

## Imagine Austin Priority Program No. 4 Green Infrastructure

Austin City Council Comprehensive Planning  
and Transportation Committee  
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Mike Personett  
Assistant Director, Watershed Protection  
&  
Program Manager for the Imagine Austin  
Green Infrastructure Priority Program Implementation Team (GIPPIT)

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## Council CPT Committee Briefing

- Definitions
- Benefits of green infrastructure
- GI Priority Program Implementation Team (GIPPIT)
  - ❖ Formation
  - ❖ Sub-Teams
- Example of "alignment" of purpose and resources



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## Priority Program No. 4 Green Infrastructure

Use green infrastructure to protect environmentally sensitive areas and *integrate nature into the city*.

### Definitions:

**Green Infrastructure** is strategically planned and managed networks of natural lands, parks, working landscapes, other open spaces, and green stormwater controls that conserve and enhance ecosystems and provide associated benefits to human populations. *Imagine Austin, Appendix A, p 19*

**Green Stormwater Infrastructure** are engineered systems that control the quantity and/or quality of stormwater runoff using landscape features that mimic natural processes.

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## Benefits of Green Infrastructure

**Ecosystem Services – the benefits of nature to households, communities, and economies:**

- ❖ Hazard mitigation (e.g., flooding, wildfire)
- ❖ Water supply and water quality protection
- ❖ Erosion and sediment control
- ❖ Air pollution prevention and control
- ❖ Local and global climate regulation
- ❖ Wildlife habitat
- ❖ Food and renewable non-food products
- ❖ Social and cultural benefits (e.g., passive/active recreation)



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## Formation of the GI Priority Program Implementation Team

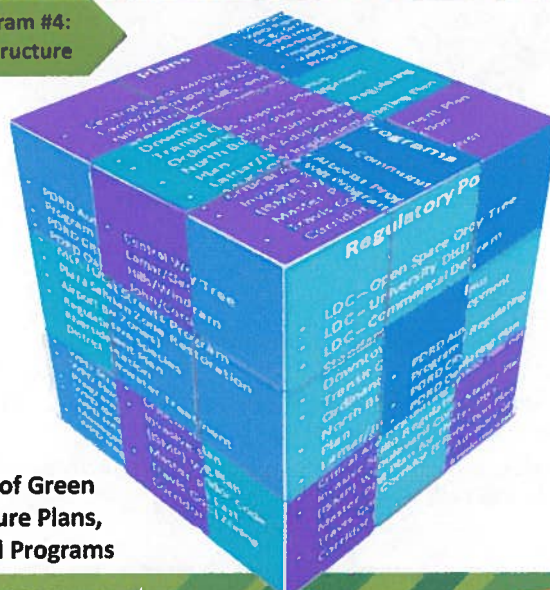


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## Priority Program #4: Green Infrastructure



**Inventory of Green  
Infrastructure Plans,  
Policies, and Programs**

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## Identify and Prioritize Needs and Gaps

### Process:

- Review IACP policies, actions, and work program tasks
- Compile preliminary inventory of existing City plans, policies, and programs
- Inventory available GIS data layers for City-owned/managed property
- Analyze to identify needs, gaps, and priorities
- Form sub-teams and develop work plans

### Conclusions:

- The City is already doing much of what is called for in IACP
- Implementation of IACP requires closer “alignment” of existing plans, policies, and programs; as well as new initiatives
- Highest priorities are:
  - Improve inter-departmental collaboration on land acquisition and disposition
  - Support Priority Program No. 8 – Land Development Code revisions (CodeNEXT)
  - Improve inter-departmental collaboration to improve management public lands

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### Priority Program #4: Green Infrastructure

#### Goal

**Manage Austin's urban and natural ecosystems  
in a coordinated and sustainable manner**

#### Key Objectives

- Continue public investment in green infrastructure
- Incentivize and/or require private investment in green infrastructure
- Maximize ecosystem function and services provided by green infrastructure on city-owned lands
- Improve inter-departmental collaboration and coordination in the management of city-owned lands

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**Priority Program #4:  
Green Infrastructure**

**Inventory of Green Infrastructure Plans, Policies, and Programs**

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**Priority Program #4:  
Green Infrastructure**

**Implementation Team Organization**

**GIPPIT**

- Sustainability Office
- Austin Fire Department
- Austin Energy
- Austin Resource Recovery
- Austin Water Utility
- PARD
- PORD
- Public Works
- Real Estate Services
- Watershed Protection

**Green Infrastructure Acquisition**

- Strategic vision/plan
- Collaboration/partnering
- Assist SFGT

**Green Infrastructure Regulatory Policy**

- CodeNEXT LDC revisions
- Criteria manual revisions

**Public Lands Management**

- Lands classification system
- Urban Forestry Management Plan implementation
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan implementation
- Riparian Zone Restoration
- Invasive Species Management Plan implementation
- Integrated Pest Management

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## GI Acquisition Sub-Team

### Mission:

- In collaboration with the Strategic Facilities Governance Team (SFGT) develop a strategic vision for green infrastructure (i.e., land, open space) acquisition and disposition by City departments. The strategic vision will in criteria that will serve as policy direction to establish green infrastructure goals for land acquisition and management for various public purposes including recreation, watershed protection, connectivity, and equitable distribution of services to the citizens of Austin.

### Guidelines:

- In developing a strategic vision for green infrastructure acquisition, the sub-team will consider:
  - Public purpose of existing and potential new assets
  - Critical gaps in the green infrastructure network;
  - High-growth areas;
  - Plans, priorities, needed easements and city facilities of various departments;
  - Plans and priorities of other entities (e.g., governmental, private and not-for-profit) that are investing in green infrastructure throughout the Central Texas region;
  - Leveraging inter-departmental resources opportunities to make land acquisition more financially feasible; and
  - Enhancement of property values, community culture, and public health.
- The sub-team will serve as an advisory body to the SFGT and will provide support and assistance with considerations of land purchases at the request of the SFGT or at the request of a department.
- Every effort will be made to protect sensitive information relating to potential real property acquisition to the extent allowed by State law and City policy.

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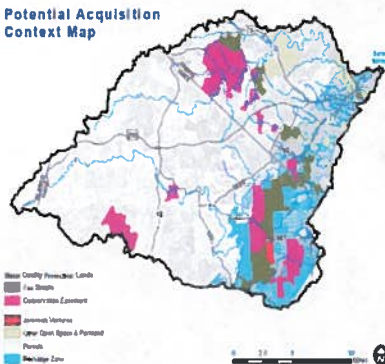
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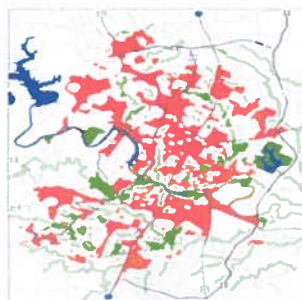
## GI Acquisition

### Water Quality Protection Lands

Potential Acquisition  
Context Map



### Areas Deficient in Parkland



### Legend

- City of Austin Parks
- Potential Creek Greenways
- Deficient Areas

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## GI Regulatory Team (GIRT)

### Mission:

Establish a collaborative inter-departmental process to ensure that City of Austin ordinances, regulations, policies and procedures embody the "integrate nature into the City" vision of Imagine Austin.

### Goals:

- Evaluate the effectiveness, costs, benefits, and limitations of current regulatory policies relating to green infrastructure
- Identify and evaluate new or alternative approaches to require and/or incentivize green infrastructure in public and private development
- Provide expert input into the Land Development Code revision process with regard to those elements of current policy to retain, modify, eliminate, or supplement with new approaches
- Provide expert input into the revision of the green infrastructure elements of various Criteria Manuals (e.g., Drainage, Environmental, Transportation)

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## GI Regulatory Topics

- Agriculture
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas
- Green Streets
- Landscape
- Parks
- Stormwater
- Trails
- Urban Forest
- Waterways
- Air Quality



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## Public Lands Management Sub-Team

### Mission:

Develop and implement unified, comprehensive management of all City of Austin lands for public access and recreation, connectivity, and integrated environmental sustainability, including carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, water quality and quantity, and education.

### Goals:

- Maximize ecosystem services on lands managed by the City of Austin:
  - Align COA land management policies, plans, procedures, and standards
  - Share resources and expertise to improve efficiency and effectiveness of public lands management
  - Target limited COA resources to achieve multiple objectives (e.g., wildfire fuel mitigation, ecosystem restoration)
  - Improve land management with more consistent and meaningful performance metrics, better data, and application of sound science to support decision-making
  - Discontinue non-sustainable land management practices that damage or diminish ecosystem services
- Reduce risk associated with natural hazards (e.g., wildfire, erosion, flooding) through broad application of various prevention and ecosystem restoration strategies and techniques

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## Priorities

- Land Classification System
- Austin's Public Urban Forest Plan
  - Austin-specific Standards of Care
  - Departmental Operating Plans
- Invasive Species Management Plan
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan
- Integrated Pest Management Plan
- City of Austin Land Management Programs and Activities Inventory



Central Texas  
**Invasive Plants**



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## Green Streets Working Group

### Mission:

Develop the Green Street elements of the recently adopted Complete Streets Policy.

### Definition:

Green Street incorporates landscape, stormwater controls, and sustainability elements to improve ecological and human health.

### Goals:

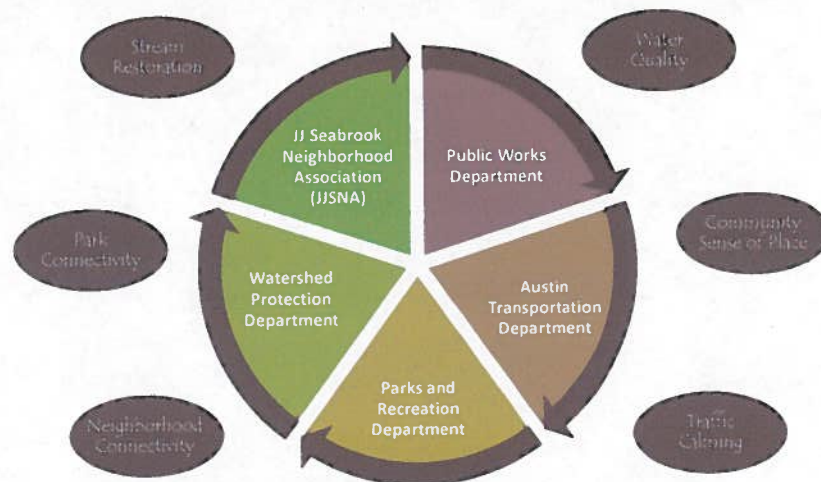
- Define Green Streets principles and elements
- Develop Green Streets performance measures
- Evaluate current code and criteria to identify impediments and potential improvements
- Develop implementation guidelines

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## J.J. Seabrook Stream Restoration, Rain Garden, and Urban Trail Project



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## QUESTIONS

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