

CodeNEXT Priority
Environment: Natural + Resilient
Improvements to the Code Draft 2
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Improvements Include:

- **Open Space is defined in CodeNEXT.** Although there are open space requirements in the current code, there is no one definition of what open space is. We see the words open space on plats and site plans and it is not clear what that means and what that space is for. Is it open to the public; is it for drainage; is it for wildlife; is it for trails? In 23-2M-1030 General Terms and Phrases, 3 types of open space are defined. Civic Open Space, Common Open Space and Personal Open Space to create a general understanding of what is expected of these spaces.
- **Open Space percentages are increased for larger sites from 5% to up to 15% of site area.** The current code requires up to 5% personal open space or 5% common open space on site plans. CodeNEXT open space requirements vary by Zone but may include 5% personal open space, 5% common open space on site plans and adds an additional requirement for Civic Open Space for sites 4 acres and larger. The Civic Open Space can double as the common open space and is required to be 10% of the site.
- **Parkland dedication, as adopted in 2016, remains unchanged in CodeNEXT.** The parkland dedication policy can be found in 23-3-3B, General Planning Standards for All/ Parkland Dedication.
- **CodeNEXT provides guidelines for each type of open space** The current code's Subchapter E provides a menu of amenity types to choose from for common open space. That menu is the same in CodeNEXT and is applicable to all sites 2 acres and larger. CodeNEXT provides increased standards for Civic Open Space that require buildings to front the space and trails to connect them to provide for community gathering open areas. (23-4C-1040 and 23-4C-2030) It also provides a menu of civic open space types with minimum standards to ensure a wide range of planned open spaces throughout Austin. (23-4C-2050 – 23-4C-2160). The civic open space menu can also be used to design parkland to dedicate.
- **Revised land uses for recreation make it easier to locate small recreation types into more areas of the City.** In the current code, a multitude of different recreation land uses developed over the years, creating various conditions depending on whether the recreation is run by a public, a not-for-profit or a private entity. Most of these uses are only allowed by right in commercial areas in the current code. In CodeNEXT, all Recreation uses are delineated in four categories: Indoor; Outdoor Formal, Outdoor Informal, and Natural. The permissibility of the uses is found in each Zoning Type's Land Use Table in Article 23-4D. The intent in CodeNEXT is to allow Outdoor Informal (playscapes, nature play areas, trails, trailheads, single sport courts, community gardens, pavilions, and splash pads) in most zones.
- **New zones provide development standards for parks and preserved lands.** The current code has no zones solely dedicated to natural lands preservation and recreation. Parks and protection lands are located in Public (P) Zones or in a variety of other zones which apply those development standards and uses instead of ones especially for parks and preserve lands. CodeNEXT provides two new Zones Park (PR) Zone 23-4D-8110 and Conservation Lands (CL) Zone 23-4D-8070. The Zones are intended to provide Development standards and define allowable uses appropriate for the Zones.