Planning Commission and City of Austin Planning Staff CodeNEXT Coordination List

By: Stephen Oliver | City of Austin Planning Commission Chair

Summary: Many of the items below have been discussed in some form or fashion with staff during the last year of the code rewrite. While it may difficult to check many of these boxes below in the short amount of time before the release of the draft, it is important that each is discussed with respect to commission opinion but most importantly with respect to impact on current, upcoming and future commission and staff efforts. It is critical that commission and staff understand and work to anticipate outcomes of the CodeNEXT draft rollout.

- Executive Summary or Outline of anticipated areas of change within the code with illustrating connection to or alignment.
    - Imagine Austin adopted policies
    - Code Diagnosis strategies
    - Prescription Paper recommendations
    - Other policies or goals of adopted plans of the City of Austin (i.e. transit, housing, etc.)

Response: Staff is working to generate a summary of Code improvements to be achieved through CodeNEXT. As this is not a planning process, there will be a set of documents that create a link to the above documents and how those inform the text draft and mapping strategies of CodeNEXT.

> The connection of policy through analysis and public process to the new code is necessary to avoid confusion, distrust, delays. Connectivity of Code to Policy reinforces the validity of the process and that the code changes are focused on positive outcomes for Austin cemented within our Comprehensive Plan.

- Small case studies of implementation of rezoning, remapping process.

Response: When the code draft is released at the end of January 2017, it will be accompanied by several illustrative examples of what the rezoning (or mapping) will look like on specific places around Austin. These examples will revisit the areas studied at SoundCHECK and will depict a distribution of form-based and used-based districts demonstrating how the interface of said districts can occur in various situations.

- Provide Metrics (where available) utilized for code rewrite that informed new or revised requirements illustrating alignment of code with our goals and policies as stated in Imagine Austin and other adopted plans.

Response: Working with the consultants, Staff will rely on economic data and analysis to test the validity of various development patterns and building types for efficacy as they relate to Imagine Austin and other council policy. Additional information will be provided when it becomes available.

- Demonstration that resources are available to staff for successful adoption of code and mapping as well subsequent planning.

Response: Planning and Zoning staff is working with several City departments, including the Law Department to ensure the new Code will be supported through the adoption process. Planning and Zoning personnel as well as Development Services support staff will be providing assistance to create draft versions of the map. Planning efforts beyond the current planning areas that are underway will resume after CodeNEXT has been adopted.

- What is the work plan for reviewing the Draft Code with respect to the schedule of the Planning Commission? Can zoning cases be reorganized/postponed? How many special meetings will be needed?

Response: PC and ZAP have agreed to meet monthly through October 2017 to discuss and eventually action on the new draft Code. These meetings will began in December of 2017 and additional meetings may be called by either land use commission as necessary. Currently, special-called meetings once per month is devoted solely to CodeNEXT and when available, a 5th Tuesday combined meeting with the ZAP.

- Flow chart of how mapping of all areas within city limits will be accomplished and how this relates to existing Neighborhood Plans, Conditional Overlays, Restrictive Covenants and other area/property specific requirements. Will Neighborhood Planning, Corridor Plans, Small Area Plans, in order to further "context based decisions", continue immediately after the mapping of CodeNEXT?

Response: Staff is working on a detailed mapping methodology that will be shared with the Land Use Commissions once mapping begins. The process will detail how Neighborhood Plans (FLUMS), and COs inform the mapping process. This is expected to be discussed with the Commissions shortly after draft Code is released and prior to map roll-out in April 2017.

- Will Existing Technical Criteria Manuals be maintained, revised (if so when), removed and replaced (if so when)? What impact does this have on the new code when adopted? Are there inherent conflicts and confusion that a new code combined with old Criteria Manuals will foster?

Response: Existing Criteria Manuals (CM) will remain as is through the adoption of CodeNEXT. Updates to CMs is beyond the scope of CodeNEXT and will need to be

accomplished after adoption and prior to the effective date of the new code. Staff anticipates that there will be some areas where there is no alignment of code and CM, however, with the new code, staff anticipates many administrative improvements to the code that may make CM revisions more manageable. In addition, its anticipated changes to some of the CM will occur prior to the effective date of the Code that is anticipated to be on 2018.

- How do "Context Based Decisions" (as consistently stated in the Prescription Papers) inherent to the successful rezoning of the city relate to the need for a "planning" process in addition to a "mapping" process? When and how do "context based decisions" occur in a city-wide approach mapping effort? Is it possible that mapping is really a first pass at fixing long overdue zoning issues with current policies and actually there will be additional attempt(s) necessary after the code has been in place for some duration? Currently many planning commissioners have an expectation that after mapping, rezonings should be at a minimum. However if mapping doesn't tackle planning issues then these expectations may be difficult to meet.

Response: As described above, the mapping process will be informed by multiple policy documents approved by Council, which include but not limited to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan, neighborhood plans and other small area plans   Context-sensitive recommendations will be based on an analysis of said policy. As CodeNEXT is not a planning exercise, there is no direction from council to deviate from adopted policy and therefore, the CodeNEXT mapping seeks to implement council policy. There will be the need to continue to modify the map and zones after the code is adopted and informed via a small area plan process. What we are building as a community are the tools to effectively address zoning and map changes in the future.

- How does the 5-year review and analysis of Imagine Austin relate to the CodeNEXT process from process and content standpoint? If it is a distraction or taxing when the code adoption and remapping are most critical for resources and time, might be beneficial to get place the 5 year update agenda in 2017 rather than 2016?

Response: The 5-year update of Imagine Austin will continue as scheduled and eventually inform the text and map improvements once Council enacts them as policy direction. As discussed in December, it is anticipated the 5-year update of Imagine Austin will not conflict with the Planning Commission's current CodeNEXT schedule.

- Does the mapping process identify areas that are opportunities for change in alignment with policy goals? Have we worked with the stakeholders prior to mapping to prepare the community as the expected levels of change and why such changes are necessary for increased opportunity to reach our larger community goals? The expected level of change or desired level of change is a conversation that the Code Diagnosis stated as a critical step. Since this

planning effort with the community has not occurred prior to the draft, how do we handle this critical issue during and after the code and mapping adoption?

Response: The draft map will not identify areas of change and deviation from council policy as there is currently no direction from current Council to do otherwise. The map will implement council policy as described above.