

Zoning and Platting Commission, City of Austin, Budget Recommendations
FY 2022-2023

The Zoning and Platting Commission respectfully urges City Council Members to consider the following recommendations regarding the City of Austin FY 2022-2023 budget.

Housing and Planning Department:

- Ensure adequate staffing and resources in all City income-restricted housing programs to timely monitor compliance with income restricted housing requirements including the number of units provided, how quickly the units are filled, and whether health and safety maintenance is provided on a regular and sufficient basis.
- Provide more funding for partial down payment assistance which was listed as the greatest barrier to purchasing a home in the Neighborhood Housing Community Development's comprehensive analysis of impediments to housing to leverage limited dollars. The analysis was based on the participation of 6,000 low-income residents, 43% of the participants were of color.
- Provide recurring annual funding for anti-displacement programs to help prevent and mitigate involuntary displacement of low-income families, families of color, and small community-based businesses in Austin.
- Provide resources and staffing necessary to investigate application of neighborhood-based median family income standards in low income areas of the City to facilitate equitable access to scarce affordable housing resources.
- Provide adequate planning staff and resources to initiate and facilitate concurrent small area planning processes for:
 - Equitable Transit Oriented Development associated with Project Connect.
 - Displacement prevention and mitigation in project connect corridors, low-income neighborhoods, and communities of color in the Eastern Crescent.
 - Historic surveys of neighborhoods and community assets impacted by rapid redevelopment and displacement in the Eastern Crescent.

Development Services Department:

- Facilitate application reviews for increased transparency, faster review times, and cost savings.
- Ensure adequate staffing and resources to timely update Amanda and GIS with information on localized flooding and wildfire interface.
- Ensure staffing levels are adequate to meet ensure review times and facilitate code compliance.

Fire:

- Increase staffing for construction and environmental inspections to ensure that all public infrastructure is built according to approved requirements and to address the \$261,617 decrease in funding from the FY 2020-2021 budget.
- Provide funding to facilitate implementation of City wildfire prevention and preparedness programs, and Firewise programs.

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Code Enforcement:

- Ensure adequate staffing and resources to proactively monitor and enforce compliance with health and safety regulations by commercial residential developments that participate in City, state, and federal income-restricted housing, rental assistance, or home repair assistance programs in Austin. Investigate the possibility of federal funding for these resources.

Environment/Watershed:

- Ensure funding for all the Atlas Floodplain studies identified in the 2022 budget.
- Provide funding to facilitate implementation of the City's Water Forward Plan.
- Provide funding to facilitate implementation of the Austin Climate Equity Plan, Austin Climate Resilience Action Plan, and Austin Climate Preparedness Plan.

Citywide:

- Provide ongoing funding to allow the public to participate virtually in public meetings held by Council, boards, and commissions.
- Provide funding for a Livability Team to facilitate timely response to time-sensitive code complaints after regular business hours and on weekends and investigate the possibility of using Austin Police Department (APD) funds for the services previously provided by APD or the use of civilians for those functions.