

# CODE NEXT Background and Impacts - Disclaimer

- ▶ While much of this presentation contains materials and summaries of materials on the City's Imagine Austin and CODE NEXT website, not all content of this presentation was prepared by the City of Austin.
- ▶ Nevertheless, given the potentially significant impact that a this magnitude of a code overhaul presents, every AVANA homeowner should make themselves aware of the CODE NEXT project.

# CODE NEXT Background and Impacts

- ▶ What is CODE NEXT?
- ▶ From where did it come?
- ▶ Why is CODE NEXT important?
- ▶ Who is involved?
- ▶ Where do we go from here?
- ▶ How do we get there?
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# What is CODE NEXT?

- ▶ CODE NEXT is the new City of Austin initiative to revise the Land Development Code, which determines how land can be used throughout the city - including **what** can be built, **where** it can be built, and **how much** can (and cannot) be built.
- ▶ The process is a collaboration between Austin's residents, business community, and civic institutions to align our land use standards and regulations with what is important to the community.

# What is CODE NEXT?

- ▶ This initiative to revise the [Land Development Code](#) is a priority program out of [Imagine Austin](#), the City's plan for the future adopted by City Council in 2012 and included 8 priority programs:
  - ▶ Priority Program 1: Invest In a Compact and Connected Austin
  - ▶ Priority Program 2: Sustainably Manage Our Water Resources
  - ▶ Priority Program 3: Continue to Grow Austin's Economy by Investing in Our Workforce, Education Systems, Entrepreneurs, and Local Businesses
  - ▶ Priority Program 4: Use Green Infrastructure to Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Integrate Nature Into the City
  - ▶ Priority Program 5: Grow and Invest in Austin's Creative Economy
  - ▶ Priority Program 6: Develop and Maintain Household Affordability Throughout Austin
  - ▶ Priority Program 7: Create a Healthy Austin
  - ▶ Priority Program 8: **Revise Austin's Development Regulations and Processes to Promote a Compact and Connected City (CODE NEXT)**

# From where did CODE NEXT come?

- ▶ While the CODE NEXT emerged as Priority Program Number 8 from the 2012 Imagine Austin project, it's roots go back 30 years when the current Austin Building and Development Code was implemented.
- ▶ Imagine Austin identified 10 problems with the current code that stand in the way of implementing Imagine Austin:
  1. **Ineffective Base Zone Districts** - less than half of the City has an additional regulatory overlay; single family (SF3) treats small downtown bungalow like a suburban ranch style. This may be divided into three subcategories.
  2. **Competing Layers of Regulations** - Over 400 different possible combinations of base zoning districts with compatibility standards added over time. This leads to an unwieldy and complicated code. Propose to reduce layers to a more reasonable number.
  3. **Complicated Opt In - Opt Out Standards** - Corner store, small lot amnesty, and other standards vary from one neighborhood to another.
  4. **Household Affordability Issues** - CODE NEXT will not address all of these issues but will provide a tool in the tool box for the City. Goal is denser development and shortening the permitting approval process. Gap between single family housing and multifamily multi-story leaves the "missing middle."
  5. **Code is Auto-Centric** - Old code is based on everybody owns a car with all of the attendant parking to serve the cars. These parking lots and garages destroy the character of the neighborhood. Looking for walkable urban like Mueller development.

# From where did CODE NEXT come?

- ▶ Imagine Austin identified 10 problems with the current code that stand in the way of implementing Imagine Austin:
  6. **Existing Code is Not in Line with Imagine Austin** - Bike infrastructure, water resources and storm water management, integrating nature with the neighborhood (tree preservation)
  7. **Lack of Clarity and Usability** - 30 years of changes left the code without a clear structure and table of contents. New code will have
  8. **Ineffective Digital Version of the Current Code** - Makes the code harder rather than easier to use.
  9. **Code Changes Adversely Effected Code Staff Structure** - Staff structure is as complicated as the code structure.
  10. **Incomplete and Complicated Implementing and Administrative Procedures** - Largely a product of the complicated and hard to follow code.

# Why is CODE NEXT important?

- ▶ CODE NEXT will determine how land can be used throughout the city - including **what** can be built, **where** it can be built, and **how much** can (and cannot) be built.
- ▶ The "Code Approach Alternatives & Annotated Outlines" sets a framework for understanding options for revising key elements of the code.
- ▶ According to the City, these Approaches explore fundamental aspects of a code that a city needs to "get right" in order to achieve their goals and address things like affordability, mobility, efficient city processes and vibrant neighborhoods.
- ▶ **BOTTOM LINE** - The new Imagine Austin vision appears to favor higher density future development and this could constrain development in and around Angus Valley going forward.

# Who is involved?

- ▶ Austin City Council
- ▶ City Departments
- ▶ Outside City Planning Consultant Team
- ▶ Of 103 different neighborhood reporting areas, 53 submitted inputs through Community Character In a Box (CCIB) and CC plans in place.
- ▶ Over 400 people participated in this process submitting over 3,000 photos in addition to 1200 photos taken by the professional team.
- ▶ Businesses and Developers



# Where do we go from here?

- ▶ About 8 to 9 months of “listening” sessions so far.
- ▶ CODE NEXT Team digested the content from the sessions.
- ▶ Team developed Community Character Manual to:
  - ▶ create a common vocabulary for discussing the CC issues and
  - ▶ define the differences and the commonality in the different neighborhood reporting areas.
- ▶ Code Next team’s job is to untangle the current code mess and come up with a hybrid combination of form-based code elements with performance-based code elements provide the right zoning tool for the right situation.
- ▶ Team will provide code alternatives in October 2014 and will go back to the new City Council for confirmation in May 2015.
- ▶ Process is set to design three alternative approaches to redoing the code with target adoption in 2017.

# Where do we go from here?

- ▶ Each resident of Angus Valley should make themselves aware of the issues and impacts involved with Imagine Austin and CODE NEXT.
- ▶ While it may be too late to influence the strategic direction taken in these initiatives, the new City Council will be asked to confirm the initiatives in May 2015.
- ▶ AVANA and area residents should consider:
  - ▶ completing the Community Character In a Box process,
  - ▶ Staying engaged with the process and policy makers going forward.

# How do we get there?

## ▶ September 2014

- ▶ Sep. 16, 2014 - [CodeNEXT at Planning Commission, Codes and Ordinances Cmte](#)
- ▶ Sep. 16, 2014 - [CodeNEXT at Zoning and Platting Commission](#)
- ▶ Sep. 17, 2014 - [CodeNEXT at Environmental Board](#)
- ▶ Sep. 18, 2014 - [CodeNEXT at Urban Transportation Commission](#)
- ▶ Sep. 22, 2014 - [CodeNEXT at Design Commission](#)
- ▶ Sep. 22, 2014 - [CodeNEXT: Advisory Group meeting September 22, 2014](#)
- ▶ Sep. 23, 2014 - [CodeNEXT at Planning Commission](#)

## ▶ October 2014

- ▶ Oct. 02, 2014 - [CodeNEXT at City Council](#)
- ▶ Oct. 20, 2014 - [CodeNEXT: Advisory Group meeting October 20, 2014](#)
- ▶ Oct. 23, 2014 - [CodeNEXT at City Council](#)

- ▶ **May 2015** - New City Council votes to confirm, modify, or deny the directions taken by earlier City Councils on this initiative.

# How do I find out more?

- ▶ **Details on Imagine Austin -**  
<http://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Planning/ImagineAustin/webiacreduced.pdf>
- ▶ **Details on CODE NEXT -**  
<http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Planning/CodeNEXT/CODENEXT-CCB-HOST-INSTRUCTIONS-reduced.pdf>
- ▶ **Details on Existing CCIB Photos and Comments -**  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/119725136@N06/sets>
- ▶ **Details on Form-Based and Performance-Based Codes -**  
<http://www.flagstaff.az.gov/index.aspx?nid=1416>.
- ▶ **Q&A on CODE NEXT and the Development Process -**  
[http://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Planning/CodeNEXT/Cracking\\_the\\_Code\\_QA\\_2.pdf](http://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Planning/CodeNEXT/Cracking_the_Code_QA_2.pdf)