

## Planning and Budgeting

The small town of Austin Texas located on the banks of the lower Colorado River has transformed dramatically over the years. Indeed, the City of Austin doubles in size almost every 20 years. Such rapid growth requires a comprehensive process that aligns our financial system to short, medium and long range plans so that citizens continue to receive the high level of services Austin is known for.

### Comprehensive Planning

Comprehensive planning is an inclusive approach of addressing future growth. It focuses simultaneously on the present and the future. The comprehensive planning process helps to tie the efforts of the city, the council, departments, and employees into a unified inventory of plans designed to accomplish the specific purpose of supporting the city's overall vision of livability.

The city's vision of being the most livable city in the country is at the top of the pyramid and planning for the future begins with our vision.

The council review and/or revise their priorities each year. However, these priorities are always aligned with the city's vision. Some examples of council priorities are:

- a rich, social and cultural community
- a vibrant urban fabric
- a healthy, safe city and
- sustainable economic development and financial health

Council priorities support the achievement of Austin's vision and serve as an organizing framework for planning and service delivery.

Livability is the principle theme that governs the city's planning process for land use,

transportation and economic growth. Managing physical growth and preserving the environment are key components of the council's vision for Austin.

The Austin Tomorrow Plan is the city's adopted comprehensive plan with broad goals and guiding principles. It is intended to be implemented over time and updated to fit our needs as we change.

- These plans are often 20 or more year plans.
- Mid-range plans look at what is necessary to achieve the livability desired 10 years down the road in the areas of economics, growth and needed capitol improvements.

The process is designed to look at future growth and needs. It is a dynamic, diverse visioning and strategic planning process that aligns a myriad of planning efforts to achieve the city's vision.

The annual City-wide performance report is organized by city departments and contains performance measures and benchmarks for each department. It measures where we have been, where we are, and where we want to go, tying back to each council priority.

Each department develops an annual plan and budget to address these priorities. The business planning process is an important step in Austin's becoming the most livable city in the country.

Each department identifies through its mission and goals how it contributes to the Vision of Austin in a way that is results-oriented and accountable to the council and the public. Performance measures within the plans define the level of service citizens can expect for their tax dollars.