# Communicating Austin Planning and Development

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PART 1: CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

Lays out the scope of the project and describes the methods of research.

# Problem Space

### CONTEXT

As Austin continues to grow rapidly, problems such as traffic, affordability, gentrification, and maintaining the city's legacy confront the city. City planning is the process by which Austin begins to address these issues. Involving citizens helps city planners develop Austin into a city reflects the cultural identity of its people. The process intends to be a partnership between Austin and the public, however, this relationship can be weak or ineffective.

# CHALLENGES

Currently, Austin provides fragmented and hard to access information about city planning, stifling citizens from understanding an accurate mental model of the system. To make learning the process more difficult, city planning is complex and understanding its intricacies requires questioning, clarification, and contemplation.

# Solution Space

The basis of my research involves understanding and visualizing various elements, connections, and functions within a complex system or networks of people, services, infrastructures, and the environment through the lens of design.

**PROCESS** I began by studying various planning and regulation documents provided by the city. As I gathered information, I looked for patterns in the information and sketched out how I might present it visually. I developed numerous iterations alternating between researching and sketching. My goals are to present the system clearly with a language an average citizen could understand. To check the validity of research, I sought out individuals more familar with the process, particularily an urban designer working for the city.

PART 2A: DEFINITION AND ORGANIZATION

Introduces key terms for understanding planning and development.

# System Visualization

### Stakeholders

Planning in Austin consists of three organizations of people: Stakeholder Individuals, Stakeholder Organizations, and City Officials. Each plays a unique part of the planning process.



STAKEHOLDER INDIVIDUALS Stakeholder Individuals include all people living within Austin and individuals commuting or working in Austin who are not residents.



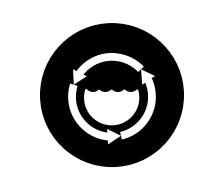
STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS These stakeholders are key agencies or individuals relevant to the proposed plan. Several examples of Stakeholders Organizations are local businesses, community leaders, developers, public schools, Texas Department of Public Transportation, and Capital Metro.



CITY OFFICIALS City Officials includes all members working for Austin including City Council and various departments including the Planning and Development Review Department, Watershed Protection, and the Transportation Department

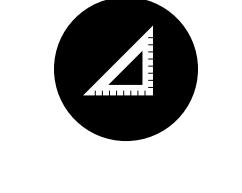
### Key Departments

Though Austin's city planning spans across many departments. The Watershed Protection, Planning and Development Review Department, and the Transportation Department share the most responsibility.

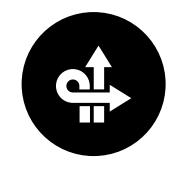


WATERSHED PROTECTION Because of Austin's weather and landscape, it is vulnerable to floods, erosion, and water pollution. Watershed Protection works to protect lives, property and the environment through strategic planning and sets

standards on development.



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW DEPARTMENT This department provides planning, preservation, design, comprehensive development review and inspection services to create Austin. It includes teams of zoning specialists and urban designers.



TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT City planning is not possible without considering infrastructure. The Transportation Department plays an integral role in the development of the Austin by overseeing the transportation infrastructure components of a proposed plan.

ment.

## Development Plans

Development plans guide land use for Austin. Often one plans' recommendations and its geographic boundaries overlap with another. However, once a Master Plan turns into a Regulation Plan it becomes the basis for the Land Development Code and overrides the recommendations of Neighborhood and Comprehensive Plans.



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN A long-term plan guiding the future development of Austin. Specifically it addresses land use decisions determines locations for future growth, and sets a standard for Master Plans. It helps shape the entire



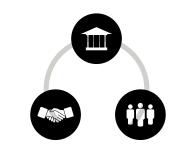
MASTER PLAN A plan guiding Austin's growth. In this context, the

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN A Neighborhood Plan addresses land use and trans-Master Plan guides the preservation or development portation issues at a detailed level. The plan's goal is of a given geographic area. Its objectives ultimately to bring diverse interests together to develop a shared

overide comphrehensive and neighborhood plans, but neighborhood vision and influence Master Plans. it seeks harmony between them.

PART 2B: MASTER PLAN COMMUNICATION FLOW

Highlights the relationships between stakeholders and breaks down the planning process.



Individual and Organiza-

tional Stakeholders reach

out to Austin City Council

members directly and

voice their concern over

neighborhood and city

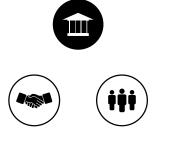
development.

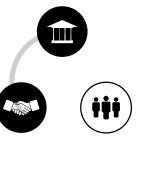
Austin forms a Public Advisory Group (P.A.G.) as a representative group of the key stakeholders to provide direction for the plan. Austin also hires consulting groups to help

with planning.

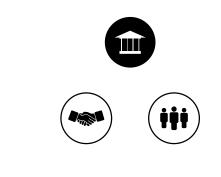


The lead consulting group conducts a series of small group meetings with key stakeholders in the community. The interviews offer the consultants a chance to further explore various aspects of the planning area and highlight issues of concern.





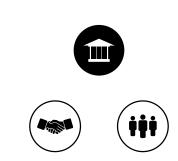
The Public Advisory Group The Public Advisory Group (P.A.G.) hosts an introduc-(P.A.G.) hosts a series of public workshops tory public meeting. Prior, the group sends mail to including research, visual all property owners and design surveys, and utility customers within concept building. The the Master Plan area. Addimeeting encourages all tionally, the P.A.G. notifies stakeholders to share their subscribers of the Austin's vision. newsletter.



(P.A.G.) meets with the state and regional agencies and various city departments such as Transportation, Watershed Protection, and Planning and Development Review to cover logistical concerns.



The Public Advisory Group the Public Advisory Master Plan.



After a series of workshop and public meetings, Group (P.A.G.) meets to discuss results from the workshops and meetings. Afterward the P.A.G develops a conceptual

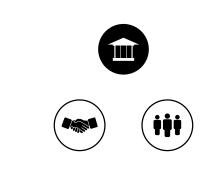


The Public Advisory Group The draft Master plan (P.A.G.) presents draft advances to the Austin's Master Plan to the public. Land Commission and Austin and the P.A.G. the Public Advisory Group invites local media outlets (P.A.G.) presents the plan to publicize the announceat two public hearings.

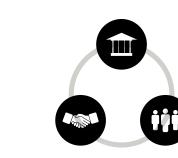


city rather than a specific portion.

The draft Master Plan advances to the City Council and the Public Advisory Group (P.A.G.) presents the plan at three public hearings.



The Master Plan transforms into a Regulation Plan. Various city departments, public agencies, and key stakeholders develop the regulation



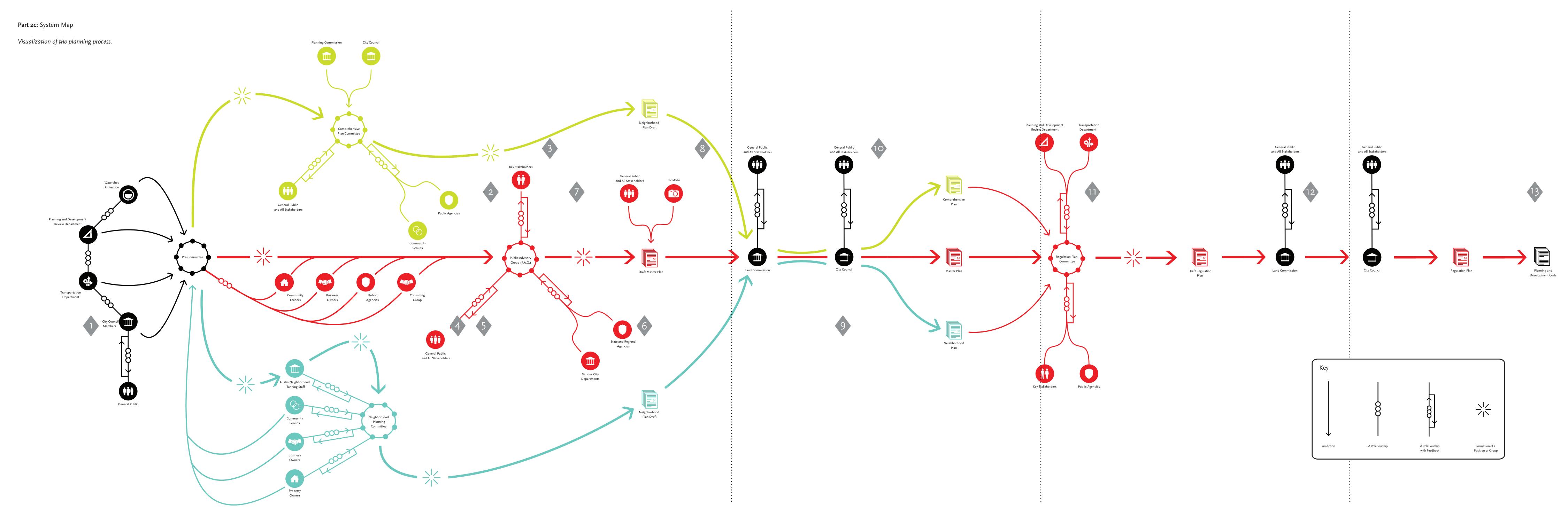
The Regulation Plan advances to Austin's Land Commission with

two public hearings

followed up by three public

hearings at City Council.

The Regulation Plan is codified into the Austin's Land Development Code.



In this phase all stakeholders come together for an opportunity to cast their vision for a future plan. Austin engages all stakeholders primarily through interviews and public meetings in Comphrehensive Plans and Master Plans. Neighborhood Plans are mainly grassroots efforts.

This phase of planning process focuses on the approval of a plan by the Land Commission and City Council. All stakeholders have the opportunity to attend and voice their opinion at public hearings.

After a Master Plan is approved, it needs to become a Regulation Plan. A Regulation Plan takes the reccomendations from the Master Plan and translates the concepts into specific regulations. It requires a sophisticated collaboration of city departments, public agencies, and key stakeholders. Once complete, it acts as a legal document for future development.

CODIFICATION After City Council adopts the Regulation Plan, it integrates or overwrites the Land Development Code based on the geographic location of the Master Plan. The updated code regulates how developers can build