

Compatibility Q&A Part II (August 18, 2014)

How do we craft regulations that are clear for people (not just professionals) to understand? I.e. using clear terms

The goal of CodeNEXT is to provide a Land Development Code that contains clear regulations that can be understood by anyone who reads it. The intent is to simplify the text and to use clear graphics and maps to illustrate key points.

What is our role as citizens? Who will be in the room when the decisions get made?

The Code revision is a multi-year effort and we are collecting feedback from the community on an ongoing basis. Everyone is welcome to participate, and anyone that chooses to participate in the process and events will have input in the process. Ultimately City Council will decide what is in the new Code.

Is the CodeNEXT team paying attention to contact teams?

Yes, we are working with all Neighborhood Plan Contact Teams. We have participated in several training sessions with contact teams and have worked with them in analyzing the existing neighborhood plans.

How we are going to transition from what we have now to the communities that are being proposed?

The Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan presented a vision of "complete communities" which provide access to employment, shopping, learning, open space, recreation, and other amenities and services. The plan also set forth a framework for how to achieve this vision over the next several decades, involving many different initiatives to guide implementation of the vision. CodeNEXT is one tool that can help realize the vision by providing a regulatory system that encourages the development of viable mixed-use communities in appropriate locations and also supports the other goals of Imagine Austin. For more details, see Chapter 4 of Imagine Austin at <http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Planning/ImagineAustin/webiacpreduced.pdf>

How do we keep the richness of services of a heterogeneous neighborhood when there are homogeneous development pressures at work?

A fundamental principal behind CodeNEXT is that development regulations should be tailored to the specific context they are trying to create. The objective is to achieve a balance between maintaining unique characteristics of an area and accommodating new growth at an appropriate scale. The CodeNEXT team has undertaken an extensive effort to identify different contexts through the "Community Character in a Box" exercise. For more information about how you can participate in this exercise, see <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/community-character>.

How do we help downtown neighborhoods grow with compatibility standards?

The code will implement the Council adopted Downtown Plan (2011), which contains a specific set of compatibility standards that apply to neighborhoods on the perimeter of Downtown. Click here to find more information regarding the [Downtown Plan](#) and its adopted standards.

How can compatibility foster flexibility process-wise?

Flexibility is a value that we have heard expressed by the community throughout the CodeNEXT process. The level of flexibility to be built into the code will be guided by upcoming decisions from City Council on the Code Approach Alternatives. Additional guidance will be provided through public involvement in the drafting of the new code once an overall direction has been selected.

Can there be an administrative variance without a full public hearing?

There are some provisions in the current Land Development Code that allow administrative waivers or variances in some situations. How variances are dealt with and when public hearings should be required will depend on the amount of flexibility in the adopted code, a topic that will be addressed more fully once drafting of the code begins.

Why should compatibility be based on the current land use?

Compatibility standards in the current Land Development Code are triggered by both single-family land uses and zoning; this is an aspect that remains to be examined in the process of developing regulations and standards.