The focus of the Code Advisory Group’s May 23, 2016 stakeholder engagement event was public input on the Code Prescription: Household Affordability. The following text summarizes the input that was received at the meeting. The summary consolidates the participants responses based on the four breakout rooms.

- The Gallery
- Conley Room
- The Classroom
- Dance Studio

Part 1

1. How did you choose where you live?
2. What were the most important factors?

**Proximity to:**
- Transit, the Boardwalk at Lady Bird Lake,
- Downtown and central neighborhoods
- Job
- Family and friends
- University, school
- Shopping, restaurants, conveniences and services
- I-35
- Parks including Barton Springs
- Arts
- Food
- Amenities and interests
- Cows

**Affordability**
- It is what they could afford, needed $600-800 to rent
- Family housing
- What they could finance, made sense for a first-time homebuyer
- Shared walls as affordable
- Timing, needs
- Not a choice
- Unforeseen costs
- Minimize taxes due to retirement (but this has changed)
- Sacrificed access for affordability.
- Affordability equals lack of choice such as grocery, medical and transportation
- Have to move/lots of turnover every year
- Lack of sidewalks, ammenities etc. to keep rent low

**Community Character**
- Captures what is Austin, feels like home
- Liked Mueller Master Plan
- Village lifestyle
- Suburban v urban character
- Historic neighborhoods, old housing...
- Village lifestyle
- Suburban vs urban character
- Historic neighborhood, older housing
- Neighborhood feel
- Rural character
- Family-oriented
- Family history
- Quality of life
- Housing type
- Density, Avoid Density
- Big yard
- Quiet
- Size of units (lack of smaller units)
- Single-family neighborhood
- Austin vibe, eclectic, Austin culture
- Diversity of people, mixed income and ethnicities
- People who accept/appreciate others
- Social aspects, community ties
- Walkable streets, bikeable
- Size/space vs proximity (where an option, scarce)
- Stability over time
- Safety
- Trees and green space
- Convenient

Other (Classroom)???

- Private vs public green space
- Question of access-car vs location
- Land uses around home
- Single-family home vs. density $
- What to do with contradictions in the code?
- Over-taxed park system
- Quantity vs. quality of green space
- Mandatory inclusions in code vs. need (i.e. visitability)
- Parking requirements (unwanted)
- Rent control (voucher holders)

Part 2:

Who Cannot Live There?

- Low income residents
- Middle income households
  - Subsidized or expensive but not in between
  - In low income developments
- People who live there because of taxes (especially for fixed income)/people getting pushed out of neighborhood
- For some there is a limited ability to upsize or downsize within neighborhood
- The range of income levels has shrunk over time
- The children of those living there now.
- Families
- Renters
- Students/young people
- People that need more than a studio
- People of color
- People “just starting out”
- People “that aren’t planned for”
People of color
People “just starting out”
People “that aren’t planned for”
Fixed income
People with limited transit options, no car
The fabric of the neighborhood (long-term residents)
People with mobility challenges such as disabilities both physical and visual.
90% of people in city

Discussion of the Prescriptions

Mobility
- Relationship between density and public transportation
- Incentives for employment near transit
- Connect density to public transit
- Change transit-oriented development to equitable transit-oriented development
- Accessibility to transit
- Concern for persons with disability in proximity to transit
- More transit hubs that are serviced
- Greenfield example: pre-plan for mass transit
- Reduce parking where appropriate, eliminate parking minimums and let market dictate, connect parking requirements to walk scores
- Tools available to planners too limited
- Put a price on users for parking spots (people pay for what they value)
- Affordable housing negatively impacted by parking requirements (unnecessary/expensive)
- Public parking garages centrally located in activity centers
- Redevelopment needs to be considered with transportation needs.
- Real analysis of precise benefit from reduced parking requirements for developers
- Impacts of reduced parking must be considered in context
- Disincentivize parking vs. incentivize bus use
- Green space over excess parking space
- Improve roads in conjunction with growth

Missing Middle Housing
- Variety of housing options such as row houses, micro-units (400 square feet)
- Developer wants predictability in code-do not have to gamble on permits and rezoning
- Apply code uniformly across central Austin, not just corridors and neighborhood centers but worries about total changing neighborhood from homeowner.
- Need voice from everyone.
- Worries about luxury condos in affordable neighborhood
- Make it easier for diverse housing-single/multi/townhome, duplex, etc.
- On-street parking impacts
- Will missing middle be “affordable?”
- Affordable housing vs household affordability
- Pre-approved missing middle/accessory dwelling unit design
- Transition zone should be measured not by distance but by effects
- Co-ops, co-housing, and other alternative ownership structures
- Have community development corporations manage accessory dwelling units-similar to alley flats
- Family-friendly affordable units
- Attract families to live in the city
- Variety of family-centered mix of housing
- Use form-based code to fit zoning to neighborhood feel and context
- Preservation of existing housing stock, including those that are affordable
- Accessory dwelling units for affordability
- Live/work-integrate into neighborhoods
- No area should be exempt from diversifying housing stock.
- Hyde Park: 8 units/12 parking spaces, 5,000 sf lot. Stormwater control?
No area should be exempt from diversifying housing stock.

Hyde Park: 8 units/12 parking spaces, 5,000 sf lot. Stormwater control?

Access over proximity
Age of housing units
Does diverse housing lead to gentrification?
Are we segregating our city by income
More affordable Central Austin living
Does density lead to or prohibit affordability?
More infill may lead to more flooding especially in central Austin given infrastructure
If we want more places like Mueller, we need to put a code in place that encourages that type of development.
Value community services over highest bidder.
Are we planning to move people? Need to avoid more displacement.
Don’t insist of density/development where people already live.
Are we choosing not to make Austin affordable?
We have antiquated “big lot” tendencies that limit affordability
NIMBYism around greenfield sites?
Development in West Austin needs to keep pace with East Austin.
Homogenous (single-family) neighborhoods excludes low income, service industry
Filtering-luxury condos provide more choices on upper end and also make affordability in center.
Worry about neighborhoods becoming less diverse, pushing people to suburbs.
Worry about 6+ unrelated people ordinance for cooperatives, students, etc.
Tradeoff community benefit for density
Increase supply and diversity of housing throughout Austin

Affordable Housing
Conversion of underutilized properties to affordable housing
Eliminate fee in lieu or pool into funds for affordable housing. Increase fee!
Why not 99 years affordability instead of 20?
Rebekah Baines Johnson Center is an example of density working
Change definition of “affordable” for subsidies/bonuses-serve who is being priced out.
Define affordable as 30% take home income.
Regulate some of affordable units for density bonus (3, 4 + bedrooms)
Better monitoring of affordability programs

Density bonus:
Density bonuses where appropriate (i.e. Homestead Preservation Areas)
Missing middle density bonus for affordability
At what point do bonuses actually make a difference in cost? (land, finance, construction costs)
The City complicates the process!
Longer required affordability or in perpetuity.
Density Bonus Program for greenfield

Centers and Corridors
Important to ensure uses (industrial, etc.) do not harm single-family residences (East Austin historic “dumping ground”)
Develop town centers on periphery with more than service jobs (not just coffee shops and bars)

What’s Missing from the Code?

Fiscal
Examine tax policy, tax exemptions
Linkage fees
“Branding” affordability for reasonableness and modesty including working with the State

Conversion of underutilized properties to affordable housing
Elsewhere, even a tax on that on underutilized properties (i.e. Homestead Preservation Areas)
Eliminate fee in lieu or pool into funds for affordable housing. Increase fee!
Why not 99 years affordability instead of 20?
Rebekah Baines Johnson Center is an example of density working
Change definition of “affordable” for subsidies/bonuses-serve who is being priced out.
Define affordable as 30% take home income.
Regulate some of affordable units for density bonus (3, 4 + bedrooms)
Better monitoring of affordability programs

Density bonus:
Density bonuses where appropriate (i.e. Homestead Preservation Areas)
Missing middle density bonus for affordability
At what point do bonuses actually make a difference in cost? (land, finance, construction costs)
The City complicates the process!
Longer required affordability or in perpetuity.
Density Bonus Program for greenfield

Centers and Corridors
Important to ensure uses (industrial, etc.) do not harm single-family residences (East Austin historic “dumping ground”)
Develop town centers on periphery with more than service jobs (not just coffee shops and bars)

What’s Missing from the Code?

Fiscal
Examine tax policy, tax exemptions
Linkage fees
“Branding” affordability for reasonableness and modesty including working with the State
}

- No area should be exempt from diversifying housing stock.
- Hyde Park: 8 units/12 parking spaces, 5,000 sf lot. Stormwater control?
- Access over proximity
- Age of housing units
- Does diverse housing lead to gentrification?
- Are we segregating our city by income
- More affordable Central Austin living
- Does density lead to or prohibit affordability?
- More infill may lead to more flooding especially in central Austin given infrastructure
- If we want more places like Mueller, we need to put a code in place that encourages that type of development.
- Value community services over highest bidder.
- Are we planning to move people? Need to avoid more displacement.
- Don’t insist of density/development where people already live.
- Are we choosing not to make Austin affordable?
- We have antiquated “big lot” tendencies that limit affordability
- NIMBYism around greenfield sites?
- Development in West Austin needs to keep pace with East Austin.
- Homogenous (single-family) neighborhoods excludes low income, service industry
- Filtering-luxury condos provide more choices on upper end and also make affordability in center.
- Worry about neighborhoods becoming less diverse, pushing people to suburbs.
- Worry about 6+ unrelated people ordinance for cooperatives, students, etc.
- Tradeoff community benefit for density
- Increase supply and diversity of housing throughout Austin

Affordable Housing
- Conversion of underutilized properties to affordable housing
- Eliminate fee in lieu or pool into funds for affordable housing. Increase fee!
- Why not 99 years affordability instead of 20?
- Rebekah Baines Johnson Center is an example of density working
- Change definition of “affordable” for subsidies/bonuses-serve who is being priced out.
- Define affordable as 30% take home income.
- Regulate some of affordable units for density bonus (3, 4 + bedrooms)
- Better monitoring of affordability programs

Density bonus:
- Density bonuses where appropriate (i.e. Homestead Preservation Areas)
- Missing middle density bonus for affordability
- At what point do bonuses actually make a difference in cost? (land, finance, construction costs)
- The City complicates the process!
- Longer required affordability or in perpetuity.
- Density Bonus Program for greenfield

Centers and Corridors
- Important to ensure uses (industrial, etc.) do not harm single-family residences (East Austin historic “dumping ground”)
- Develop town centers on periphery with more than service jobs (not just coffee shops and bars)

What’s Missing from the Code?

Fiscal
- Examine tax policy, tax exemptions
- Linkage fees
- “Branding” affordability for reasonableness and modesty including working with the State
- Examine tax policy, tax exemptions
- Linkage fees
- “Branding” affordability for reasonableness and modesty including working with the State to relate tax rate to rent paid
- Economic development policy regarding promoting local business.
- Land trusts and banking as tools in the code
- Look at utilities to ensure compact development that lowers costs
- Rent control? Change state law!
- City investment in public housing

**Development Standards**
- Further restrict housing sizes
- Green buildings to save money in the long run
- Zero lot line in Single-Family zoning or different setback standards
- Accessibility requirements
- Inclusionary zoning where available
- Subchapter E: redevelopment v rehabilitation
- How much flexibility in code? Use vs. form-based
- Worry about uniform code vs. neighborhood plan

**Mobility**
- Need better transit planning
- Sidewalks and streetscape
- Better sidewalk requirements—maybe use density bonus for offsite improvements

**Community**
- Safety such as eyes on the street, communication between neighbors, and design for safety
- Need more about what happens in core of neighborhoods outside of centers and corridors
- Use code to address food desert in suburbs, grocery stores in complex (i.e. Fresh Plus in West Campus).

Summary of Public Input (5/23/16), Page 1