



## Community Dialogue: 6909 Ryan Drive October 29, 2013

### Background Information

- Austin Energy owns the site at 6909 Ryan Drive at the northeast corner of Justin Lane and Ryan Drive, just west of the Airport Boulevard and North Lamar Boulevard intersection. The property is within the Lamar-Justin Transit-Oriented Development District and has a Transit-Oriented Development zoning designation.
- The site is currently used by Austin Energy for operations and storage; those uses would need to be relocated prior to another use occurring on the property. Austin Energy no longer needs to utilize this site for a substation and the future of the property has not been decided.
- Various City of Austin planning efforts have identified this land for potential redevelopment (see City Council resolution handout for more information). There is no plan or decision on whether the land will be re-purposed.
- If a decision is made to sell the property, Austin Energy—as a public utility— must be compensated at fair market value. In Austin, before land is sold to the private sector, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development is offered first right of refusal to purchase or lease for affordable housing.
- A Parks and Recreation gap analysis identified this area as lacking adequate parkland to meet the goal of providing parks within one-half mile of every household. The 2012 Bond Program approved by voters included minimal funding for park acquisition throughout the city. (See display map for the nearest parks and open spaces).
- *What is affordable?* Imagine Austin, the City's adopted comprehensive plan for the future, calls for increasing household affordability throughout Austin. Housing is considered “affordable” when a household is paying no more than 30 percent of annual income for housing. “Household affordability” encompasses the cost of housing, utilities, taxes and transportation.
- *What does compact and connected mean?* Imagine Austin calls for redevelopment rather than urban sprawl, which keeps costs low by using land and infrastructure already in place. This is critical to connecting residents of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to homes, jobs, schools and amenities with a more complete transportation system that is affordable to maintain.

### Excerpt from Austin City Council Resolution No. 20130117-054:

*“The City will benefit from having a full dialogue about this tract and its redevelopment potential.”*

Ideas and sentiments captured this evening will be compiled into a “Listening to the Community” report and shared with City Council, which is responsible for determining the future of this property.

# 6909 Ryan Drive

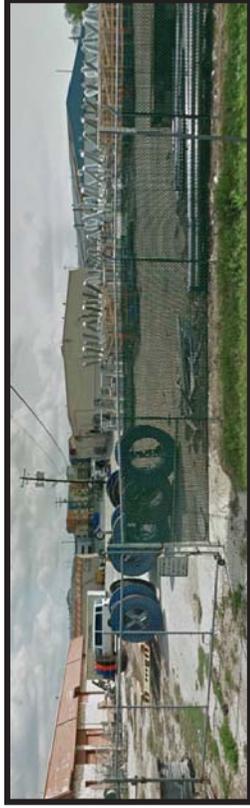
## Existing Site Conditions

The 6909 Ryan Road property is a 5.67 acre site located near the intersection of Lamar Boulevard and Airport Boulevard. It is currently owned by Austin Energy and has 4 primary uses; Relay Panel Testing, Reclamation, operations, Substation, and General Storage.

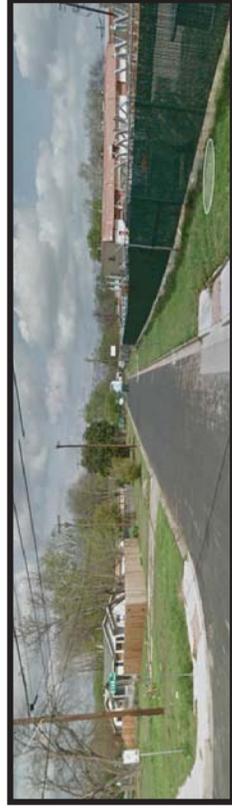
The property is also located adjacent to Crestview Station, which is served by the Capital Metro Rail line.



Entrance to Austin Energy facility at 6909 Ryan Drive.



View of existing overhead utilities on site.

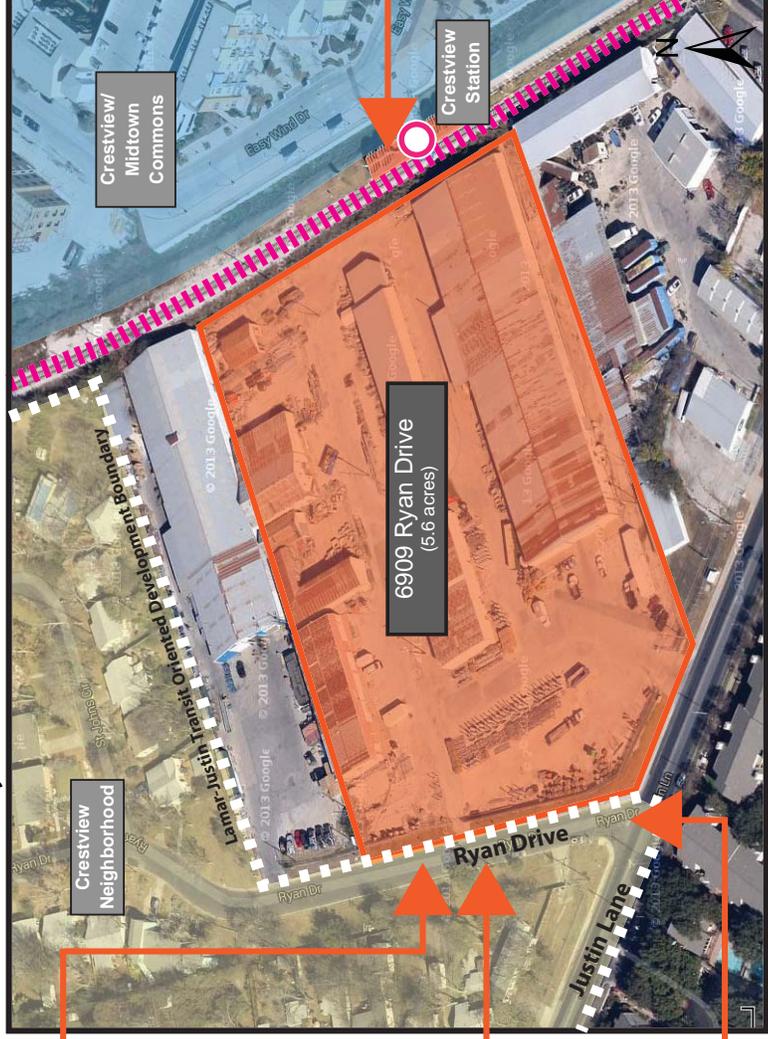


View of Ryan Drive from Justin Lane.



View of 6909 Ryan Drive from Crestview Station Capital Metro Rail stop.

### Site extents for 6909 Ryan Drive



**RESOLUTION NO. 20130117-054**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin owns an approximately 5.5-acre tract at 6909 Ryan Drive that previously served as a planned location for an Austin Energy substation; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin Energy no longer has need to utilize the tract as a location for a substation and instead now uses the tract for temporary outdoor storage; and

**WHEREAS**, 6909 Ryan Drive is located in the Crestview Neighborhood and within the Lamar Boulevard/Justin Lane Transit-Oriented Development (TOD); and

**WHEREAS**, representatives of the Crestview Neighborhood Association and the Brentwood Neighborhood Association have expressed a desire to use this parcel to fill a gap in parkland and open space; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin has adopted a goal of providing parks within a distance of one-quarter to one-half mile of every household, and the Parks and Recreation Department's gap analysis has identified this area as deficient in adequate parkland; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2005 Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) ordinance sets the goal that 25 percent of housing near each commuter rail station be affordable; and

**WHEREAS**, the Lamar Boulevard/Justin Lane TOD Regulating Plan identifies this tract as a potential site for a pocket park of a minimum of 0.5 acre; and

**WHEREAS**, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development's Action Plans from 2009 to the present have identified this parcel as a potential site for affordable housing; and

**WHEREAS**, the Families and Children Task Force recommended that the City create and assist in funding a pilot family-friendly development in one of the transit-oriented development districts and identified the North Lamar/Justin Lane parcel at 6909 Ryan Drive as an option; and

**WHEREAS**, cities such as Chicago and Urbana, Illinois, New York, New York, Issaquah, Washington, and Miami, Florida, have participated in model affordable housing/energy-efficient developments with family-friendly amenities; and

**WHEREAS**, financial resources may be available from state and federal sources to support transforming this tract into a pocket park and model family-friendly development; and

**WHEREAS**, the Watershed Protection Department has identified the Brentwood Neighborhood in the Shoal Creek Watershed as an area in need of flood control measures; and

**WHEREAS**, there is limited open space in the Shoal Creek Watershed on which to locate flood control solutions; and

**WHEREAS**, the Watershed Protection Department is performing an analysis to identify potential tracts of land in the Brentwood and Crestview Neighborhoods that could be used for building small-scale detention structures; and

**WHEREAS**, various City planning efforts have identified this tract for redevelopment for purposes, ranging from a pocket park to affordable, multi-family housing; and

**WHEREAS**, this tract offers the possibility of achieving several community- and Council-adopted goals related to affordable housing, urban park access, and sustainability; and

**WHEREAS**, the City will benefit from having a full dialogue about this tract and its redevelopment potential; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

The City Manager is directed to evaluate and outline issues associated with redeveloping the City-owned property located at 6909 Ryan Drive and report back to City Council by March 1, 2013 as follows:

The report should evaluate development scenarios for this tract, including:

- use of the entire site as a park; and
- use of the tract as a model energy-efficient, affordable, and family-friendly multi-family development and neighborhood pocket park.

The report should detail:

- AE's current uses of the site;
- sites to which those functions could be relocated;
- any environmental or other assessments that have been performed on the tract and their findings;

- potential city and private resources that could support such redevelopment; and
- structures and relationships for achieving the redevelopment scenarios.

The report should also identify and offer strategies for overcoming any potential hurdles.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is directed to conduct community outreach and provide significant opportunities for meaningful dialogue with and input from residents and business owners in adjacent neighborhoods and other stakeholders before moving forward with any long-term plans for this tract.

**ADOPTED:** January 17, 2013

**ATTEST:**   
Shirley A. Gentry  
City Clerk