



## PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION 20231024-31

Date: October 24, 2023

Subject: Request Council initiate amendments to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan and elements or portion thereof including the Climate Equity Plan and Austin Strategic Mobility Plan in reference to Telework policies.

Motioned By: Commissioner Connolly

Seconded By: Commissioner Woods

### **Recommendation:**

Request Council initiate amendments to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan and elements or portion thereof including the Climate Equity Plan and Austin Strategic Mobility Plan in reference to Telework policies.

Please see attached memorandum and proposed amendments.

### **Vote: 12-0**

For: Vice-Chair Hempel, Commissioners Anderson, Azhar, Barrera-Ramirez, Connolly, Cox, Haynes, Howard, Maxwell, Mushtaler, Phillips and Woods

Absent: Chair Shaw

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "AR", written over a horizontal line.

Andrew D. Rivera  
Land Use Commission Liaison

## **PLANNING COMMISSION**

### **MEMORANDUM**

#### **Request Council Initiate Amendments to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan and elements or portion thereof including the Climate Equity Plan and Austin Strategic Mobility Plan in regards to Telework Policies**

The Planning Commission recommends that the Austin City Council initiate the suggested changes to the comprehensive plan to ensure that the City of Austin is a leader for workplace, mobility, and environmental policies that implement the vision of Imagine Austin and advance the priorities it espouses. As the Planning Commission, we are tasked with the stewardship and oversight of the City's comprehensive plan. The development of Imagine Austin engaged thousands of Austin's residents, a wide array of stakeholders, consultants, and City employees through a robust process that included public meetings, online surveys, traveling teams, and more.

As elements of the Comprehensive Plan, the Austin Strategic Mobility and the Climate Equity Plans represent vital aspects of this larger vision, bringing us closer to complete, sustainable, and resilient communities. These plans outline clear modeshift goals for the City, along with goals for traffic demand management, reduction and elimination of free parking in city facilities, and compact and sustainable development.

We have identified a few key areas where goals in these plans require clarifying language to make clear the role of the City of Austin in the implementation and modeling of these policies. Furthermore, we have identified gaps where it would strengthen the plan to add clarifying language around the specific strategies required to implement these plans.

We therefore recommend the initiation of amendments to the comprehensive plan that will bolster and clarify the intent of the stated goals within these plans and advance our shared community priorities. Nothing less than the successful implementation of Imagine Austin is at stake. As one of the largest employers in Central Texas, the City of Austin will not successfully achieve the goals in its comprehensive plan, nor prompt the private sector and other public entities to meet these goals, if the City itself fails to model these policies.

Furthermore, the Planning Commission requests that while these changes to the comprehensive plan are being considered by the Austin City Council, changes in policy that might impact achieving these goals are paused or reconsidered to ensure that Austin is committed to providing leadership on the implementation of community mobility and climate equity goals.

Am.	Plan	Section & Goal	Pg #	Proposed Amendment	Recommended Change to Proposed Amendment
1	Climate Equity	Transportation and Land Use, Goal #1: "By 2030, 80% of new non-residential development is located within the city's Imagine Austin activity centers and corridors."	56-59	For "Strategy 4: Phase out free parking," under "How we'll get there" add the following bullets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ensure all city policies for reduced parking, remote-work, and telecommuting align with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, and establishes the City of Austin as a leader for workplace and environmental policies to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips.</b></li> <li>• <b>City of Austin should develop remote work policies through a collaborative, all-employee process to develop clear goals and measured outcomes as a means of reducing parking demand at city facilities. In developing the city policies, Austin should build on the successful Travis County telework policy.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure all city policies for reduced parking, remote-work, and telecommuting align with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, and establishes Austin as a leader for workplace and environmental policies to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips.</li> <li>- City of Austin should develop remote work policies through a collaborative, all-employee process to develop clear goals and measured outcomes as a means of reducing parking demand at city facilities. In developing the city policies, Austin should build on the successful Travis County telework policy.</li> </ul>
2	Climate Equity	Transportation and Land Use, Goal #3: "By 2030, 50% of trips in Austin are made using public transit, biking, walking, carpooling, or avoided altogether by working from home"	61-63	Add: <b>Strategy 7: Promote remote and flexible work policies</b> <b>Actively promote remote work, telework, and flexible commute policies so as to maintain and encourage further reductions in single occupancy vehicle trips.</b> How we'll get there: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ensure that all policies for telework, remote work, or mandatory commuting that impact City of Austin employees are in full alignment with the goal of reducing single occupancy vehicle trips in the region, and that any future changes to city policies contribute towards reaching the 50% mode-shift goal by 2030</b></li> <li>• <b>Whenever appropriate encourage City partners, consultants, contractors, and stakeholders who engage with the City to adopt remote work policies or flexible commute policies that support the 50% mode-shift goal</b></li> <li>• <b>Whenever possible, encourage private employers and local businesses to consider adopting remote work and telework policies</b></li> </ul>	
3	ASMP	Transportation Demand Management Programming "Indicators and Targets"	56-57	Beneath the Target/Indicator: "Increase the share of Austin residents who work at home instead of commuting to work. Achieve 15% of Austin residents who work at home by 2039 (7.9% of residents worked at home between 2013 and 2017)" Add Indicator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increase the share of City of Austin employees who work at home instead of commuting to work.</b></li> </ul> <b>Ensure that, whenever appropriate, all new City telework and remote work policies contribute towards the goal of achieving 15% Austin residents working from home by 2039</b>	
4	ASMP	Action Table, Transportation Demand Ma	284	Action Item #53 "Government employer TDM strategies" Text change: "Seek partnerships with various federal, state, and local government agencies and universities that are major employers within Austin to encourage employees to telework or to take public transportation and other modes to work and disincentivize employees to drive alone to work. <b>Prioritize the alignment of City of Austin workplace policies, including telework policies, to achieve these goals.</b> "	

**RESOLUTION NO. 20231109-029**

**WHEREAS**, on August 8, 2019, Council unanimously approved Resolution No. 20190808-078, declaring a climate emergency in the City and calling for an acceleration of the timeline for achieving the City's climate goals; and

**WHEREAS**, telework is a critical component in meeting the goals of the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP) and the Austin Climate Equity Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, telework significantly reduces the need for daily commuting, leading to a substantial decrease in carbon emissions from vehicles, thereby helping combat climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, the ASMP outlines clear transportation mode-shift goals for the City, along with goals for traffic demand management, reduction and elimination of free parking at City facilities, and promotes compact and sustainable development; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 11, 2019, Council approved Ordinance No. 20190411-033, adopting amendments to the ASMP as an amendment to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 30, 2021, City Council approved the adoption of the Austin Climate Equity Plan, which sets a new community-wide goal of equitably reaching net-zero community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2040, including a goal that by 2030, 50 percent of trips in Austin be made using public transit, biking, walking, carpooling, or avoided altogether by working from home; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission has expressed interest in providing recommendations on this matter and has not had an opportunity to have amendments considered by Council; and

**WHEREAS**, on October 24, 2023, the Planning Commission approved an action, making recommendations to Council to initiate amendments to the Climate Equity Plan and the ASMP related to the City's telework policies; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

Council affirms the City's role as a leader and model employer in achieving our long-term goals and that our comprehensive plans should reflect that role.

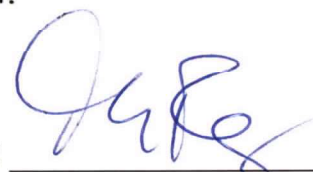
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

Council initiates amendments to the Climate Equity Plan and to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive plan and elements or portions thereof, including the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, as recommended by the Planning Commission on October 24, 2023, in the attached **Exhibit "A."**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

Council directs the City Manager to draft the amendments based on the proposed recommendations and submit the draft amendments for review to any applicable boards or commissions as needed, including the Joint Sustainability Committee and Planning Commission, with draft amendments to be returned for Council consideration no later than February 15, 2024.

**ADOPTED:** November 9, 2023 **ATTEST:**



Myrna Rios  
City Clerk



## **PLANNING COMMISSION**

### **MEMORANDUM**

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We therefore recommend the initiation of amendments to the comprehensive plan that will bolster and clarify the intent of the stated goals within these plans and advance our shared community priorities. Nothing less than the successful implementation of Imagine Austin is at stake. As one of the largest employers in Central Texas, the City of Austin will not successfully achieve the goals in its comprehensive plan, nor prompt the private sector and other public entities to meet these goals, if the City itself fails to model these policies.

Furthermore, the Planning Commission requests that while these changes to the comprehensive plan are being considered by the Austin City Council, changes in policy that might impact achieving these goals are paused or reconsidered to ensure that Austin is committed to providing leadership on the implementation of community mobility and climate equity goals.

[illegible]

## Indicators and Targets



**Increase the understanding of transportation options (aside from a personal vehicle) and satisfaction of users to get around Austin (rideshare, bus/train, bike, walk, etc.), reported by socioeconomic demographic measures**



**Increase the share of City of Austin employees commuting by walking, bicycling, sharing rides, or taking transit**



**Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT)**

*Achieve a 20% reduction in VMT by 2039  
(32.351 million vehicle miles of travel (19.26 per capita) were estimated in 2019)*



**Increase the share of Austin residents who work at home instead of commuting to work**

*Achieve 15% of Austin residents who work at home by 2039  
(7.9% of residents worked at home between 2013 and 2017)*



**Increase the share of City of Austin employees who work at home instead of commuting to work**

*Ensure that, whenever appropriate, all new City telework and remote work policies contribute towards the goal of achieving 15% Austin residents working from home by 2039*



**Increase the share of Austin residents who carpool to work**

*Achieve 11% of Austin residents who carpool to work by 2039  
(10.8% of residents carpooled to work between 2013 and 2017)*



**Increase the share of work trips that are taken during off-peak hours**

*(51.6% of work trips leave home between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.)*



**Increase the number of people reached by transportation demand management programming**



## Transportation Demand Management Programming

Action Item	Description
<b>53</b> Government employer TDM strategies	Seek partnerships with various federal, state, and local government agencies and universities that are major employers within Austin to encourage employees to telework or to take public transportation and other modes to work and disincentivize employees to drive alone to work. <b>Prioritize the alignment of City of Austin workplace policies, including telework policies, to achieve these goals.</b>
<b>54</b> Regional TDM collaboration	Collaborate with CAMPO's regional TDM plan efforts to implement prioritized TDM strategies regionwide.
<b>55</b> Statewide TDM Policies	Support state-level legislative actions such as highway congestion management through TDM, statewide telework policies, TDM as a construction project requirement, etc.
<b>56</b> Congestion pricing	Implement congestion pricing in regional centers as a method of managing demand at peak travel times.
<b>57</b> Barriers to multimodal transportation	Work with partners to develop and promote discounted passes for carshare, bike-share, scooter-share, and public transit for low-income community members. Expand access to the internet and technology to enable equity in use of telecommuting, access to shared mobility services and ride hailing, etc.
<b>58</b> Targeted TDM education and programming	Develop targeted educational materials marketed to Austin's historically underrepresented and underserved communities. Target programs and tailored one-on-one education on transportation options to these communities.
<b>59</b> City employee commuter program	Continue to implement and strengthen the City of Austin's employee commute program. Provide incentives to employees to reduce their drive-alone trips. Provide multimodal options for mid-day trips to reduce the desire to bring a vehicle to work.
<b>60</b> Parking policies for City employees	Phase out the practice of providing free parking spaces to City of Austin employees working in transit-rich locations. Develop and implement a permanent parking cash-out program for City buildings in areas with managed parking.
<b>61</b> City telework, flexible schedule, and hoteling policy	Strengthen City of Austin policy to support teleworking and provide employees with the opportunity to use shared worksites close to where employees live (remote workstations known as hoteling). Provide employees with the technology to work remotely. Where flexible schedules are allowed, encourage employees to consider compressed work weeks and work schedules that avoid the morning and evening peak congested times.
<b>62</b> City facility colocation	Select City of Austin facilities and proactively develop City land assets in transit-rich locations with the goals of supporting multimodal commute options, consolidated City functions, and improved access for community members.

## Shared Mobility

Action Item	Description
<b>63</b> Shared mobility services using managed and tolled lanes	Seek regional recognition of registered private mass transit vanpool/shuttle operators to access regional tolled and managed lanes for free.
<b>64</b> Integrated transportation and payment platform	Pursue regional integrated multimodal transportation and payment platform, including a cell phone app and integrated payment method, with options for those without smartphones and the unbanked.
<b>65</b> Mobility hubs	Create family-friendly multimodal mobility hubs, including park-and-rides, adjacent to transit stops to offer a variety of first- and last-mile mobility options and a complete trip experience. Incorporate community-knowledge sharing, maintenance programming, and integrate civic space where strategic.

# Austin Strategic Mobility Plan



Adopted April 11, 2019

# 2024 ASMP Amendments

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN JOINT  
COMMITTEE

JANUARY 10, 2024

KELSEY VIZZARD, SENIOR PLANNER  
AUSTIN TRANSPORTATION  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

# Presentation Agenda

- **Purpose**
- **Timeline**
- **Amendments Proposed**
- **Q & A**

## Purpose | Why are we updating the ASMP?

- Council Resolution 20231109-029 initiated “amendments to the Climate Equity Plan and to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive plan and elements or portions thereof, including the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, as recommended by the Planning Commission on October 24, 2023”

AND

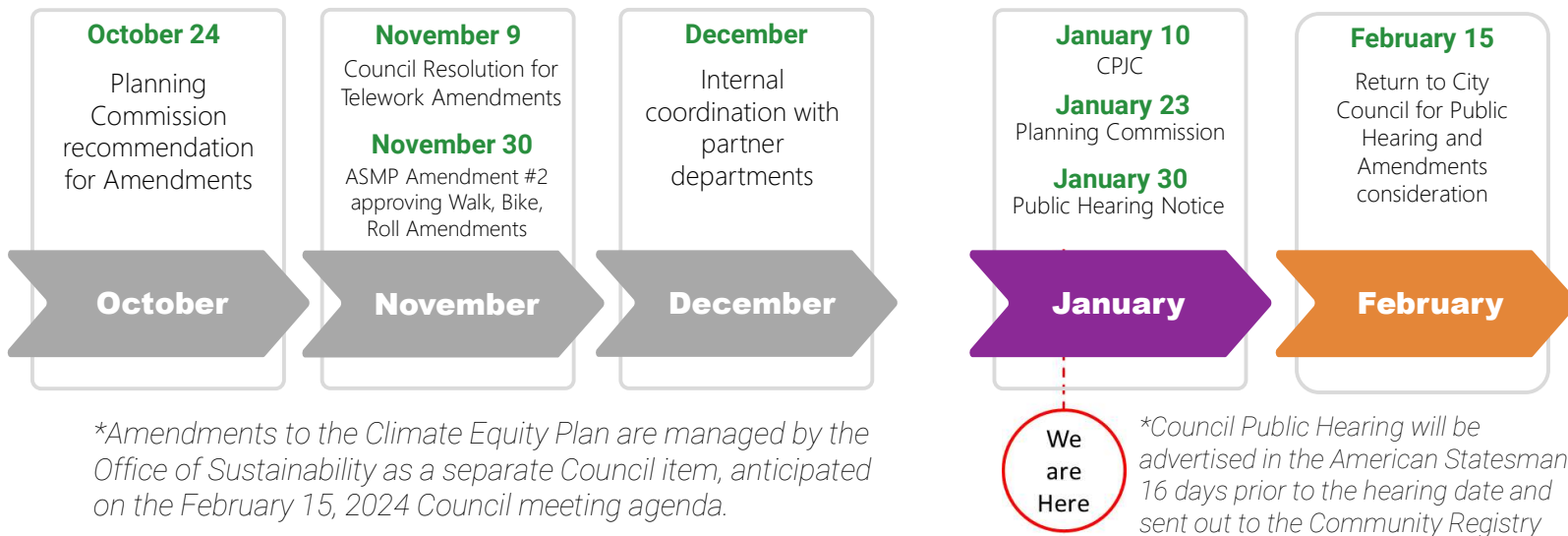
- directed the City Manager to “draft the amendments based on the proposed recommendations and submit the draft amendments for review to any applicable boards or commissions as needed, including the Joint Sustainability Committee and Planning Commission, with draft amendments to be returned for Council consideration no later than February 15, 2024”

As the ASMP is the transportation element of Imagine Austin, we wanted to brief CPJC on this process.

# Timeline

2023

2024





# ASMP Amendment #3: Telework

Planning Commission proposed the following updates (in red) to text within the ASMP policy document.

3	ASMP	Transportation Demand Management Programming "Indicators and Targets"	56-57	<p>Beneath the Target/Indicator:            "Increase the share of Austin residents who work at home instead of commuting to work.            Achieve 15% of Austin residents who work at home by 2039 (7.9% of residents worked at home between 2013 and 2017)"</p> <p>Add Indicator:  <i>· Increase the share of City of Austin employees who work at home instead of commuting to work.</i>  <i>Ensure that, whenever appropriate, all new City telework and remote work policies contribute towards the goal of achieving 15% Austin residents working from home by 2039</i></p>
4	ASMP	Action Table, Transportation Demand Ma	284	<p>Action Item #53 "Government employer TDM strategies"</p> <p>Text change: "Seek partnerships with various federal, state, and local government agencies and universities that are major employers within Austin to encourage employees to telework or to take public transportation and other modes to work and disincentivize employees to drive alone to work. <i>Prioritize the alignment of City of Austin workplace policies, including telework policies, to achieve these goals.</i>"</p>



City of Austin

34

### Transportation Demand Management Programming

## Shared Mobility

284

## Next Steps | Remaining Schedule

**Comprehensive Plan Joint Committee : January 10**

Planning Commission : *January 23*

Joint Sustainability Committee (Climate Equity Plan) : *Jan 24*

City Council Public Hearing : *February 15 (pending Council action)*

City Council Consideration : *February 15 (pending Council action)*

# Thank You!

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QUESTIONS?

PLEASE EMAIL US AT [ASMP@AUSTINTEXAS.GOV](mailto:ASMP@AUSTINTEXAS.GOV)