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**RECA Calls on Governmental Entities to Offer Unused Land for Housing, Other Needs**  
***Properties Could Provide Much Needed Housing for Rapidly Growing City***

(AUSTIN – October 26, 2016) – The Real Estate Council of Austin (RECA) released a white paper Wednesday examining how much land local, state and federal governments own and how some of that land could be used to build much needed housing throughout the city.

The paper, *Public Land Use in Austin*, makes recommendations about how public landowners should put procedures and strategies in place to help bring underutilized public properties to the private market for redevelopment of much needed housing and other needs.

“Every square foot of dirt in the city needs to be used efficiently, and if governments are not ensuring the highest and best use of their real estate, then they need to adopt processes to annually review their real estate holdings,” said RECA President Ward Tisdale. “More housing inside the city limits will help address Austin’s two most pressing issues – affordability and housing.”

Jurisdictions including Travis County, Austin ISD and the City of Austin have begun to take steps to make some of their land assets available for development, but they may not go far enough. RECA believes public landowners should assertively move forward to evaluate all their land assets, identifying properties that could be used for housing, and develop coordinated strategies for making them available for development.

Often, planning for the future use of public land (by either the public or private sector, or both in partnership) has been conducted on an ad hoc, site-by-site basis. RECA recommends that public landowners initiate ongoing efforts to develop and update comprehensive jurisdiction-wide facilities plans, with an eye toward returning surplus land that could be better used for housing and other community needs to the private market and the tax rolls.

RECA has previously called for the development of 150,000 new housing units over the next 10 years within the city of Austin to stabilize the regional housing market, accommodate the city’s rapid growth, and make strides toward the affordability that Central Texas needs to continue to be prosperous and sustainable. Housing stock has not been keeping up with demand, which has had the effect of artificially inflating home prices and rents. Leveraging the region’s inventory of publicly owned land can help achieve the outcomes that the Austin area critically needs to succeed.

*The Real Estate Council of Austin (RECA) addresses issues affecting the commercial real estate community in Central Texas. With more than 1,900 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.*