

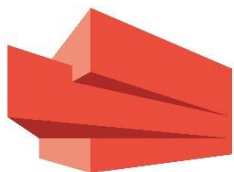
SESSION WORKBOOK

City of Austin: Economic Development Policy

Community Leader Session: Wednesday September 6, 2017

Record your feedback through exercises in this workbook.

Please turn in this workbook at the end of the session.



**Global Business
Expansion**

CITY OF AUSTIN
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



Table of Contents

p.2	Agenda
p.3	Public Participation Principles & Discussion Guidelines
p.4	Defining Economic Development
p.5	Business Recruitment
p.6	Business Expansion
p.7	Workforce Development
p.8	Real Estate
p.9	Small Business
p.10	Creative Sector
p.11	Social Enterprise
p.12	Final Exercise
p.13	Additional Comments
<hr/>	
p.14	APPENDIX A: Community Values
p.19	APPENDIX B: Session Summaries

Agenda

Economic Development Policy: Community Leader Session

Wednesday September 6, 2017 8:15am – 2:30pm

8:15am.....	Attendee Check-In
8:20am.....	Welcome & Introduction David Colligan, City of Austin EDD
8:30am.....	Speed Briefings Austin Demographics: Chris Schreck, Director of Planning & Economic Development, CAPCOG Spirit of East Austin: Lara Foss, Corporate Communications Marketing Consultant, City of Austin Opportunity Austin: Mike Rollins, President, Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce Workforce Study: Tamara Atkinson, Executive Director, Workforce Solutions Capital Area Place-Making: David Steinwedell, Executive Director, ULI Austin
9:45am.....	Work Session Framework Julia Campbell, City of Austin EDD
9:50am.....	Defining Economic Development David Colligan, City of Austin EDD
10:00am.....	Break
10:10am.....	Business Recruitment
10:50am.....	Business Expansion
11:30am.....	Workforce Development
-----WORKING LUNCH-----	
12:00pm.....	Real Estate
12:30pm.....	Small Business
1:00pm.....	Break & Tour of Workforce Solutions Facility
1:15pm.....	Creative Sector
1:45pm.....	Social Enterprise
2:15pm.....	Final Exercise
2:30pm.....	Closing Remarks & Next Steps

City of Austin

Public Participation Principles & Discussion Guidelines:

- Open-mindedness: Listen to and respect all points of view
- Acceptance: Suspend judgment as best you can
- Curiosity: Seek to understand rather than persuade
- Discovery: Question old assumptions, look for new insights
- Sincerity: Speak for yourself about what has personal heart and meaning
- Brevity: Go for honesty and depth, but don't go on and on

Accountability and Transparency

The City will enable the public to participate in decision-making processes by providing clear information on the issues, the ways to participate, and how their participation contributes to the decision.

Fairness & Respect

The City will maintain a safe environment that cultivates and supports respectful public engagement and will expect participants to do so in turn.

Accessibility

The City will respect and encourage participation by providing ample public notice of opportunities and resources and accommodations that enable all to participate.

Predictability & Consistency

The City will prepare the public to participate by providing meeting agendas, discussion guidelines, notes, and information on next steps.

Creativity & Community Collaboration

(Inclusivity and Diversity)

The City will use innovative, proven, and customized engagement solutions that are appropriate to the needs of the projects and the participants.

Stewards of Resources

The City will balance its commitment to provide ample opportunities for public involvement with its commitment to delivering government services efficiently and using City resources wisely.

Defining Economic Development

A. 380 Definition:

Sec. 380.001. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS. (a) The governing body of a municipality may establish and provide for the administration of **one or more programs**, including programs for making **loans and grants of public money** and providing personnel and services of the municipality, to **promote state or local economic development** and to stimulate business and commercial activity in the municipality.

B. Community Values:

A revised Chapter 380 program reflects the following overarching values as outlined by the community:

- 1) Government Role: Connector, Investor, Path-Clearer
- 2) Focus on Equity: Employment Opportunities for All
- 3) Unify the Community Through Collaboration
- 4) Train, Recruit and Retain Local Workforce and Talent
- 5) Support Austin's Culture, Creative Sector and Community Identity
- 6) Incentivize, Support, Staff and Train Small Businesses
- 7) Build Affordable, Livable and Accessible Development
- 8) Impact Business Growth
- 9) Control Affordability
- 10) Economic Diversity

C. How do we want to define Economic Development?

i. Traditionally, Economic Development provides these exchange values:

- _____ Quality Jobs
- _____ Capital Investment
- _____ COA Tax Revenue (taxes & utilities)

ii. What's missing?:

iii. Prioritize these exchange values in the space provided.

Business Recruitment

Purpose: Recruit for new businesses and industries in Austin

Values: Ensure steady net new job growth and investment in Austin

Exercise 1: Review the values the community provided. These are the values that the community have said are the most important aspects of a Business Recruitment Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 2: In the column provided, check off the values you agree should apply. Do these/should these values apply to a Business Recruitment Program under Chapter 380?

Exercise 3: In the space provided, what's missing? Insert values you believe are missing from this list that would be critical to the success of a Business Recruitment Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 4: In the column provided, rank each value in order of importance (1-high importance).

EXERCISE 1: Review Community Input (Understand Values)	EXERCISE 2: Do these apply? (Check those apply)	EXERCISE 4: Rank Values 1-5 (1- most important)
Community benefits (Projects provide economic relief for affordability, infrastructure improvements, transportation, zoning and commercial equity.)		
Collaboration (Businesses partnering with each other and with local schools to develop the city's workforce.)		
Government role (Increasing efficiency with issuing permits, implementing zoning regulations and taxes, which are burdensome on Austin businesses. Living wages and address underlying affordability.)		
Industry and business diversity (Tool should focus on small businesses, attracting venture capital and improving economic diversity through large businesses.)		
Equity (Projects create a balanced economy that reduces poverty, income inequality, and other economic segregations.)		
Marketing and communications (Intentional branding and wide promotion is needed.)		
EXERCISE 3: What's Missing?:		

Business Expansion

Purpose: Support existing businesses in Austin.

Values: Ensure steady net new job growth and investment in Austin.

Exercise 1: Review the values the community provided. These are the values that the community have said are the most important aspects of a Business Expansion Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 2: In the column provided, check off the values you agree should apply. Do these/should these values apply to a Business Expansion Program under Chapter 380?

Exercise 3: In the space provided, what's missing? Insert values you believe are missing from this list that would be critical to the success of a Business Expansion Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 4: In the column provided, rank each value in order of importance (1-high importance).

EXERCISE 1: Review Community Input (Understand Values)	EXERCISE 2: Do these apply? (Check those apply)	EXERCISE 4: Rank Values 1-5 (1- most important)
Talent: (Business growth opportunity is dependent on training for existing talent, availability of skilled workers for hire and extending the employee continuum.)		
Coordinate resources: (The government should identify a variety of training opportunities and connect corporations and small businesses within the same industries to share knowledge.)		
Neighborhood connection: (Small and local business growth can directly affect the neighborhood or community the business services by creating jobs proximate to workers, training opportunities for neighborhood residents and solidify the community identity. Conversely, business growth depends on the growth of the surrounding community.)		
Alternative space: (Business growth can happen in multi-use spaces, such as co-working, library, showroom, pop-up and unused retail spaces.)		
Funding needed: (Funding is needed for business expansion, training and marketing. Government should also assist with identifying grant funds available to businesses in need.)		
EXERCISE 3: What's Missing?:		

Workforce Development

Purpose: Support employers and employees by developing the skills and productivity of the new and existing workforce.

Values: Connect skills with jobs and create real employment opportunities for the underserved community.

Exercise 1: Review the values the community provided. These are the values that the community have said are the most important aspects of a Workforce Development Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 2: In the column provided, check off the values you agree should apply. Do these/should these values apply to a Workforce Development Program under Chapter 380?

Exercise 3: In the space provided, what’s missing? Insert values you believe are missing from this list that would be critical to the success of a Workforce Development Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 4: In the column provided, rank each value in order of importance (1-high importance).

EXERCISE 1: Review Community Input (Understand Values)	EXERCISE 2: Do these apply? (Check those apply)	EXERCISE 4: Rank Values 1-5 (1- most important)
Training (Workers need more training to be able to take advantage of available job opportunities. Employers widely support this training because they need more qualified Austin workers to fill mid-skill-level jobs.)		
Government role (Government can support workforce training by directly matching firms and workers to mutually beneficial employment opportunities. An inadvertent effect of government’s current involvement has further disadvantaged racial minorities, lower-income individuals, and small/local business.)		
Wraparound Services (In the current labor market, there is a mismatch between skills, workers and jobs. Training-related services such as daycare and transportation are necessary for those with limited incomes to be able to participate in the training. Inequity based on income, race, skill-level and geography such as East Austin need to be addressed as a part of this strategy.)		
Financial incentives: (Local government should provide incentives that help put people to work, but the City has often used them to benefit big businesses over small businesses. Small businesses would also like an incentive program that helps support their workforce needs, but it would probably look different than the current 380 structure.)		
Communications: (Program suffers from general lack of awareness of workforce development programs, particularly among small businesses, hampers effectiveness.)		
EXERCISE 3: What's Missing?:		

Real Estate

Purpose: Create or support opportunity and access to physical space for innovation, incubate ideas, grow operations

Values: Serve as neighborhood connectors and centers for place-making

Exercise 1: Review the values the community provided. These are the values that the community have said are the most important aspects of a Real Estate Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 2: In the column provided, check off the values you agree should apply. Do these/should these values apply to a Real Estate Program under Chapter 380?

Exercise 3: In the space provided, what’s missing? Insert values you believe are missing from this list that would be critical to the success of a Real Estate Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 4: In the column provided, rank each value in order of importance (1-high importance).

EXERCISE 1: Review Community Input (Understand Values)	EXERCISE 2: Do these apply? (Check those apply)	EXERCISE 4: Rank Values 1-5 (1- most important)
Government role (Includes setting the overall strategy for the city, encouraging businesses and non-profits to invest, and educating home owners and commercial businesses. Government could protect populations from poverty while improving neighborhoods.)		
Socially beneficial (An inclusive program and there would be both cultural and economic diversity created as a result. Real Estate development should benefit the economy, the community, provide social equity and protect the environment.)		
Communication & efficiency (Public forums and access to information on available programs will improve efficiency and effectiveness. Currently, the lengthy permitting process holds back the completion of socially responsible projects, and local government needs to address this immediately.)		
Financial incentives: (Incentives can promote these economic goals through taxes or zoning and encourage sustainability.)		
Transportation: (Transportation-oriented development could provide integrated solutions.)		
EXERCISE 3: What's Missing?:		

Small Business

Purpose: Offer resources and support to small and local businesses that create jobs

Values: Sustain the Austin ecosystem and promote the success of small businesses in the overall economy

Exercise 1: Review the values the community provided. These are the values that the community have said are the most important aspects of a Small Business Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 2: In the column provided, check off the values you agree should apply. Do these/should these values apply to a Small Business Program under Chapter 380?

Exercise 3: In the space provided, what's missing? Insert values you believe are missing from this list that would be critical to the success of a Small Business Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 4: In the column provided, rank each value in order of importance (1-high importance).

EXERCISE 1: Review Community Input (Understand Values)	EXERCISE 2: Do these apply? (Check those apply)	EXERCISE 4: Rank Values 1-5 (1- most important)
Government role (Taxation, regulation and "red tape" in local government hinders small business growth. The city lacks follow-through in its commitments to small businesses. Small businesses require more visibility and perceive that government does not prioritize them during policy making. The government should assist with the speed and complexity of permitting for small businesses. Small businesses do not have a "seat at the table," and it should be the city's job to amplify the voice of this sector to promote equity.)		
Financial incentives (Incentives and attention should be paid to small business at a similar level to which city pays big and tech businesses. A successful small business program leads to job creation.)		
Collaboration (Collaboration, sharing resources and crosspollination among industries are all desired outcomes of a successful small business program.)		
Communication & cooperation (The government could standardize processes and communicate existing resources to better educate small businesses on what's already available to them. Small businesses are open to government involvement when it comes to promoting equity and welfare.)		
EXERCISE 3: What's Missing?:		

Creative Sector

Purpose: Provide backing and enhance the creative sector as a part of the Austin’s cultural and creative identity

Values: Reinforce Austin’s competitiveness, attractiveness, distinctiveness and strengthen the cultural economy

Exercise 1: Review the values the community provided. These are the values that the community have said are the most important aspects of a Creative Sector Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 2: In the column provided, check off the values you agree should apply. Do these/should these values apply to a Creative Sector Program under Chapter 380?

Exercise 3: In the space provided, what’s missing? Insert values you believe are missing from this list that would be critical to the success of a Creative Sector Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 4: In the column provided, rank each value in order of importance (1-high importance).

EXERCISE 1: Review Community Input (Understand Values)	EXERCISE 2: Do these apply? (Check those apply)	EXERCISE 4: Rank Values 1-5 (1- most important)
Government role (The government is perceived as the facilitator of partnerships and connector between public-private, creative-non-creative, and peer-peer. The government should continue to support and promote the arts in this capacity. The government could help those in the creative sector acquire health care through non-profit partnerships or by creating a network.)		
Financial incentives (Lack of available funding is the main challenge in the creative sector and effective incentives could take the form of rebates, grants, rent control, and property tax abatements alongside information about where to access funding opportunities.)		
Collaboration (Due to the lack of a centralized network within the creative sector, it is difficult to collaborate or have civic engagement.)		
Communication & cooperation (There is a general feeling that the arts are not considered a priority, part of which is rooted in the lack of understanding of the economic value or impact of the arts. Therefore, more recognition of what is already being done, advocacy and direct marketing of impact could strengthen the sector.)		
Affordability (Cost, availability and suitability of space is a major concern for the local industry.)		
EXERCISE 3: What's Missing?:		

Social Enterprise

Purpose: Support new and existing social enterprise organizations that align with the City of Austin’s strategic vision

Values: Focus on the members of the community and address practical needs

Exercise 1: Review the values the community provided. These are the values that the community have said are the most important aspects of a Social Enterprise Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 2: In the column provided, check off the values you agree should apply. Do these/should these values apply to a Social Enterprise Program under Chapter 380?

Exercise 3: In the space provided, what’s missing? Insert values you believe are missing from this list that would be critical to the success of a Social Enterprise Program under Chapter 380.

Exercise 4: In the column provided, rank each value in order of importance (1-high importance).

EXERCISE 1: Review Community Input (Understand Values)	EXERCISE 2: Do these apply? (Check those apply)	EXERCISE 4: Rank Values 1-5 (1- most important)
Government role (Government can be important in connecting social enterprise organizations with public services, with other sectors, each other and directly with clients. Government can serve as the centralized clearinghouse or administer a single web portal to better facilitate such cooperation. Non-profits and social enterprise organizations are interested in partnering with the city.)		
Financial connections (Open to receive grant money, assist with grant applications and connect for-profit businesses and other funders. Social enterprises need more funding from the city and other sources.)		
Collaboration (Coordination between social enterprises and government is lacking and the feeling is the local government is not listening to all the voices in the community.)		
Communication & cooperation (Accessibility of information and existing resources is missing from the social enterprise ecosystem. Additionally, there is the lack of understanding services that are available, especially the lack of clear funding criteria.)		
Innovation (Innovation/ the start-up culture and shared co-working and incubator spaces are positively benefiting social enterprises.)		
EXERCISE 3: What's Missing?:		

Final Exercise:

Considering all aspects of today's conversation (Austin's current economic conditions, community feedback and values, practical application, identified priorities, pressing needs and the potential scope of a revised Chapter 380 policy) **please indicate the order in which each of these potential new programs should be rolled out (1 = first program, 7 = last program)**

_____ Business Recruitment

_____ Business Expansion

_____ Workforce Development

_____ Real Estate

_____ Small Business

_____ Creative Sector

_____ Social Enterprise

Anything Missing?: _____

APPENDIX A:

COMMUNITY VALUES

Community Values Summary:

Overarching community values emerged during the Economic Development Policy Community Conversations (i.e., what's important for a revised Chapter 380 Incentive Policy.):

Value 1: Government Role: Connector, Investor, Path-Clearer: The government has the responsibility to ensure that growth is shared equitably. Government should provide a strong incentive program that services small businesses as well as large corporations, and that will allow Austin to remain competitive against other cities. Government should facilitate connections within the business community and provide connections for resources and services outside business industry. Government can promote economic equity by facilitating strong job training programs to fill mid-skill positions. The Austin music and arts community is mostly made up of small businesses, many of which are struggling, and the government must step in to support them to preserve community identity. The government should reduce the burden of zoning, permitting and expensive property taxes that business growth and prosperity.

Value 2: Focus on Equity: Employment Opportunities for All: Economic growth is contributing to inequality and economic segregation in the City of Austin, where the inequity issue is intimately related to the affordability issue. The government should ensure prosperity is accessible for all community members, emphasize tools and programs that serve vulnerable groups (small businesses, low-income residents, individuals living in poverty, unemployed, under-employed, etc.) Potential solutions for rising inequity in Austin include job training, job access, and family services to help individuals access that job training (specifically, the ability to take advantage of educational and employment opportunities is dependent upon being able to get to them.) In addition, real estate development should support all regions of the city and all residents equitably.

Value 3: Unify the Community through Collaboration: Austin businesses could better operate outside silos and benefit from the resulting cross-pollinating innovation. Businesses should have stronger relationships with school districts, Austin Community College and local colleges and universities. Non-profits need to connect better with funders. City government is the best positioned entity to make businesses, workers and nonprofits collaborate for the betterment of the economy and health of the community. Artistic and musical entities need help connecting and communicating with businesses. Dialogue between industry sectors, facilitated by the government, could help increase cooperative efforts, pool resources and solve problems across sectors.

Value 4: Train, Recruit and Retain Local Workforce and Talent: The lack of middle-skilled workers in Austin is a problem for both the labor force and employers. Businesses are turning down work for lack of middle-skill employees to carry out operations. Stronger job training programs could help businesses fill middle-skill positions and also address rising economic inequity within the city. Training programs in high schools could be enhanced to include partnerships with businesses and employers. Those who participate in job training programs need wraparound

services, particularly daycare and transportation. Employers should be able to hire local employees rather than seeking immigrant or outside talent.

Value 5: Support Austin's Culture, Creative Sector and Community Identity: The arts are an economic engine in Austin, but are not always recognized as such. Creative enterprises are having real difficulty in affording space in which to produce their content. Music, art and theater is what makes Austin a desirable place to live and what brings business into the city; but these businesses drive costs up and threaten to push creatives out. The government should play a stronger role in supporting the creative class, at the risk of losing the very thing that causes prosperity in Austin. Rent is the most critical issue facing the creative sector and the government needs to put programs in place to help control rents or help businesses pay for them. Creative enterprises are often artistic first and businesses second and therefore require training, support, services and access to information to run efficiently.

Value 6: Incentivize, Support, Staff and Train Small Businesses: The local and small business community has significant economic impact. They keep neighborhoods vibrant and prosperous, provide employment, and support local community identity. However, the government does not engage with or support small businesses as it does large businesses. The government should provide incentive tools that small businesses can use for their specific needs and negotiate terms they can accept, thereby spending less on big business incentives and more on small business incentives that require a smaller stake and offer better ROI. In addition, small businesses need subsidized job training to achieve their business growth operations goals. Government programs can encourage local ownership and development of small businesses that meet the needs of neighborhoods and communities.

Value 7: Build Affordable, Livable, and Accessible Development: There is a need for a stable development market that includes affordable homes and small spaces to rent for local businesses, encourages walkable neighborhoods, and integrates public transport improvements to create connectivity. Permitting and zoning relief is needed for development efficiency and cost, as is property tax rate control. As development and housing costs rise, Austin could become more homogenous, therefore economic development policies need to actively support communities of color as they have support majority segments in the past. The government should address problems with segregation, diversity and negative effects of gentrification.

Value 8: Impact Business Growth: The government can clear a path for business growth by working with the community on property taxes, permits and zoning. The government could shift its role from allowing inspectors to shut down projects or businesses who are out of compliance to the role of a consultant, where they suggest and offer solutions for businesses to continue operations. The government can also assist in the growth of businesses by providing workforce training and a supportive environment for small businesses.

Value 9: Control Affordability: The rising cost of living is pushing people further outside the urban core and causing businesses to raise wages to maintain their workforce. Affordable space is scarce and threatens the longevity of social enterprises that seek to serve the community. Rising rents slow down the growth of existing businesses and prevent the creation of new businesses, therefore the government should institute rent stabilization to protect the economic base. The city should be focused on creating living wage jobs to ensure income matches living expenses.

Value 10: Economic Diversity: The focus on the tech industry threatens the economic diversity of the city, therefore the government focus should be to attract other growth industries, such as consumer packaged goods, that are capable of bringing a large number of mid-skilled jobs to Austin. The city should recruit a diverse range of businesses to hedge against future downturns and industry shifts. In addition, government programs should be targeted at populations not common in certain industries to encourage diversity and innovation (such as women in technology). Small businesses represent a large part of the economic base and should be supported, funded and retained to protect against big business contractions that affect employment. Residential neighborhoods should be economically diverse, offering a wide range of goods, services, representative industries, job functions, skill levels and wage ranges to support the integration of diverse communities.

“Prosperous Austin Economy” Community Values:

To Live Here:

- a. Economic **inequity** continues to widen the gap of prosperity in Austin.
- b. Decreasing **affordability** and the rising **cost of living** is an important risk factor for community members suffering from “sticker shock” and the inability to grow their businesses within the current cost climate. Affordable commercial and creative space are among the leading concerns that have the potential to erode the success of business enterprises both new and established.
- c. The **role of local government** can be defined as providing regulatory support, simplistic compliance structure, financial partnerships for programs that support the community and tools/programs that are accessible, well-publicized, and reflective of needs that may not necessarily include financial support.
- d. **Transportation** affects every aspect of the lives of citizens, businesses and neighborhoods. A comprehensive vision for the future of Austin’s transportation and transit infrastructure is needed to ensure the workforce can physically access jobs, enjoy a wide variety of transit modes and better connect a sprawling city to neighborhood centers.
- e. A new perspective is needed for **commercial and mixed use developments** to better unite where people work, play and live. **Housing** that is both affordable and plentiful is required to drive available supply up and push prices down to match income levels.

To Work Here:

- f. **Economic diversity** insulates Austin against future downturns by supporting a wide range of business sizes and industries to offer a balanced, diversified economic base. Increased support is needed for **small and local business** in the form of city partnerships, access to funding, training, and fostering stronger collaboration. This also points to the need for a wider range of wages and job types to include more middle-skill and middle-income roles to help close the equity gap.
- g. **Culture** and the strength of the **creative sector** run deep within the Austin success story and should be a growing, not shrinking, part of the Austin economy as the market expands. This includes the need for the public to access the creative community that is well weaved within the culture, economy and job base.
- h. **Talent** and **workforce** investment programs that are accessible, attractive and meet both employer and community demands are necessary in narrowing the prosperity gap.
- i. **Cooperation** and **collaboration** are needed on a macro-level (city) and micro-level (business/industry). The city should focus on honing its strategic vision to unify the

needs of citizens, businesses and neighborhoods. Businesses and community members could benefit from an improved organized effort to collaborate, share ideas and pool resources.

APPENDIX B:

SESSION SUMMARIES

- **Business Recruitment/Business Expansion Program:**
 - **Purpose:** Recruit new and support existing businesses in Austin
 - **Values:** Ensure steady net new job growth and investment in Austin
 - **Community Input (Business Expansion):** Public input for business expansion emphasized the risks for business contraction and opportunities for business growth, the role of government, talent and workforce development, collaboration within the sector, local business support, the role of communities and neighborhoods, and government subsidies. Business growth opportunity is dependent on training for existing talent, availability of skilled workers for hire and extending the employee continuum. The government should identify a variety of training opportunities and connect corporations and small businesses within the same industries to share knowledge. Small and local business growth can directly affect the neighborhood or community the business services by creating jobs proximate to workers, training opportunities for neighborhood residents and solidify the community identity. Conversely, business growth depends on the growth of the surrounding community. Business growth can happen in multi-use spaces, such as co-working, library, showroom, pop-up and unused retail spaces. Funding is needed for business expansion, training and marketing. Government should also assist with identifying grant funds available to businesses in need.
 - **Community Input (Business Recruitment):** Public input for business recruitment included community benefits of recruitment projects, collaboration, equity, transportation, and marketing and communications. Attributes of projects that are beneficial to the community include affordability, infrastructure improvements, transportation/zoning and equity. Collaborative efforts should take the form of businesses partnering with each other and with local schools to develop the city's workforce. The government needs to focus on increasing efficiency with issuing permits, implementing zoning regulations and taxes, which are burdensome on Austin businesses. The government needs to focus on living wages and address underlying affordability issues to better attract businesses to the community. Business recruitment tools should focus on small businesses, attracting venture capital and improve economic diversity through large businesses. Business recruitment efforts should help create a balanced economy that reduces poverty, income inequality, and other economic segregations. An effective business recruitment program would be intentionally branded and promoted widely.
- **Small Business Program:**
 - **Purpose:** Offer resources and support to small and local businesses that create jobs

- **Values:** Sustain the Austin ecosystem and promote the success of small businesses in the overall economy
- **Community Input:** Public input for a small business program concentrated on role of government, the impact of local and small businesses, communication and dissemination of existing support programs. Taxation, regulation and “red tape” in local government hinders small business growth. The city lacks follow-through in its commitments to small businesses. Small businesses require more visibility and perceive that government does not prioritize them during policy making. The government should assist with the speed and complexity of permitting for small businesses. Small businesses do not have a "seat at the table," and it should be the city's job to amplify the voice of this sector to promote equity. Incentives and attention should be paid to small business at a similar level to which city pays big and tech businesses. A successful small business program leads to job creation. Collaboration, sharing resources and crosspollination among industries are all desired outcomes of a successful small business program. The government could standardize processes and communicate existing resources to better educate small businesses on what’s already available to them. Small businesses are open to government involvement when it comes to promoting equity and welfare.
- **Creative Sector Program:**
 - **Purpose:** Provide backing and enhance the creative sector as a part of the Austin’s cultural and creative identity
 - **Values:** Reinforce Austin’s competitiveness, attractiveness, distinctiveness and strengthen the cultural economy
 - **Community Input Summary:** Public input for the Creative Sector development program highlighted the importance of the role of government, available subsidies, collaboration, development of technology and infrastructure, marketing and communication, and affordability. The government is perceived as the facilitator of partnerships and connector between public-private, creative-non-creative, and peer-peer. The government should continue to support and promote the arts in this capacity. The government could help those in the creative sector acquire health care through non-profit partnerships or by creating a network. Lack of available funding is the main challenge in the creative sector and effective incentives could take the form of rebates, grants, rent control, and property tax abatements alongside information about where to access funding opportunities. Due to the lack of a centralized network within the creative sector, it is difficult to collaborate or have civic engagement. Cost, availability and suitability of space is a major concern for the local industry. There is a general feeling that the arts are not considered a priority, part of which is rooted in the lack of understanding of the economic value or impact of the arts. Therefore, more recognition of what is already being done, advocacy and direct marketing of impact could strengthen the sector.
- **Workforce Development Program:**

- **Purpose:** Support employers and employees by developing the skills and productivity of the new and existing workforce
- **Values:** Connect skills with jobs and create real employment opportunities for the underserved community
- **Community Input:** Public input for Workforce Development emphasized the role of government, availability of training, the importance of equity, government subsidies, small business workforce, and marketing and communications. Workers need more training to be able to take advantage of available job opportunities. Employers widely support this training because they need more qualified Austin workers to fill mid-skill-level jobs. Government has an important role to play regarding workforce training by directly matching firms and workers to mutually beneficial employment opportunities. However, an inadvertent effect of government's current involvement has further disadvantaged racial minorities, lower-income individuals, and small/local business. In the current labor market, there is a mismatch between skills, workers and jobs. Training-related services (such as daycare and transportation) are necessary for those with limited incomes to be able to participate in the training. Inequity based on income, race, skill-level and geography (East Austin) need to be addressed as a part of this strategy. Local government should provide incentives that help put people to work, but the City has often used them to benefit big businesses over small businesses. Small businesses would also like an incentive program that helps support their workforce needs, but it would probably look different than the current 380 structure. A general lack of awareness of workforce development programs, particularly among small businesses, hampers their effectiveness.
- **Real Estate Program:**
 - **Purpose:** Create or support opportunity and access to physical space for innovation, incubate ideas, grow operations
 - **Values:** Serve as neighborhood connectors and centers for place-making
 - **Community Input:** Public input for the Real Estate development program highlighted the role of government, equity, investing in socially beneficially and equitable real estate projects, marketing and communications, government subsidies and transportation. The role of government includes setting the overall strategy for the city, encouraging businesses and non-profits to invest, and educating home owners and commercial businesses. Government could protect populations from poverty while improving neighborhoods. A successful real estate development program would be inclusive and there would be both cultural and economic diversity created as a result. Real Estate development should benefit the economy, the community, provide social equity and protect the environment. Public forums and access to information on available programs will improve efficiency and effectiveness. Currently, the lengthy permitting process holds back the completion of socially responsible projects, and local government needs to address this immediately. Incentives can promote these economic goals through taxes or zoning and encourage

sustainability. Transportation-oriented development could provide integrated solutions.

- **Social Enterprise Program:**

- **Purpose:** Support new and existing social enterprise organizations that align with the City's of Austin's strategic vision
- **Values:** Focus on the members of the community and address practical needs
- **Community Input:** Public input for the social enterprise program focused on government role, cooperation in and outside the industry, available subsidies, funding, resources, marketing, development of technology and data collection, innovation/entrepreneurialism, talent/workforce and education. Government can be important in connecting social enterprise organizations with public services, with other sectors, each other and directly with clients. Government can serve as the centralized clearinghouse or administer a single web portal to better facilitate such cooperation. Non-profits and social enterprise organizations are interested in partnering with the city. They are also keen to receive grant money, assist with grant applications and connect for-profit businesses and other funders. Coordination between social enterprises and government is lacking and the feeling is the local government is not listening to all the voices in the community. Social enterprises need more funding from the city and other sources. Accessibility of information and existing resources is missing from the social enterprise ecosystem. Additionally, there is the lack of understanding services that are available, especially the lack of clear funding criteria. Innovation/ the start-up culture and shared co-working and incubator spaces are positively benefiting social enterprises.