



## Land Development Code Revision

### draft Fact Sheet

#### **Project Overview & Opportunity**

A comprehensive revision of the City's Land Development Code is a landmark opportunity to fundamentally rethink Austin's development standards and review/approval process. The project strives to translate what is important to the lives of the people in Austin into a land development code that is understandable, predictable, fair, and helps achieve results consistent with Imagine Austin's vision.

#### **What is Imagine Austin?**

Imagine Austin is our plan for the future. The plan was fueled by ideas and contributions from the Austin community. This 30-year comprehensive plan adopted unanimously by the Austin City Council in 2012 lays out a vision for how the city should grow in a compact and connected way.

#### **Imagine Austin Priority Programs**

Imagine Austin identifies 8 priority programs to organize policies and actions into related groups to make it easier to implement the plan. Priority Program #8 calls for revising Austin's development regulations and processes to promote a compact and connected city, which speaks to the Land Development Code (LDC) Revision project.

#### **What is a Land Development Code?**

A Land Development Code is on-the-ground rules for how a city develops. Austin's current land development code is more than 800 pages and regulates new development, redevelopment, zoning, subdivisions, transportation and parking, outdoor signs, site plans, drainage, watershed protection, open space and more.

#### **Why are we revising Austin's land development code?**

The Land Development Code was last revised in 1984. It has been amended numerous times since then in a piecemeal fashion without an overall community vision. Imagine Austin provides guidance for how to revise the code, associated technical and criteria manuals, and administrative procedures. Austin's City Charter also requires land development regulations to be consistent with the City's comprehensive plan.

#### **Role of Citizens Advisory Group**

An Advisory Group of Austin residents is charged with public outreach and providing feedback on development and implementation of a revised code. The Land

Development Code Advisory Group meets monthly and may gather more or less frequently during future stages of the project. All meetings are open to the public.

### **Role of Consultant Team**

The Austin City Council hired Opticos Design to lead a multi-disciplinary consultant team to work with the Advisory Group and City staff throughout the process. Opticos will author the work products for this project.

### **Who approves the changes?**

Revisions of the Land Development Code require approval by the Planning Commission and City Council.

### **What we DON'T know**

- We do not know if every section of the code will be revised or left unchanged.
- We do not know yet how the code will balance competing interests.

### **What we DO know**

- We have the vision from Imagine Austin as the foundation.
- Revising the code will be a multi-year effort.
- Every aspect of the Land Development Code is on the table for discussion.

### **So far, we have heard a desire for...**

- A clear, predictable, user-friendly code to facilitate the kind of sustainable development called for in Imagine Austin.
- A new or revised code that is an effective tool for government, residents, developers, property owners, business people, and community members that is:
  - ✓ Easy to understand and use
  - ✓ More efficient with a shortened review period and process to resolve conflicts, resulting in less costly development
  - ✓ Consistent and fair in how it balances trade-offs (status quo vs. potential changes) resulting in better development

### **Project Schedule**

- Preparation: Informal outreach
- Current Stage: Formation of Advisory Group, Consultant team & Staff team
- Step 1: Listening, Education, and Issue Identification—2013
- Step 2: Diagnosis & Annotated Outline— 2013-14
- Step 3: Preliminary Draft Code approved—March 2015
- Step 4: Adoption Draft & Code Adoption—September 2015

### **How to get involved**

Sign up for project updates by e-mail and watch for upcoming input opportunities at:

[www.austintexas.gov/newLDC](http://www.austintexas.gov/newLDC)