



### Rationale for Ordinance

- Comprehensive Watershed Ordinance 1986
- Austin an early US leader in watershed protection
- Complex current code & criteria
- Better understanding of watershed management
- Unique challenges in eastern watersheds
- Some development patterns leading to property loss, unsustainable public & private expense
- Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan alignment

### Council Resolution

1. Creek Protection
2. Floodplain Protection
3. Development Patterns and Greenways
4. Improved Stormwater Controls
5. Mitigation Options
6. Simplify Regulations and Maintain Opportunity
7. Coordinate with Regional Partners

**Stakeholder Input**

### Anticipated Benefits

- Bring best of watershed science into code
- Improved stream buffers, especially in east
- Restoration of natural floodplain function
- Sustainable maintenance of waterways
- Complements trail & greenway system
- Mitigation system for activity centers
- Simpler buffer & site rules
- Majority of properties maintain existing development potential & increase flexibility

### Current Challenges

#### 1. Creek Protection

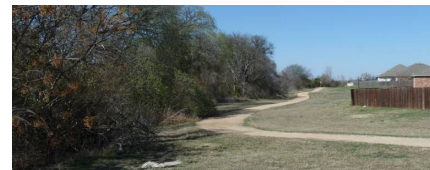
- Small, headwaters creeks are not currently protected in all parts of town.
- Small creeks are being straightened, narrowed, and channelized.
- Development & infrastructure is being placed too close to small creeks.



### Potential Strategies

#### 1. Creek Protection


- Extend creek buffers into headwaters areas citywide, not just in west.
- Establish buffer widths sufficient to cover Erosion Hazard Zones.
- Design for passive, affordable maintenance of channels.



**Current Challenges**

### 2. Floodplain Protection


- Historic land practices have cleared vegetation to water's edge, resulting in erosion & water quality problems.
- Floodplain reduction & alteration impair protective habitat & stormwater infiltration, and can increase downstream erosion and pollution.



**Potential Strategies**

### 2. Floodplain Protection

- Restrict floodplain modifications within creek setback areas.
- Not only preserve healthy waterways, but enable and encourage the recovery of degraded ones.



**Current Challenges**

### 3. Development Patterns and Greenways

- Erosion threatens to public & private property
- Loss of opportunities for greenway and trail connectivity.



**Potential Strategies**

### 3. Development Patterns and Greenways


- Facilitate sustainable, publicly accessible trails within creek setback areas.
- Encourage dedication and permanent protection of floodplain and riparian areas.



**Current Challenges**

### 4. Improved Stormwater Controls


- Many developments are using structural controls that are large, unattractive, single-purpose, and/or subsurface.
- Some sites can build extensive amounts of impervious cover without treatment.



**Potential Strategies**

### 4. Improved Stormwater Controls

- Provide incentives to use innovative water quality and flood controls.
- Improve ability to inspect, maintain subsurface controls.
- Require water quality controls based on square feet of impervious cover instead of a percentage.



**Current Challenges**

### 5. Mitigation Options (Desired Development Zone)

- No standard process for mitigating high-intensity developments.
- Current transfer of development rights system is seldom used and provides limited benefits.



**Potential Strategies**

### 5. Mitigation Options (Desired Development Zone)

- Make existing transfers of development intensity more attractive.
- Explore other US models that use mitigation to balance development rights and creek protection.



**Current Challenges**

### 6. Simplify Regulations and Maintain Opportunity

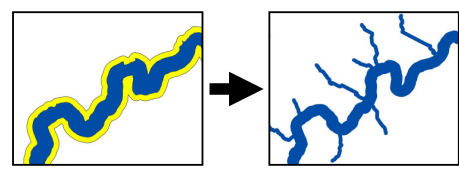
- Complex regulations (partially result of 30 years of ordinance development).
- Increased creek & floodplain protections will potentially limit development opportunity if not counterbalanced.

REGULATORY CATEGORY	ZONE	DESIRED DEVELOPMENT ZONE			OVERSEEN WATER PROTECTION ZONE		
		Urban	Suburban	Water Quality Transition	Water Quality Transition	Water Quality Transition	Water Quality Transition
Impervious Cover	Collection Basin	Single Site Area	Net Site Area	Net Site Area	Net Site Area	Net Site Area	Net Site Area
	Lot/Block	50 - 60%	45 - 60%	30 - 40%	1 unit per 1.2 ac.	R / BC / C *	Net Site Area
	Single Family	Zoning C Limited One	60 - 70%	40 - 50%	20 - 25%	15% - 20% - 25%	Net Site Area
	Multi Family	Zoning C Limited One	60 - 70%	40 - 50%	20 - 25%	15% - 20% - 25%	Net Site Area
	Commercial	Zoning C Limited One	60 - 70%	40 - 50%	20 - 25%	15% - 20% - 25%	Net Site Area
Water Quality Transition Zone (WQZ)	Water Quality Transition	75% No Water	30%	30%	1.5% water / 1 acre	No C allowed	Net Site Area
	Water Quality Transition	75% No Water	30%	30%	1.5% water / 1 acre	No C allowed	Net Site Area
Floodplain	Critical Water Quality Zone (CWQZ)	No C allowed	No C allowed	No C allowed	No C allowed	No C allowed	Net Site Area
	Critical Water Quality Zone (CWQZ)	No C allowed	No C allowed	No C allowed	No C allowed	No C allowed	Net Site Area
Stormwater	Stormwater	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Stormwater	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Erosion	Erosion	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Erosion	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sediment	Sediment	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Sediment	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Water Quality Transition	Water Quality Transition	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Water Quality Transition	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Potential Strategies**

### 6. Simplify Regulations and Maintain Opportunity


- Streamline and simplify Code wherever possible.
- Use simpler buffer system citywide.
  - Eliminate Water Quality Transition Zone (DDZ)
  - Extend to Headwaters
- Eliminate Net Site Area (DDZ).



**Current Challenges**

### 7. Coordinate with Regional Partners

- If uncoordinated, new rules would create an additional layer of complexity across jurisdictions.



**Potential Strategies**

### 7. Coordinate with Regional Partners

- Coordinate regulations with new Travis County Water Quality Rules and Title 30.
- Align regulations with other jurisdictions where possible.



Adoption Schedule	
<b>Stakeholder Meetings</b>	Sep 2011 – April 2012 (Meetings every two weeks)
1. Creek Protection	
2. Floodplain Protection	
3. Development Patterns & Greenways	
4. Improved Stormwater Controls	
5. Simplify & Clarify Regulations/Maintain Opportunity	
6. Mitigation Options (Desired Development Zone)	
7. Draft Ordinance	
<b>Boards &amp; Commissions</b>	May – June 2012
<b>City Council</b>	August 2012
<b>Travis County Commissioner's Court</b>	Fall 2012

- ### Stakeholder Participation
- Facilitated meetings every two weeks with stakeholder representatives
  - Council Resolution goals to be discussed individually, each as follows:
    - Current City & regional regulations
    - Challenges & draft recommendations
    - Discussion and stakeholder feedback
  - Review draft ordinance

- ### Q&A / Discussion Prep
- When it comes to the current Watershed Protection Ordinance:
- **What's working?**
  - **What's not working?**
  - **If you could only make one significant improvement to the ordinance, what would it be?**

- ### Staying Involved
- Email distribution list and meeting support materials prior to each meeting
  - Ordinance website with meeting summaries, videos, presentations, documents and schedule
  - Briefings to Environmental Board
  - Public Hearings: Boards, Commissions, Council

### Contact Information

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