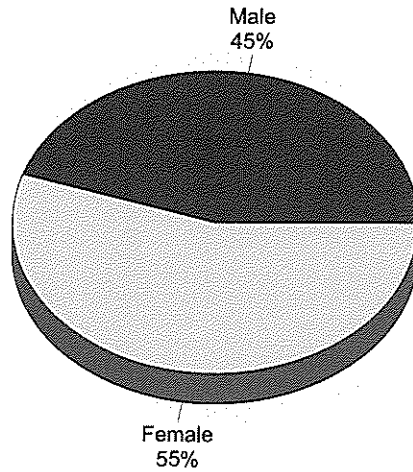


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

CA/80

### Q22. Demographics: Gender

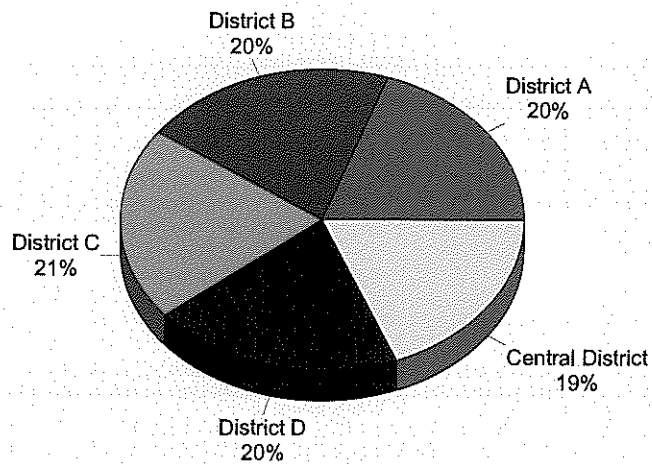
by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

### Demographics: Location of Residence

by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (April 2010)

C1/81

Vision Statement Themes  
3/9/10 CATF Meeting

CATF Theme	Corresponding Common Ground Working Paper Theme
<b>1. Transportation / Mobility / Access</b>	
Mobility (Group 1)	Multimodal Austin
Robust Transportation System (Group 2)	Multimodal Austin
Transportation Options (Group 3)	Multimodal Austin
Transportation (subtheme under Basic Services) (Group 4)	Multimodal Austin
Transportation (Group 5)	Multimodal Austin
Access / Mobility (Group 6)	Multimodal Austin
<b>2. Economic Opportunity</b>	
Employment Opportunities (subtheme under Opportunity) (Group 1)	Prosperous Austin
Economic Opportunities (Group 2)	Prosperous Austin
Diverse Job Market (Group 3)	Prosperous Austin
Shared Opportunities for Prosperity / Diverse, Healthy Economy (Group 4)	Prosperous Austin
Local Businesses (subtheme under Neighborhoods) (Group 5)	Prosperous Austin
Vibrant Job Market with Small Business Growth (subtheme under Opportunity) (Group 6)	Prosperous Austin
<b>3. Environment / Open Space</b>	
Green Energy / Clean Water (subtheme under Security) (Group 1)	Green Austin
Ecosystem Services (Group 2)	Green Austin
Environment (Group 4)	Green Austin
Environment and Open Space (Group 5)	Green Austin
Environment (Group 6)	Green Austin
<b>4. Affordable Housing</b>	
Affordable Housing (subtheme under Affordability) (Group 1)	Affordable Austin
Housing (Group 2)	Affordable Austin
Affordable Housing (Group 3)	Affordable Austin
Affordable Housing (subtheme under Neighborhoods) (Group 5)	Affordable Austin
Afford to Live Here (Group 6)	Affordable Austin
<b>5. Educational Opportunity</b>	
Educational Opportunities (subtheme under Opportunity) (Group 1)	Educated Austin
Education (Group 2)	Educated Austin
Education (subtheme under Basic Services) (Group 4)	Educated Austin
Good Schools (subtheme under Vibrant & Diverse Neighborhoods) (Group 5)	Educated Austin
Excellent Schools (subtheme under Opportunity) (Group 6)	Educated Austin
<b>6. Human Services</b>	
Healthcare (subtheme under Affordability) (Group 1)	Healthy Austin
Access to Social Services (subtheme under Security) (Group 1)	Healthy Austin
Health (subtheme under Basic Services) (Group 4)	Healthy Austin



C1/82

Medical Services / Safe, Healthy Population (subtheme under Opportunity) (Group 6)	Healthy Austin
<b>7. Equity / Inclusiveness</b>	
Equitable Opportunity (Group 3)	Engaged Austin
Inclusive (Group 4)	Engaged Austin
Equity (Group 6)	Engaged Austin
<b>8. Unique Character</b>	
Unique Diverse Local Character (Group 3)	Creative Austin
Uniqueness / Austin "Vibe" (Group 4)	Creative Austin
Character (includes arts, music, culture) (Group 5)	Creative Austin
<b>9. Other Themes</b>	
Security (Group 1)	Safe Austin
Infrastructure (Group 4 – subtheme under Basic Services; Group 5 – "Athens" of Infrastructure)	?
Innovation / Creative (Group 4)	Creative Austin
Vibrant & Diverse Neighborhoods (Group 5)	Growth Management Austin

C1/83

## **Draft Components of a Vision**

### **Draft 4/2/10**

On its 200th anniversary (2039), Austin is recognized worldwide for its exceptional livability and vibrant creativity; its leadership in the arts, education and technology; and its commitment to environmental responsibility, economic opportunity, and social equity. Through the efforts of our engaged citizenry, working in collaboration with local government, civic organizations, and businesses, we maintain an outstanding and fertile environment in which to nurture the next generation of proud Austinites.

### **The Austin we love is Livable:**

- A variety of urban, suburban, and semi-rural lifestyle choices and settings are available to residents.
- We are a community of safe, well-maintained, and stable neighborhoods whose character and history have been preserved.
- Neighborhoods across the city are economically mixed and diverse with a range of affordable housing options.
- Downtown Austin offers a vibrant, day and night time urban lifestyle for residents, workers, and visitors.
- Residents have access to quality schools, parks and recreation, health and human services, and other outstanding public facilities and services.
- Development occurs in connected and walkable patterns supporting transit and urban lifestyles, while reducing sprawl and negative impacts on neighborhoods.
- Austin's population is active and healthy, with access to locally-grown, nourishing foods, and affordable healthcare.
- Development meets standards for quality and aesthetics providing certainty for residents and the real estate community.

### **The Austin we love is Prosperous:**

- The economy is diverse and includes large and small businesses, educational institutions, state and city government, and other major employers.
- Austin is a leader in "green" jobs, technology, research, and innovation.
- Our ecology is integrated with our economy - the preservation of the environment and natural resources contributes to the prosperity of our people.
- Equitable opportunities are provided to all through access to quality education and good jobs.
- Development strengthens our economy, tax base, and quality of life.
- Our community of local entrepreneurs and small businesses thrives.

### **The Austin we love is Natural and Sustainable:**

- Waterways, tree cover, habitat areas, and other precious natural resources are celebrated and vigorously protected.
- Air and water quality in Austin and the larger region is improved. We conserve water and rely on native plants and landscaping to support our ecosystem.

C1/84

- The scenic beauty of the Hill Country is preserved for the benefit of future generations.
- Austin is a model of conservation, efficiency, and carbon footprint reduction. Our water, utility, and energy systems rely on renewable resources.
- The network of parks, greenways, stream corridors and other protected open space resources is greatly expanded.
- Growth and infrastructure systems are well-managed to respect the limitations of our natural resources.

### **The Austin we love is Functional and Accessible:**

- The entire city is accessible by a functional and efficient road network, public transit, and safe and convenient bike and pedestrian routes.
- Congestion is reduced and air quality improved through an enhanced roadway network and more convenient transportation choices.
- Austin is a city that works. Reliable transportation, utilities, education and health, and human services are accessible to persons of all backgrounds and abilities.
- Austin is a user-friendly city with excellent schools, support for families, and opportunities for recreation, lifelong learning, and volunteer activities.

### **The Austin we love is Caring and Committed:**

- Our diverse communities thrive and enrich each other.
- All citizens are valued, respected, and welcomed to become engaged and have a stake in the future of their community.
- We acknowledge and seek to rectify past injustices to African-Americans, Hispanics, and others who had been left out of full participation in our community.
- We are a diverse city of passionate, committed, creative, and independent thinkers. Welcoming the expression of opposing ideas in a respectful and civil manner, we move forward by finding common solutions.

### **The Austin we love is Stimulating and Creative:**

- Our unique "vibe" continues - Austin remains fertile territory for our creative class of musicians, artists, and innovators in technology, education, and the environment.
- The city is a world-class leader in innovation and creative thought.
- Partnerships with schools, colleges, and other educational institutions engage our youth and provide opportunity for lifelong learning.
- Our population of artists and musicians of modest means is supported. Austin remains a great place for the arts, live music, and original culture.

# Components of a Vision Statement Results



## Background

Over the course of five months, **Austinites were asked to imagine the future of Austin as one of the world's most exceptional cities on its bicentennial, 2039.** Over 63 stakeholder interviews, representing key civic and business organizations, were interviewed early in the process. In November 2009, more than 300 Austinites participated in community forums like this one.

Following the forums, more than 3,800 Austinites completed **online and paper surveys**, indicating **strengths, challenges, and ideas for the future** of Austin. Over 160 separate **Meetings-in-a-Box** (representing 987 participants) were held at the homes, community organizations, and schools in Austin. In addition, a **statistically valid Community Survey** (separate from the online survey) was completed by 1,200 residents of Austin and the ETJ.

The Citizens Advisory Task Force began working with public input at their March 2010 meeting to create a first cut at the big ideas for the Vision Statement. Those big ideas structured these draft Components of a Vision for Austin's future.



Participants at ACC

## Components of a Vision Statement exercise

Participants at the April 27 and 28 and May 1 Community Forums were invited to mark their level of agreement for each Component, from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Posters were placed around each venue, clustering the components into six themes. Approximately half of participants at each forum voted on the Components. Not all participants rated each Component.

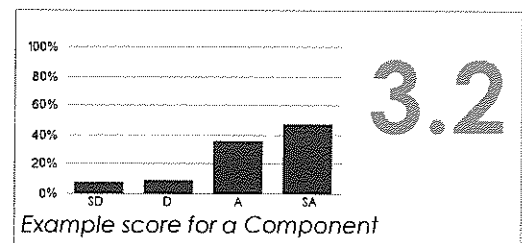
### Summary of results

The results from this exercise are presented in this document in three forms:

- a chart showing the distribution of each rating for each Component
- an average score for each Component
- comments on each Component.

Overall, the scores show general agreement across all Components.

- **Lowest** summary score: **3.1**
- **Median** score: **3.6**
- **Highest** summary score: **3.8**



The comments for each item are shown with the venue each comment came from: ACC Eastview, Fulmore Middle School, St. David's Episcopal Church, or Anderson High School.

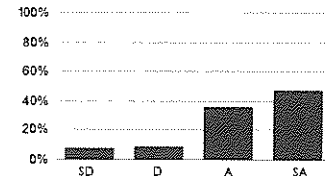
# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they **Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

## The Austin We Love is Livable:

L1

A variety of urban, suburban, and semi-rural lifestyle choices and settings are available to residents.

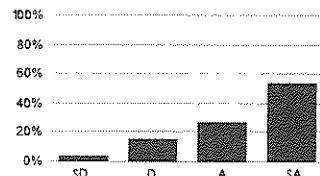


3.2

- ACC All should have components of affordability.
- ACC Affordability and diversity, especially within core. Neighborhoods must be meaningfully involved for growth and density.
- ACC None or very few of these components exist in Central East Austin, especially in the African American Heritage District. Why not now?
- ACC I feel there should be more of an effort to ensure racial and cultural diversity. Increase the African American population rather than the current steady decrease.
- ACC Austin should make more efforts to become more environmentally and economically sustainable. Equally important Austin should make diligent efforts to offer more events every day and month to attract more African Americans at all income levels
- Fulmore This development pattern will be unsustainable covers too much area
- Fulmore Need to make sure the "suburban" choice is livable as well!

L2

We are a community of safe, well-maintained, and stable neighborhoods whose character and history have been preserved.



3.3

- Anderson Affordable housing is not possible. While the capitalist mode of production exists, justice and class war NOT lifestyle
- ACC Development around main transit routes needs to increase to a minimal threshold of 9,000 people/acre to support quality bus service. 13,000 square mile is ideal.
- ACC Better facilities for our companion animals make Austin "No Kill"
- ACC More pet friendly parks and trails. Let's have "community cats" Parks!
- ACC Protecting and expanding green space is important to quality as core becomes denser this must be a mandatory element of any development
- ACC Could we have free health care instead?
- Anderson Maintain older neighborhood character
- Anderson While preserving most precious elements of today we need to accommodate for improved transit, sustainable growth, and affordability
- Anderson The city needs to preserve the character and history of neighborhoods now. Make them well maintained now.
- Anderson Existing neighborhoods should be allowed to grow and evolve while still protecting their character.

CL/ST

# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they **Strongly Disagree (1)**, **Somewhat Disagree (2)**, **Somewhat Agree (3)**, or **Strongly Agree (4)**:

## The Austin We Love is Livable:

L2

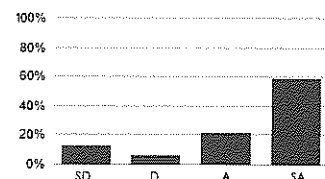
We are a community of safe, well-maintained, and stable neighborhoods whose character and history have been preserved.

(comments continued)

Anderson	Beautiful
Fulmore	The character and history of our "stable neighborhoods" is not being preserved
Anderson	"Safe" is relative this term should not be used because it suggests/ leads people to believe a diverse mixed community is not safe
ACC	Why does the East 12th street corridor look the same for 20 years from I-35 to Comal?
St Davids	Character & History is code for NIMBY (+1)

L3

Neighborhoods across the city are economically mixed and diverse with a range of affordable housing options.

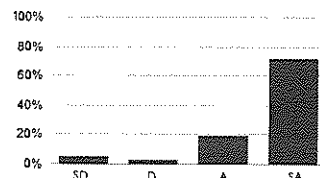


3.3

St Davids	Define "affordable housing" - Refine Plan for affordable housing in Austin - If development regulations are so restrictive that housing gets more expensive defeating the purpose and goal.
St Davids	Diversity will decrease (arrow down) and poverty will be concentrated in pockets if we don't increase (arrow up) affordability in ALL parts of town
Fulmore	No mention of the Cost of Growth & affect on "affordability"
St Davids	Plan must discourage economic segregation
Fulmore	Neighborhoods will need to incorporate a more diverse mix of housing types to achieve diversity
St Davids	Suggest "affordable Living" (includes utilities & transportation) Instead of "affordable housing" (agree)

L4

Downtown Austin offers a vibrant, day and night time urban lifestyle for residents, workers, and visitors.



3.6

Fulmore	Insert affordable for it's time to provide basic public access amenities - like restrooms - for visitors downtown. When Palm (square symbol), an emergency social services buildings, lock out restrooms - you know there is a problem.
Fulmore	I agree w/L4 if you add the word "safe" - like Ft Worth is
Fulmore	Let's be a model livable city, vibrant and self sufficient, and beautiful net zero - transportation - food - energy

CX/88

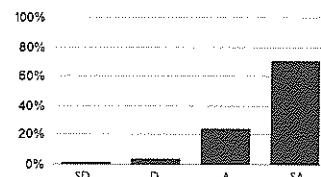
# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they **Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

## The Austin We Love is Livable:

L5

Residents have access to quality schools, parks and recreation, health and human services, and other outstanding public facilities and services.



3.6

ACC

Austin should have equal quality access to all.

St Davids

Families are leaving the city and will continue to leave without housing affordability and better schools.

Anderson

"Residents" need to include youth and services geared toward (e.g. sports facilities)

Anderson

Make transit plazas with shade, play areas, pocket parks, trails, drinking water fountains so people can wait for the bus or train in a pleasant area. Bus stops should have full shade and full protection from the elements, not what we have now. most families shouldn't need to have a car.

Fulmore

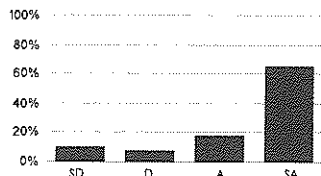
Concern over schools in urban Austin. Currently it is difficult to attract families which skews demographics to non-families

Anderson

Residents know the city is making decisions for them in 2010

L6

Development occurs in connected and walkable patterns supporting transit and urban lifestyles, while reducing sprawl and negative impacts on neighborhoods.



3.4

St Davids

Density will allow affordability and promote public transit

Fulmore

Make sure your transportation is affordable for all

Fulmore

Strongly agree with need to create walkable neighborhoods and all - but efforts need to ensure that they're AFFORDABLE to Everyone!

Fulmore

Implementation of real transit will be absolutely needed to accomplish this (years, money, & political will)

Fulmore

If "connected and walkable" is to be achieved, a much more substantial and longterm investment in multi-modal will have to be undertaken by city, regional, and state government and planning efforts

Anderson

Austin continually gives lip service to alternative modes, but never really acts just postponing to the future. Rail, bike, ped. Need more aggressive push now

Fulmore

Public Transportation is lacking in practicality and overall usability

Fulmore

Drop the RAIL - waste of \$'s

St Davids

Encourage growth eastward (D.D.Z) Embrace new urbanist development patterns

ACC

Reducing sprawl while reducing negative impacts to neighborhoods do not sound compatible.

Fulmore

No indication of how legally "sprawl" is going to be "reduced"

Anderson

Austin is not Houston

CL/gp

# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they  
**Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

## The Austin We Love is Livable:

L6

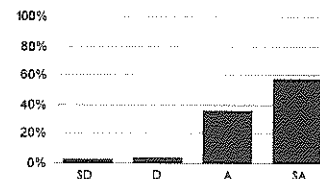
Development occurs in connected and walkable patterns supporting transit and urban lifestyles, while reducing sprawl and negative impacts on neighborhoods.

(comments continued)

- Anderson** We need to have 'mixed use' communities with commercial uses, stores, shopping, community services, etc. INTEGRATED into our residential areas. BOTH not one or the other.
- Anderson** Providing "certainty" for residents is important ie. Don't increase density in older neighborhoods
- ACC** Development should also protect the integrity of existing neighbors and transit should be mindful of space and the neighborhood of which they are moving into.
- Fulmore** When will we address urban sprawl?
- St Davids** Walkable neighborhoods come about when there are neighborhood services (small businesses) w/in walking distance

L7

Austin's population is active and healthy, with access to locally-grown, nourishing foods, and affordable healthcare.

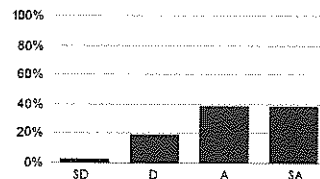


3.5

- St Davids** Yes to L-7 as long as "affordable health care" is not at the expense of healthy livable neighborhoods or excuse for "hospital sprawl"!
- St Davids** How will Austin control the cost of Healthcare?
- Anderson** need more incentives for businesses to stock locally grown healthy food. Need to preserve/add farmland out east to provide that food.
- Fulmore** As the age of oil ends, local food will become a necessity

L8

Development meets standards for quality and aesthetics providing certainty for residents and the real estate community.



3.1

- Fulmore** Development standards include inclusion on-each-site affordable housing units for workers in these developments so the people who provide basic maintenance & support services don't have to come from other neighborhoods to work at the site
- Fulmore** Parks and greenspace
- Anderson** Mixed uses in older neighborhoods will help strengthen walkability and livability
- Anderson** Who decides aesthetics?
- St Davids** Last question includes two issues - There is no certainty for development in Austin. Causes increase in development costs.
- St Davids** Enough with design standards for Aesthetics
- Fulmore** No more ugly, boring, look-alike high-rises!



CL/90

# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they  
**Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

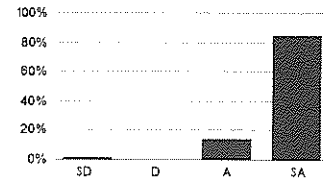
## The Austin We Love is Prosperous:

General comments:

**Fulmore** All "Pie in the Sky" get to the Details of how these good things can be accomplished

P1

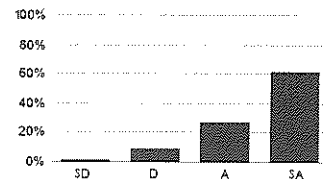
The economy is diverse and includes large and small businesses, educational institutions, state and city government, and other major employers.



3.8

P2

Austin is a leader in "green" jobs, technology, research, and innovation.



3.5

**Anderson**

Our green initiatives cannot burden our businesses economically

**Fulmore**

There are lots of low-tech green jobs that should be located in every neighborhood - not dumped on cheap dirt on the eastside. Each neighborhood should have recycle centers, scrub clubs, compost centers, gardens, pocket parks, etc. that employ people from that area who did not or could not get higher ed training for high tech jobs.

**St Davids**

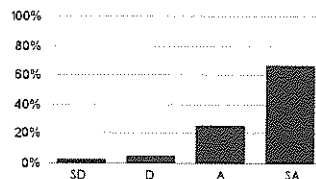
Moving to green energy will be expensive initially.

**Fulmore**

Losing that status - WORK HARDER - on this

P3

Our ecology is integrated with our economy – the preservation of the environment and natural resources contributes to the prosperity of our people.



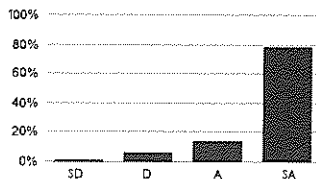
3.6

**ACC**

Encourage urban co-op/subscription neighborhood farms and local neighborhood "farmer's markets" economic development/ sustainable environment

P4

Equitable opportunities are provided to all through access to quality education and good jobs.



3.7

**ACC**

Development is a sign of land and activities demanded by people and goods/services; more development in general represents a healthy economy refer to Dr. Ed Gleaser for more. Harvard University, MA

**Fulmore**

Quality education is not affordable & is leaving too many young people - especially minority youth - without access to good jobs.

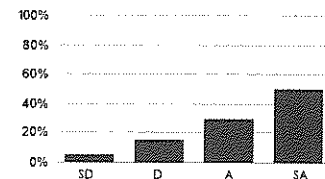
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9/1

# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they **Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

## The Austin We Love is Prosperous:

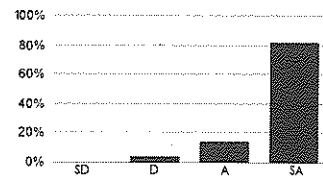
**P5** Development strengthens our economy, tax base, and quality of life.



3.2

- Fulmore** Taxation issue - far too aggressive currently. 20 years from now is unthinkable!! For the 50 year olds and older - too much to sustain home ownership.
- Anderson** It is well documented that small business money stays in circulation longer in community. Start giving tax breaks, incentives to small businesses. Particularly in new developing areas. Lessen or desist tax incentives for large and big box business they take and don't give. define development? Yes for people, no for reckless in-fill and horrific sprawl.
- ACC** Austin has many problems attracting outside dollars (basic vs. non-basic). To remain a competitive region, we need more basic level jobs (import revenue from other regions)
- Fulmore** Be sure Austin retains all economic classes
- Fulmore** Development efforts need to start taking into consideration the costs of infrastructure (water, transit, green space) seriously & substantially. Currently, this is not true so something will need to change to get there in 2039.
- Fulmore** Ditto --- Gotta keep an eye on "development"

**P6** Our community of local entrepreneurs and small businesses thrives.



3.8

- ACC** COA "Live music Capital..." should support the local scene not encumber it. Lower fees for entertainment venues, electricity/utilities, etc.
- Fulmore** Not enough emphasis on supporting & growing our local business
- Fulmore** Losing that status - WORK HARDER - on this

CL/1/12

# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they **Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

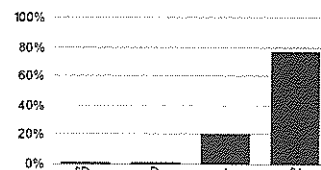
## The Austin We Love is Natural and Sustainable:

General comments:

**ACC** Keep development human scale/tree canopy scale. No Manhattan or Brooklyn.

### N1

Waterways, tree cover, habitat areas, and other precious natural resources are celebrated and vigorously protected.

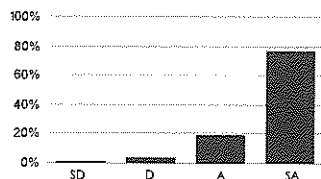


### 3.7

- Fulmore** Protection is a responsibility of developers not just taxpayers
- St Davids** Define vigorously to what extent will resources, trees, etc. be protected?
- Anderson** We must protect our natural environment, without it Austin is just any other city and not the Austin we know.
- Anderson** We are not protecting our trees, natural resources well today. We need open space planning now
- Anderson** Can't do this very well when excessive variances and excessive RSMP use is used
- Fulmore** Except Montopolis

### N2

Air and water quality in Austin and the larger region is improved. We conserve water and rely on native plants and landscaping to support our ecosystem.

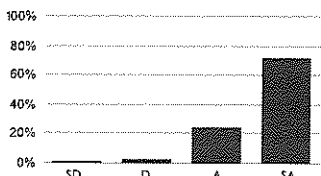


### 3.7

- Fulmore** Except Montopolis
- St Davids** N2's first sentence is good. 2nd sentence gets into the "how" & does not belong in a vision statement.
- Anderson** Include conservation requirement in all new construction. Would that be the part not devastated by developers? Humans! Every business owner, property owner and individual can be educated, encouraged and rewarded for gains in conservation.

### N3

The scenic beauty of the Hill Country is preserved for the benefit of future generations.



### 3.7

- Anderson** Include conservation requirement in all new construction. Would that be the part not devastated by developers? Humans! Every business owner, property owner and individual can be educated, encouraged and rewarded for gains in conservation.
- Fulmore** Scenic beauty of the rich farmlands on the eastside should also be preserved for future generations & for urban farming so critical to local fresh foods

# Components of a Vision Statement Results

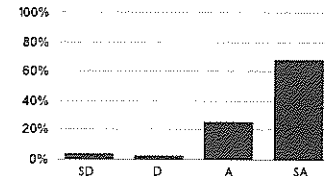
For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they  
**Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4)**

C1  
a3

## The Austin We Love is Natural and Sustainable:

N4

Austin is a model of conservation, efficiency, and carbon footprint reduction. Our water, utility, and energy systems rely on renewable resources.

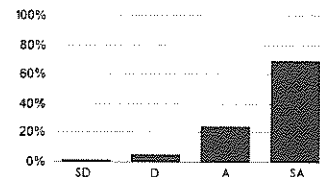


3.6

- Anderson** Include conservation requirement in all new construction. Would that be the part not devastated by developers? Humans! Every business owner, property owner and individual can be educated, encouraged and rewarded for gains in conservation.
- Fulmore** Scenic beauty of the rich farmlands on the eastside should also be preserved for future generations & for urban farming so critical to local fresh foods
- Fulmore** At what price? Energy conservation & utility infrastructure is very expensive for low-income communities. Utility bills drive housing expenses.
- St Davids** N4 should concentrate more on quantifying efficiency and environmental quality
- Anderson** Embrace the architecture 2030 challenge, carbon free buildings or net zero energy building

N5

The network of parks, greenways, stream corridors and other protected open space resources is greatly expanded.



3.6

- Fulmore** Except Montopolis
- St Davids** N2's first sentence is good. 2nd sentence gets into the "how" & does not belong in a vision statement.
- Anderson** Include conservation requirement in all new construction. Would that be the part not devastated by developers? Humans! Every business owner, property owner and individual can be educated, encouraged and rewarded for gains in conservation.
- Fulmore** Scenic beauty of the rich farmlands on the eastside should also be preserved for future generations & for urban farming so critical to local fresh foods
- Fulmore** At what price? Energy conservation & utility infrastructure is very expensive for low-income communities. Utility bills drive housing expenses.
- St Davids** N4 should concentrate more on quantifying efficiency and environmental quality
- Anderson** Embrace the architecture 2030 challenge, carbon free buildings or net zero energy building
- ACC** Keep Austin most pet-friendly city in the US. More dog parks
- Fulmore** For Austin to be "natural and sustainable" significant financial investment in air, water and parkland preservation will need to be made starting in 2010 for this vision to become reality

CL 94

# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they **Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

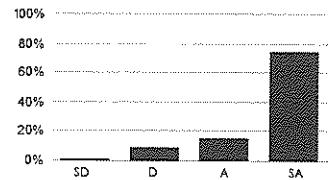
## The Austin We Love is Natural and Sustainable:

**N5** The network of parks, greenways, stream corridors and other protected open space resources is greatly expanded.

(comments continued)

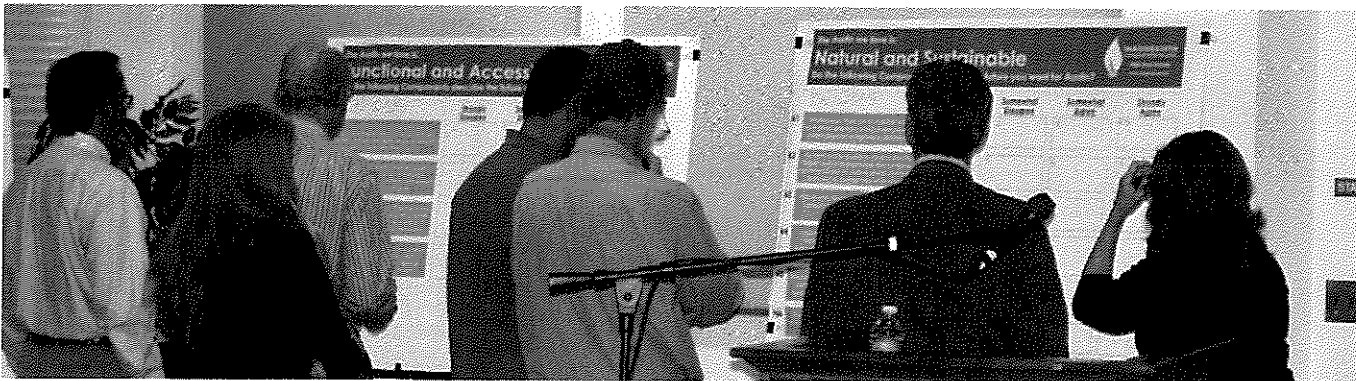
- Fulmore** Strongly, STRONGLY agree! Town Lake trail is too crowded! Need more options across the city!!
- Fulmore** Protect our water, trees, aquifer and other natural resources
- ACC** We are on the verge of EPA non-attainment and need to enact more GHG-reducing measures; same can be said for reducing water usage. Get rid of green lawns not native to Central Texas climate.
- Fulmore** It's not possible to expand people and expand nature
- Fulmore** With correct planning increased population can be accomodated without compromising Nature.
- Fulmore** We were saying similar things in 1975 in the Goals Assembly. We have been working on these BUT the obstacles to achieving these should be examined first -

**N6** Growth and infrastructure systems are well-managed to respect the limitations of our natural resources.



3.6

- St Davids** N6 hints at attempting to limit density, which would be foolhardy.
- St Davids** N6 We need to be careful how you commit growth and infrastructure. Too much limitation will stall the city.



Participants at St. David's Episcopal Church

C1/95

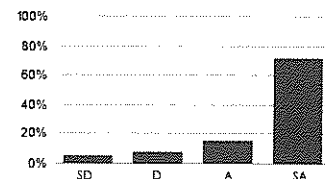
# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they  
**Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

## The Austin We Love is Functional and Accessible:

F1

The entire city is accessible by a functional and efficient road network, public transit, and safe and convenient bike and pedestrian routes.



3.6

- Anderson Personal rapid transit to carry more people in the city center
- ACC Better public transportation and higher standards for bike safety
- ACC Alternative transportation options (e.g. biking) needs to be planned.
- Anderson Buses, grid-like routes running every 15 minutes. See NYC subways move more often
- ACC Efficient mass transit options are imperative to growth and density. Infrastructure (e.g. utilities) improvements must be planned to sustain growth and density.
- Anderson Mass public transportation, affordable and accessible must be a priority. Rebuilding of roadways needs to express continuity and accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists. Same for new roads.
- Anderson Ped spending in our city is pathetic. Sidewalks are sad or non-existent. Peds should have priority over cars in central city.
- Fulmore Need more emphasis on ped/bike as viable transportation options!
- Fulmore Emphasis should be on rail not more roadways - this will pull development to transit corridors and not sprawl growth!!!
- Fulmore My mother went to City Hall from the day she arrived here in 1981, petitioning for sidewalks in neighborhoods so people could safely walk in the streets. Very little has been done . . . 30 years later. Let's not wait another 30 years.
- ACC It shouldn't take someone three hours to get to a destination that could only take 20 minutes by car
- Anderson Transportation nodes within 12 miles of each other. Unique to each host community across the city. Bury utility for new road.
- Anderson We need to think of transit/transportation and zoning/landuse as one in the same without doing BOTH together not much will really change
- Fulmore Public export must be affordable if you want poor people to give up their gas guzzlers. For folks who live paycheck to paycheck at low wages coughing up \$60 for a monthly transit pass is not doable. \$6 per day to ride the rail versus \$15 for the whole week isn't much of a choice!
- Fulmore Public transit needs to be made more accessible. The rail is a good idea, but having it only run on weekday commuter hours is Impractical.
- Fulmore Except Montopolis
- Fulmore Substantial monetary investment and political will over time (at least 10 years) will be needed to make this a reality, even if we plan it.

C/gle

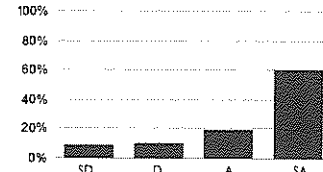
# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they **Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

## The Austin We Love is Functional and Accessible:

F2

Congestion is reduced and air quality improved through an enhanced roadway network and more convenient transportation choices.

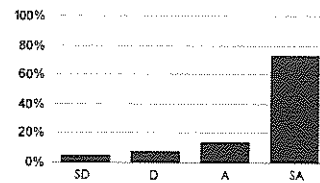


3.3

- Fulmore** Public transit needs to be made more accessible. The rail is a good idea, but having it only run on weekday commuter hours is impractical.
- Fulmore** Except Montopolis
- Fulmore** Substantial monetary investment and political will over time (at least 10 years) will be needed to make this a reality, even if we plan it.
- Anderson** Roadway network is already maxed out. Build more roads and you get more cars. Bike transit needs to improve dramatically.
- Fulmore** Forget rail it's way too expensive Fix our bus system
- Fulmore** There will be a need to reduce vehicles in central city
- ACC** Rebuild MOPAC and I-35 to reduce congestion and air quality. Prime BRT corridors.
- ACC** The highways must be re-evaluated to reduce congestion, improve air quality and accessibility
- Fulmore** Should be emphasis on transit, bike and ped. Transportation over roadway expansion.
- Fulmore** Road network improvements is important piece of transportation network - but NOT at cost of other coices for tranist & ped/lake.
- St Davids** "Enhanced roadway network" implies more roadway capacity - vision should not specify the "how" F1 has similar problems.

F3

Austin is a city that works. Reliable transportation, utilities, education and health, and human services are accessible to persons of all backgrounds and abilities.



3.6

- Fulmore** Except Montopolis
- Fulmore** Substantial monetary investment and political will over time (at least 10 years) will be needed to make this a reality, even if we plan it.
- Fulmore** Add Nodes to provide these services to extent possible at neighborhood level
- ACC** When reviewing public transit systems in existing smaller urban neighborhoods, please take into consideration the proximity to single-family homes and space available on existing roadways.
- ACC** Austin is not dense enough to support minimal bus transit coverage to very many neighborhoods. 3000 people/sq mile for 30 minute headways
- ACC** Repair and maintenance of existing road, utility, and sewer infrastructure. Priority given to "existing" over-planned of future infrastructure.

C/1/97

# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they **Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

## The Austin We Love is Functional and Accessible:

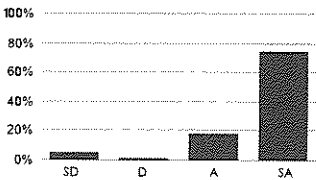
F3

Austin is a city that works. Reliable transportation, utilities, education and health, and human services are accessible to persons of all backgrounds and abilities.  
*(comments continued)*

- St Davids 72% of all daily household vehicular trips in the US are for errands & entertainment
- Fulmore Add incomes to the backgrounds & abilities
- Fulmore please comment on network of comprehensive services

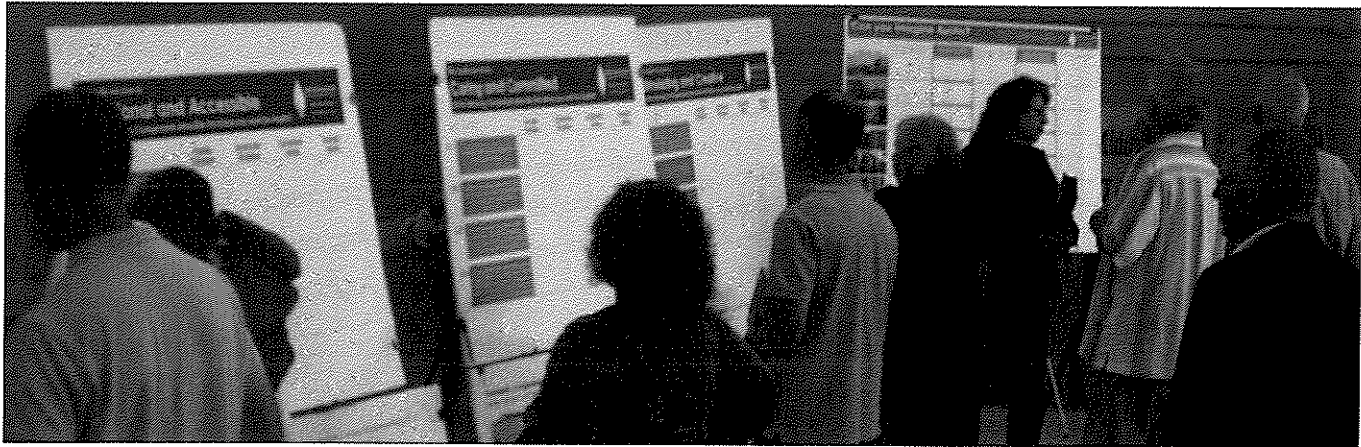
F4

Austin is a user-friendly city with excellent schools, support for families, and opportunities for recreation, lifelong learning, and volunteer activities.



3.6

- Fulmore please comment on network of comprehensive services
- St Davids The city has spread out, How will we get people from the suburbs to the new transportation choices? Just deadends?
- St Davids User-Friendly?
- St Davids Again gets into the "how"
- Fulmore Let's have a transparent government



Participants at Fulmore



c1/q8

# Components of a Vision Statement Results

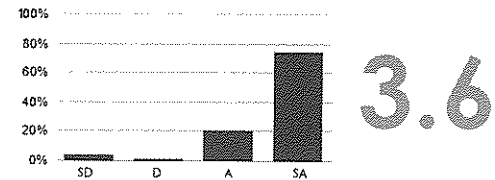
For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they **Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

## The Austin We Love is Caring and Committed:

General comments:

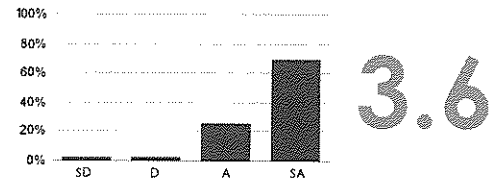
**Anderson** These are not very distinct from one another.  
**Fulmore** Read the Austin Tomorrow plan - These things have ALREADY been said

**C1** Our diverse communities thrive and enrich each other.



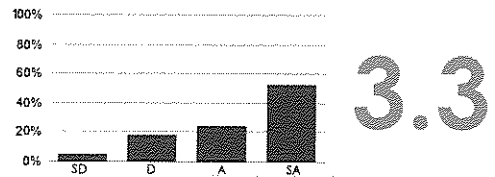
**Fulmore** Except Montopolis

**C2** All citizens are valued, respected, and welcomed to become engaged and have a stake in the future of their community.



**Fulmore** Add strive for diversity on city boards and commissions  
**ACC** This should be true no matter what! This should be the institutionalized practice that begins now!  
**Fulmore** Citizens should also include young people  
**Anderson** Access to decision makers and glut of bureaucracy is problematic now. How will this change before -by 2039.  
**Fulmore** We need a transparent government that really listens to us

**C3** We acknowledge and seek to rectify past injustices to African-Americans, Hispanics, and others who had been left out of full participation in our community.



**Fulmore** Except Montopolis.  
**ACC** more accessibility for minorities and lower income families to have input, especially on East side.  
**ACC** Injustice would be better served if we stopped thinking in terms of race  
**ACC** Don't make policy decisions based on race  
**ACC** By understanding the past and learning from mistakes, we can prevent these many injustices from happening again and make Austin "THE number one city to live in" for all! We are all part of Austin and should all be represented equally. Too much to say and so little space...  
**ACC** Focus on moving forward not trying to rectify past  
**St Davids** Big difference between acknowledging and rectifying past injustices. What does rectify actually mean in this case?

C1/09

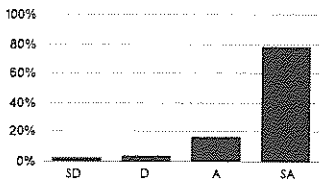
# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they **Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

## The Austin We Love is Caring and Committed:

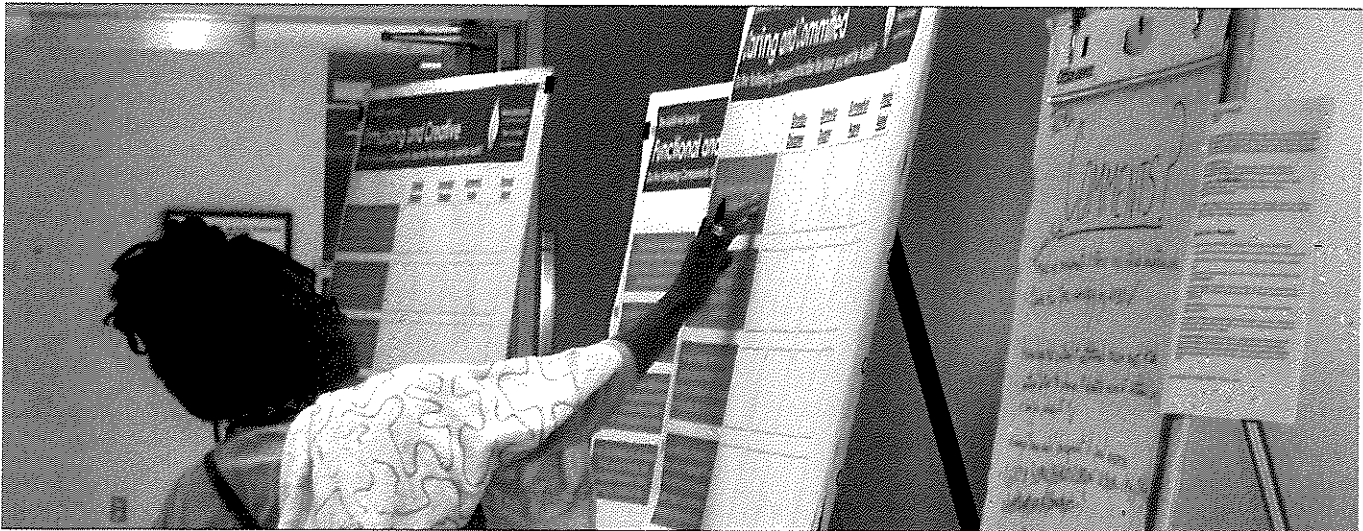
C4

We are a diverse city of passionate, committed, creative, and independent thinkers. Welcoming the expression of opposing ideas in a respectful and civil manner, we move forward by finding common solutions.



3.7

- ACC Sometimes "finding common solutions" gets too difficult. At times, a few very vocal "no-sayers" can stop progress.
- ACC This is definitely a best practice in order to see ALL common goals are met
- Fulmore Regarding IN 2039 we need to be careful not to let this go to our heads. Can't become self-righteous regarding this.



Participant at ACC

C1/100

# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they **Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

## The Austin We Love is Stimulating and Creative:

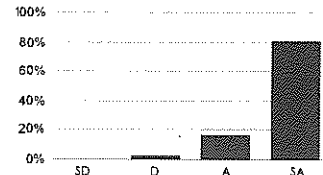
General comments:

**St Davids** Schools will not be successful if poverty is concentrated.

S1

Our unique "vibe" continues – Austin remains fertile territory for our creative class of musicians, artists, and innovators in technology, education, and the environment.

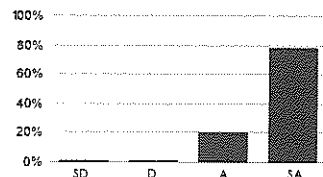
**Fulmore** Instead of "fertile territory" "focuses on continued development of opportunities" for ...



3.8

S2

The city is a world-class leader in innovation and creative thought.



3.8

S3

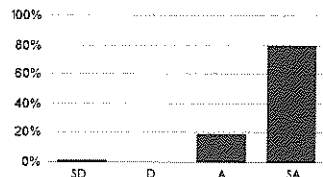
Partnerships with schools, colleges, and other educational institutions engage our youth and provide opportunity for lifelong learning.

**Fulmore** Engage our youth "in developing continued opportunities for creative class ..."

**Fulmore** "life long" learning and "partnership" with UT

**Fulmore** Lions Municipal Golf Course is an excellent example - Golf is a good "lifelong" recreation - Tell President Powers to partner with City to keep MUNI

**Fulmore** Change youth to "whole community" add at end "from the cradle to the grave"



3.8

S4

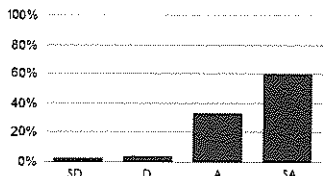
Our population of artists and musicians of modest means is supported. Austin remains a great place for the arts, live music, and original culture.

**Anderson** What does "supported" mean? Do the rest of the citizens pay for the musicians?

**Anderson** The city does not support, nor protect, nor provide economic incentive the creative class now. So it is hard to respond to options of more of the same.

**ACC** Compromise must be made so we don't lose the existing art when things are developed.

**Fulmore** This can be achieved only if housing in Austin stays (+ inc. reas) affordable. "creative" people are not necessarily rich, white and middle class.



3.5

CY/101

# Components of a Vision Statement Results

For each of the following statement, participants rated whether they  
**Strongly Disagree (1), Somewhat Disagree (2), Somewhat Agree (3), or Strongly Agree (4):**

## The Austin We Love is Stimulating and Creative:

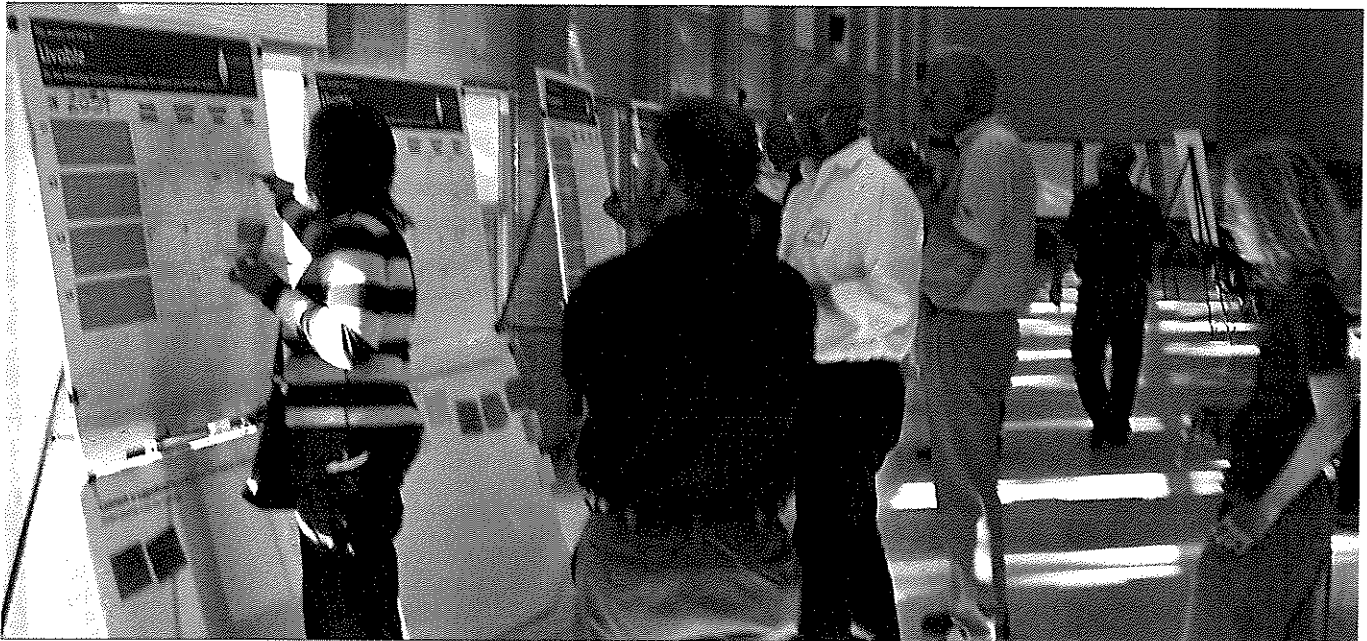
S4

Our population of artists and musicians of modest means is supported.  
Austin remains a great place for the arts, live music, and original  
culture.

*(comments continued)*

<b>Fulmore</b>	insert "is diverse" and of modest means. Add at end and original cul- tures of all ethnicities that are appreciated & protected. IE . . Victory Grill, Tejano Music Legends Trail . . .
<b>St Davids</b>	Please define the word "supported"

Questions or comments? Contact Greg Claxton: [gregory.claxton@ci.austin.tx.us](mailto:gregory.claxton@ci.austin.tx.us) or 974-7630.



*Participants at Anderson*

# Imagine Austin Vision Statement

Draft 7/15/2010

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.



IMAGINE  
AUSTIN

*Plan Your Future!*

C1  
102

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. 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 patterns supporting transit and urban lifestyles, while reducing sprawl and negative impacts on neighborhoods.
- Downtown and other urban neighborhoods offer a vibrant, day and night time urban lifestyle for residents, workers, and visitors.
- Austin's unique character and local businesses are recognized as a vital part of our community.
- Clear 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 Hill Country and blackland prairie, and value our farmland that nurtures local food production.

C1  
103

- 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 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 and good jobs.

C/104

## **Austin Values and Respects its People:**

Austin is its people. Our city is home to engaged, 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.

- People across all parts of the city live in safe, stable neighborhoods with a variety of affordable and accessible homes, healthy food, economic opportunity, healthcare, education, and transportation.
- 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, public art and 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.

C/105



**DRAFT**

C/106

## **An Education, Children, and Families Element for the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan**

Austin Planning Commission  
Comprehensive Planning Subcommittee  
July 19, 2010

Sustainable, vibrant cities plan for residents across the life cycle and maintain a mix of family types in the urban core. In April 2009 the Austin City Council committed to becoming “the most family-friendly city in the country” and to incorporating “the perspectives of families with children in all current and future planning initiatives, including the ongoing Comprehensive Plan” [Resolution No. 20090423-053]. From 1970 to 2007, the total share of families with children living in Central Austin declined from 38.2 percent to 25.5 percent. Austin needs to adopt a proactive approach to reverse this decline and to create a family-friendly city: one that offers safe, affordable housing designed for families; affordable, quality child care; parks and playspaces within walking distance; pedestrian and bicycle pathways; safe neighborhoods; and excellent public schools.

The Austin Planning Commission voted to recommend that the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan expand its elements to ensure thorough consideration of the educational and other needs of families with children. To help guide Austin in reaching its family-friendly goals, every element of the Comprehensive Plan should address the needs of families with children in a substantial manner. In addition, the Planning Commission recommends including an “Education” element in recognition of the important relationship between the City of Austin and area school districts.

### **Education**

Austin’s future depends on the quality of its public schools—from its ability to attract new employers to the burden high dropout rates place on its justice and social welfare systems. Participants in Phase I of the Comprehensive Plan identified education as a key concern. Although the City of Austin does not play a direct role with regard to curriculum or school personnel, the city’s land use planning can and does impact student success. Redevelopment, for example, can displace families with children, which may contribute to the high student mobility rates within some Austin-area schools. Research conducted by UT Assistant Professor Jennifer Holme and others has demonstrated the negative effect that student mobility has on academic success and district-wide graduation rates.

The city, county, and AISD have undertaken several initiatives to address the issue of student mobility and to craft better collaborative strategies for evaluating land use changes. The Comprehensive Plan should suggest other means of facilitating collaborative planning among these entities and the seven other school districts that fall within the city limits. Austin’s City Charter recognizes the importance of collaborative planning between the Austin Independent School District and the City of Austin when it identifies the president of the board of trustees of the Austin Independent School District as an *ex officio* member [Article X: § 2]. However, as suggested by the 2009 joint resolutions of Travis County, the City of Austin, and the Austin Independent School District, much opportunity still exists to strengthen the collaborative planning between these entities.

School district officials should collaborate with city planners on the physical location and layout for school facilities. Goals could include locating new campuses outside of environmentally sensitive areas of the city; reducing driving and increasing opportunities for safe biking or walking to school; mitigating

CX/107

inconveniences to residents near schools; and maximizing opportunities for sharing parks, playgrounds, and other resources.

Likewise, Austin has the opportunity to use its public facilities, including schools, for a broader range of community purposes. Many cities in the United States realize public benefits in sharing facilities with school districts; examples range from parks, libraries, and gymnasiums to school buildings that house health clinics or other community services. Austin's schools host many community activities and events, and the J. J. Pickle Elementary School/St. John Community Center was undertaken as a joint-use venture. Still, better planning could lead to more consistent joint-use opportunities for both new schools and existing school campuses. Collaborative planning would allow better leveraging of resources and would benefit both the schools and the city. Similarly, the City of Austin should work together with AISD, Travis County and other school districts as appropriate to coordinate capital improvement projects

The Families and Children Task Force Final Report offers a blueprint for some of the important considerations that should be included within the education element of the Imagine Austin Plan. Some specific questions related to education might include the following:

How can the city continue to support the model of neighborhood schools? What mechanisms exist that promote collaborative planning? What best practices from other cities could be used in Austin? How can the city work with area school districts to use schools and other public facilities more efficiently? When redevelopment will impact a school in negative ways, how can the city mitigate those impacts? If school enrollment drops in desired development areas, should the city collaborate with the school district to reverse that trend – and if so, how? How can the city collaborate on planning solutions that might mitigate over-enrollment at district campuses? How can the city and school districts develop policies and practices to support joint-use facilities and to share public amenities?

### **Families with Children**

Cities designed to meet the needs of children tend to work well for users of all ages. But family-friendly design does not happen without conscious and careful planning. The final report of the City Council's Families and Children Task Force highlights best practices and outlines some important recommendations in the areas of child care; housing; planning; education; parks, recreational spaces, and cultural amenities; and transportation. This report, along with subsequent materials prepared by Family Friendly Austin [an informal successor group to the Council-created task force], could provide a helpful basis for ways to integrate family-friendly concerns into the Imagine Austin Plan.

Additional questions that the Imagine Austin Plan might consider could include: How can neighborhood design better support families with children? What design choices make developments appealing to families? How can the city encourage private developers to design projects that will attract families with children? How might public-private partnerships help expand resources such as parks, public spaces, and cultural amenities? How can the city expand its inventory of parks and playspaces to include more innovative and diverse offerings? How can children and youth be incorporated into city design processes? Should the city explore the use of public improvement districts and impact fees to support parks, schools, and other community resources? Would code changes encourage development of more high quality affordable child care facilities within the urban core? How else could the city encourage developers to designate space for child care? How else might the city support the retention and expansion of high quality affordable child care programs? How can our streets be made safer for pedestrians and bicyclists, including those with children?