



EMBARGOED UNTIL OCT. 22, 11 AM

MEDIA CONTACT INFORMATION:

[Ryan Poulos](#), Real Estate Council of Austin, (512) 320-4151

[Caroline Lomax](#), Hahn Public Communications for RECA, (512) 921-8762

Real Estate Council of Austin Urges Significant Rewrite of Austin Land Development Code

AUSTIN, Texas – The Real Estate Council of Austin (RECA), along with several leading community organizations, held a press conference Wednesday morning to urge Austin City Council members to back a comprehensive and enduring transformation of Austin’s land development code and process.

“Austin is rapidly growing, and the challenges and problems to the city’s infrastructure, cost of living, tax base and quality of life are becoming increasingly more severe,” said RECA President Ward Tisdale. “We need a code with flexibility and predictability and a system that fosters innovation and scale to meet the demand in Austin’s residential and commercial real estate markets today.”

Other organizations joining RECA included the Austin Apartment Association (AAA), Austin Board of Realtors (ABOR), Austinites for Urban Rail Action (AURA), Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU), Downtown Austin Alliance (DAA), Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce and Housing Works Austin.

Along with these and many other community stakeholders, RECA has been participating over the last year with the City of Austin’s CodeNEXT effort, which has diagnosed many problematic issues with Austin’s land development code and laid out three recommended approaches for revising the code. The City Council is slated on Thursday (Oct. 23) to choose among those three approaches. Option 1 calls for a “brisk sweep” of the code while Option 3, known as the “complete makeover,” would provide the city the greatest opportunity for serious code reform.

“We strongly urge the council to adopt option 3 because it enables the city to do all the necessary work to fix a broken system,” Tisdale said. “Our environment today is evolving too quickly to view bringing the current code up to date as a suitable alternative.”

Please contact RECA’s Director of Communications [Ryan Poulos](#) at 512-320-4151 if you have any questions or need any additional information.

###

About RECA:

[The Real Estate Council of Austin](#) addresses issues affecting the commercial real estate community in Central Texas. With more than 1,650 members, the non-profit, advocacy organization represents a broad spectrum of the Central Texas economy, ranging from landowners and developers to the various service professions that facilitate the industry. Commercial real estate development brings new jobs to Central Texas while protecting existing jobs and increasing tax revenue, which is used to fund our public schools, city services, infrastructure and parks.

About CodeNEXT:

[CodeNEXT](#) 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 continues to be 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. The initiative to revise the Land Development Code is a priority program out of Imagine Austin, our plan for the future adopted by City Council in 2012.

Quotes from Other Participating Organizations

“Austin zoning districts apply the same development regulations to vastly different kinds of places, and we’ve created too many ways for both developers and neighborhoods to pick and choose which regulations are going to apply to them. We want to urge that the City Council and the rest of the City organization to have the courage to do what we know needs to be done, even though it may not be the easiest path forward.”

- Emily Chenevert, Director of Public and Government Affairs, Austin Board of Realtors (ABOR)

“It’s impossible to exaggerate how big an obstacle the current land development code and process pose to providing abundant, attainable housing. We need a code that allows for an Austin that welcomes everyone, with plenty of options for walkability and livability in the central city where more people want to live. The current code seeks to impose standards developed for suburban neighborhoods in the 1960s and 1970s onto the urban neighborhoods where Austin should be prioritizing better land use and an antidote to sprawl.”

- Brennan Griffin, Board Member, Austinites for Urban Rail Action (AURA)

“The principles of New Urbanism, and the CNU charter, call for the right policies to govern land use at every level and scale, from the mega-region down to the individual building. Our goal in supporting CodeNEXT is not to replace the current one-size fits all suburban model with a one-size fits all urban development code. Instead, we seek a flexible, easy-to-understand, and easy-to-implement code that helps meet the goals and objectives established and adopted in the city’s comprehensive plan. By doing so, we will direct growth, connect communities, create and maintain character, conserve resources and re-capture affordability.”

- Pamela Power, Chair of the Communication & Outreach Committee, Congress for the New Urbanism, Central Texas Chapter (CNU)

“It’s important that we move forward in the process now. Kicking this issue down the road is unacceptable.”

- Jeremy Martin, Senior Vice President, Government Relations and Regional Infrastructure, Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce

“The Austin land development code and process are broken, and it makes a difference when it comes to making sure we have housing in Austin that people can afford. Many of the problems the city has right now with implementation are due to the complexity of the code itself. It would be almost impossible to apply it consistently, correctly and efficiently even if everyone wanted to.”

- Terry Mitchell, Board of Directors, HousingWorks Austin