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R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, Chapters 1, 2 and 3 of the Comprehensive Plan were approved and adopted in 1977; and,

WHEREAS, Chapter 4 (Growth Management) has been in the preparation process for the development of a growth management process to influence urban development in the direction of specified goals and objectives; and,

WHEREAS, Chapter 4 has been completed and establishes a policy of review and evaluation to guide new development toward the most naturally suitable locations and away from areas of environmental sensitivity; Now, Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

That Chapter 4 (Growth Management), a copy of which is on file in the City Clerk's Office, be and it is hereby adopted and incorporated within the Comprehensive Plan.

ADOPTED: February 15, 1979. ATTEST: Grace Monroe  
City Clerk

ADLR:rs



# City of Austin

Founded by Congress, Republic of Texas, 1839  
Municipal Building Eighth at Colorado, P.O. Box 1088, Austin, Texas 78767 Telephone 512/477-6511

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May 23, 1978

Mr. Dan H. Davidson  
City Manager  
City of Austin, Texas

Dear Mr. Davidson:

The Planning Commission is pleased to submit the "Growth Management Process", Chapter IV of the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan to you for presentation to the City Council. As you know, the City Council approved the Comprehensive Plan in April, 1977 with the instructions that a growth pattern termed "Directed Growth and Inner-City Expansion" become the basis for growth management described in Chapter IV. Chapter IV was rewritten to reflect this pattern and has been reviewed by the Austin Tomorrow Ongoing Committee, the Environmental Board, and by citizens at a public hearing.

It is important to note that Chapter IV does not stand by itself; rather it is an integral part of the entire Comprehensive Plan which is divided into four chapters as follows:

- Chapter I - "Introduction" provides a history of the Comprehensive Plan and recaps the Austin Tomorrow Goals Program.
- Chapter II - "Goals, Objectives, and Policies" is comprised of statements which provide development and improvement guidelines on eight functional topics.
- Chapter III - "Development Suitability" describes the implications of urbanization and suburbanization within Austin's environmental context. The synthesis of environmental suitability and the goals in Chapter II yield developmental limitations which form the basis for growth management.
- Chapter IV - "Growth Management Process" establishes a desired physical pattern and priorities for the city's future development.

The Planning Commission agrees that Chapter IV, as written, is an accurate reflection of the adopted growth pattern, "Directed Growth and Inner-City Expansion." This growth management process encourages

development in the central city and within the environmentally suitable growth corridor. It recognizes that a certain amount of development will occur outside the corridor despite city influence and offers policies to control the nature of such development. It is intended to provide guidelines for decisions that are flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the community.

In addition to recommending approval of Chapter IV, the Planning Commission requests that disposition be made regarding the Austin Tomorrow Ongoing Committee specifically in terms of its potential role in the monitoring and evaluation of Comprehensive Plan implementation as described in Chapter IV.

Respectfully submitted,

*Miguel A. Guerrero*

Miguel Guerrero, Chairman  
Planning Commission

MG:LP:bw

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter IV

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

May 23, 1978

## I. INTRODUCTION

This Comprehensive Plan is the document officially expressing citizens' planning goals. One of the dominant themes of Chapter II, "Goals, Objectives and Policies", is the need for a growth management process to influence urban development in the direction of these goals.

With the termination of the Austin Tomorrow Goals Program and publication of the Goals report, the Austin Tomorrow Ongoing Committee (ATOC) and the Planning Commission assumed major responsibility for public review of the plan-writing process. In light of that responsibility they evaluated three alternative growth patterns and their projected characteristics, comparing them to the explicit and implicit urban characteristics of Chapter II, "Goals, Objectives and Policies". The concurrent recommendation of both groups was a fourth growth pattern which, in their estimation, best fulfills the intent of the Plan.

The selected pattern which will guide growth management decisions is called "Directed Expansion and Inner-City Development." It is described in Section II of this chapter. Section III derives a system of priority areas for urbanization and provision of municipal services based on the selected growth pattern. The concepts of environmental development suitability, elaborated in Chapter III, and inner-city redevelopment figure importantly in the system of priority areas. Section IV suggests a monitoring and evaluation process to measure progress toward implementation of the selected growth pattern, citizens' goals, and the Plan.

## II. THE SELECTED GROWTH PATTERN

### The Selection Process

The growth alternatives which were publically reviewed by the Austin Tomorrow Ongoing Committee and the Planning Commission were (1) Current Trends, (2) Redistribution (of growth based upon development suitability) and (3) Limited Expansion (redistribution and compaction of growth into high density nodes within the central city). Descriptions of these alternatives in terms of geographical distribution of projected growth, population density and distribution, land use and other characteristics are provided in the Appendix.

Both ATOC and the Planning Commission determined Current Trends to be unacceptable, since it would not allow realization of many of the goals of the Austin Tomorrow Goals Program, such as providing adequate open space, protecting environmentally sensitive areas and managing growth.

They determined that the Redistribution Alternative meets many of the citizen's desires, although it stops short of providing for the full range of goals expressed, such as a more compact city form and an efficient public transportation system.

ATOC and the Planning Commission further concluded that although the Limited Expansion alternative meets many of the aims of the Goals Program, the proposal would encourage a greater amount of high intensity development than now seems desirable for Austin, given the city's lack

of experience and exposure to the density concentrations proposed in this alternative. Although Limited Expansion was believed to promote efficient provision of municipal services, the potentially undesirable side effects of high density centers appeared to outweigh possible benefits for Austin at this time.

The selected growth pattern combines the desired characteristics of both the Redistribution and Limited Expansion alternatives. The Planning Commission labeled this pattern "Directed Expansion and Inner-City Development" including the policy guidelines found in Redistribution plus two additional elements. First, the City should promote development of underutilized inner-city land and redevelopment of particular areas to provide increased residential choices consistent with the preservation of existing neighborhoods. This should include various housing types and densities throughout the city. Second, the City should participate in a limited number of experimental high intensity development centers as proposed in the third alternative growth pattern, Limited Expansion. ATOC noted that apparently a few such developments were currently planned around Austin. The City staff was advised, as part of the growth management process, to closely monitor the projects' impact on housing availability, environmental quality, traffic generation, transit effectiveness, social conditions, utility demand, energy consumption and land use.

"Directed Expansion and Inner-City Development" was selected to facilitate sound urban development consistent with the Goals Program and a healthy, vital economy. All policy options, ordinance revisions, capital improvements

programming and development decisions should facilitate implementation of this pattern.

The objectives of implementing "Directed Expansion and Inner-City Development" include achievement of the following urban characteristics by 1995:

- Most new residential construction would be low density single-family units.
- Most new single-family residential construction would occur inside and contiguous to, Austin's 1977 incorporated area where municipal services are generally accessible.
- New apartment construction would occur in various locations both inside and outside the 1977 Incorporated Area.
- Growth would be contiguous to existing development and municipal policies would discourage leapfrog development and urban sprawl.
- The extension of municipal water and wastewater service would be provided according to priority growth area policies.
- Scattered developments utilizing septic tank systems and small waste treatment plants would occur in outlying areas where municipal systems are not readily available.
- Urban development along the north-south IH-35 corridor would be increased.
- The Core Area, including the Central Business District, would reassert its status as an active retail, service, residential and cultural center.
- Older neighborhoods would stabilize and remain attractive residential areas, not losing population to the suburbs.
- The trend toward deterioration of the housing stock within the inner portions of the city would be reversed, providing a variety of residential choices.
- Economically and ethnically segregated neighborhoods would tend to diminish as low income families enter the housing market.
- Busing of school children would be minimized as a larger proportion of our neighborhoods become integrated.
- Commercial development would concentrate in multi-use centers located near major intersections.
- Most new industrial development would locate in the FM 1325 area along Ed Bluestein Boulevard and Ben White Boulevard.



- The amount of additional urban development in environmentally sensitive areas would diminish.
- The automobile would continue to be the primary mode of transportation.
- Extensive bus service, and possibly light rail mass transit, would be more feasible.

ATOC and the Planning Commission agreed that the goals, objectives and policies found in Chapter II support the preceding urban characteristics. The selected growth pattern will allow for environmental protection as well as a broad choice of development opportunities throughout the city. Revitalization of the Core Area, preservation of neighborhoods, and protection of natural areas should also result from implementation of "Directed Expansion and Inner-City Development".

#### Physical Interpretation of the Growth Pattern

"Directed Expansion and Inner-City Development" incorporates growth management features common to both the Redistribution and Limited Expansion alternatives, recognizing an environmentally preferable location for urban growth. This was determined from the Environmental Development Limitations map described in Chapter III and illustrated here in Figure 1.

Figure 1 illustrates major development constraints in a schematic form. To the west of Austin are steep slopes, the Lake Austin watershed, the Barton Creek watershed, and recharge zones of the Edwards Aquifer. To the east are clay soils with high shrink-swell characteristics, prime agricultural soils, extensive floodplains, and the Bergstrom Air Force Base noise zone. As shown in Figure 2, these combined constraints define the general area of best environmental suitability for Austin's future growth, a linear corridor

extending through Austin to the north and south, referred to as the Growth Corridor.

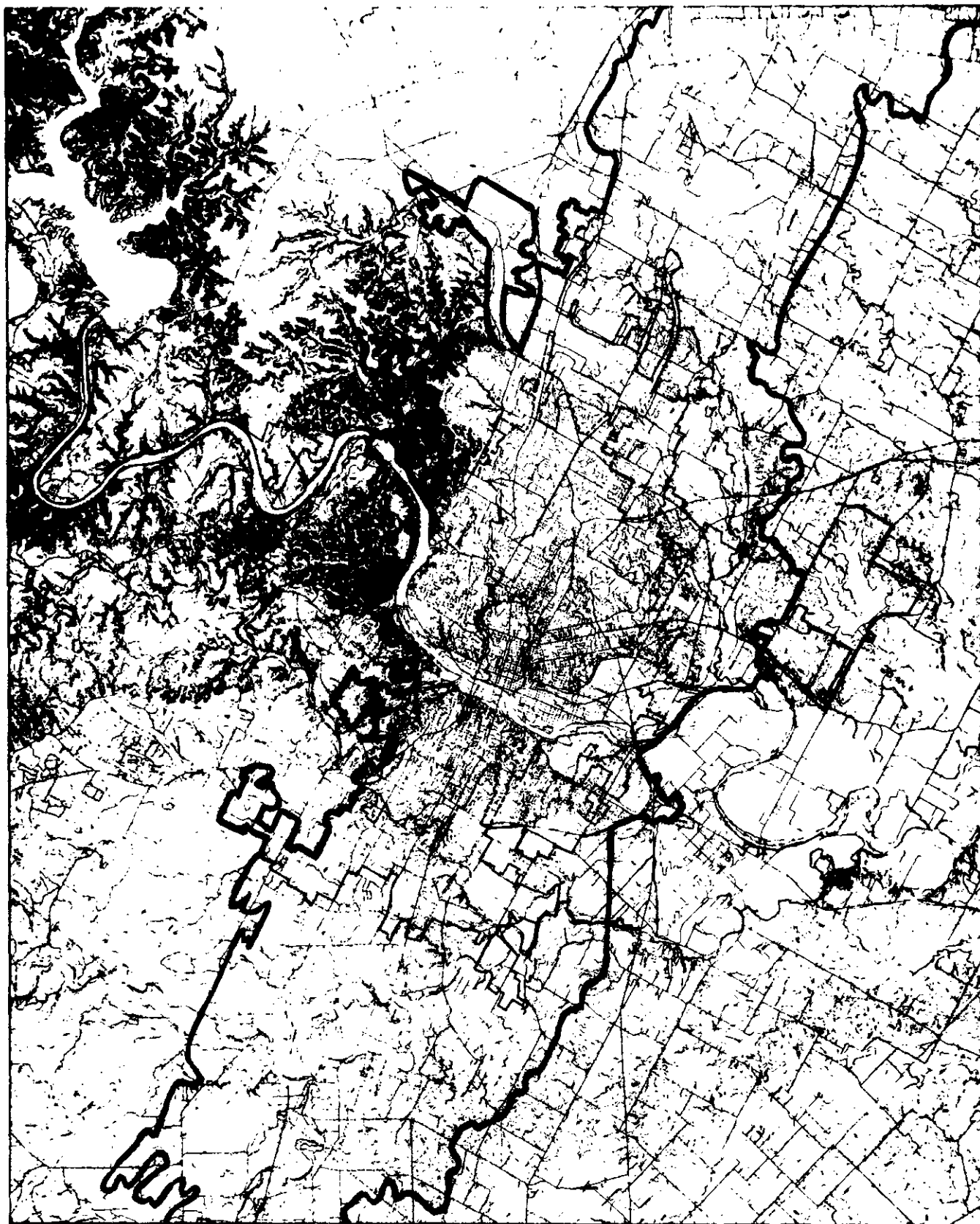
The firm boundaries of Figure 2 were designated for the Growth Corridor in order to facilitate growth management decisions. The central part of the western boundary of the corridor and a small portion of the eastern boundary are determined by the Austin incorporated limits. Further north and south, the western boundary is determined by the first occurrence of the waterbearing Edwards limestone. The northern part of the eastern boundary delineates the geologic division between chalk bedrock and deep clays. With one exception, the remainder of the eastern corridor boundary is determined by ridgelines separating Walnut Creek and Onion Creek watersheds from much less developmentally suitable drainage basins to the east. The singular exception is the eastern boundary segment which coincides with the Bergstrom Air Force Base Ldn-65 noise zone.

#### Goals Compatibility

"Directed Expansion and Inner-City Development" was selected as the best physical interpretation of the goals and objectives stated in Chapter II of this Plan. The statements below indicate the compatibility of the goals with the characteristics of the selected pattern for growth.

1. Environmental suitability -- Figure 1 and earlier mapping demonstrate that the plan seeks to encourage further growth and development in the most environmentally suitable areas available. The Plan seeks to discourage urbanization

FIGURE 2



DEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR  
Austin City Limits  
--- 1960 City Limits  
— 1976 City Limits

outside the corridor where severe problems, such as those associated with slopes, soils, engineering properties, water quality, noise and other hazards generally occur.

2. Transportation considerations -- The goals in Chapter III place high priority on an efficient public transportation system and express particular interest in developing an intensive mass transit system. The corridor is already well-served by prominent transportation infrastructure facilities. North-south travel in the corridor is now, and will continue to be, better served than east-west travel. The alignment of urban and suburban development in the Corridor offers the best chance for the feasible use of a fixed, rapid transit system in the foreseeable future. Coincidentally, the proposed mass transit "spine", which has been under consideration by the Austin Transportation Study Committee, would be located along the center of the Corridor.

3. Infrastructure and construction costs -- Outside the corridor, the cost of constructing buildings, utilities, road systems and other public facilities increases significantly due to engineering constraints, steep slopes and topographic features. The environmental cost may be greater still.

Within the Corridor, infrastructure service can be phased incrementally. The gross density of a service area could remain high, yet environmental cost would be relatively low. Outside the corridor, extension of utilities over constraining features to reach isolated developments is inefficient. It is also difficult to provide an adequate level of fire and police protection in these areas.

4. Low and moderate cost housing opportunities -- The Corridor contains few areas with adverse conditions for construction. Special foundations and exceptional construction practices are generally unwarranted. As indicated above, utilities and transportation can be supplied at minimum costs. Growth to the north and south should enhance the availability of low and moderate cost housing.

5. Annexation opportunities -- With the adopted growth pattern new residential, commercial and industrial growth can be annexed in contiguous segments without skipping large vacant areas. This is seldom possible west of the corridor, where development often occurs in isolated clusters.

6. Reduced racial segregation -- Current development trends tend to reinforce the east-west socio-ethnic dichotomy which is presently established in the city. Emphasis on development in a north-south corridor would tend to reduce this locational dichotomy for new housing.

7. Industrial location -- Growth along the IH-35 corridor coincides with existing industrial locations such as Westinghouse, IBM, and John Roberts. Many good industrial sites can be found to the north and south near the MoPac Railroad and IH-35.

8. Regional growth trends -- Expansion of neighboring municipalities such as Georgetown, San Marcos and Round Rock is expected to continue in the corridor.

9. Amenities -- This corridor parallels and provides scenic amenities along the Balcones Escarpment. Live Oak trees thrive on the Austin chalk formation, the predominate bedrock of the area. The potential for shade

trees and revegetation is much higher than on the limestone terrain west of the Corridor and the threat to water resources is much lower.

10. Open space and urban sprawl -- The urban form provided by the Corridor gives the greatest assurance that suburban neighborhoods will remain bordered by land of a rural character on the east and west rather than engulfed by expanding urban sprawl. The proximity of each residence to open space is enhanced.

11. Green belts and parks -- Numerous creeks cut across the Corridor, providing greenbelt opportunities, and natural features provide buffer zones for potential high density residential, industrial, or commercial land uses.

### III. GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The adopted growth pattern, "Directed Expansion and Inner-City Development", provides the basis for establishing Growth Areas for urban development.

This section designates land resources in and around Austin according to their development suitability in terms of the Comprehensive Plan. Priorities derive principally from the concepts of environmental development suitability and revitalization of the inner-city. For implementation of the adopted growth pattern, municipal services and utilities should be guided by the following recommendations, and proposed developments should consider the criteria presented for each Growth Area.

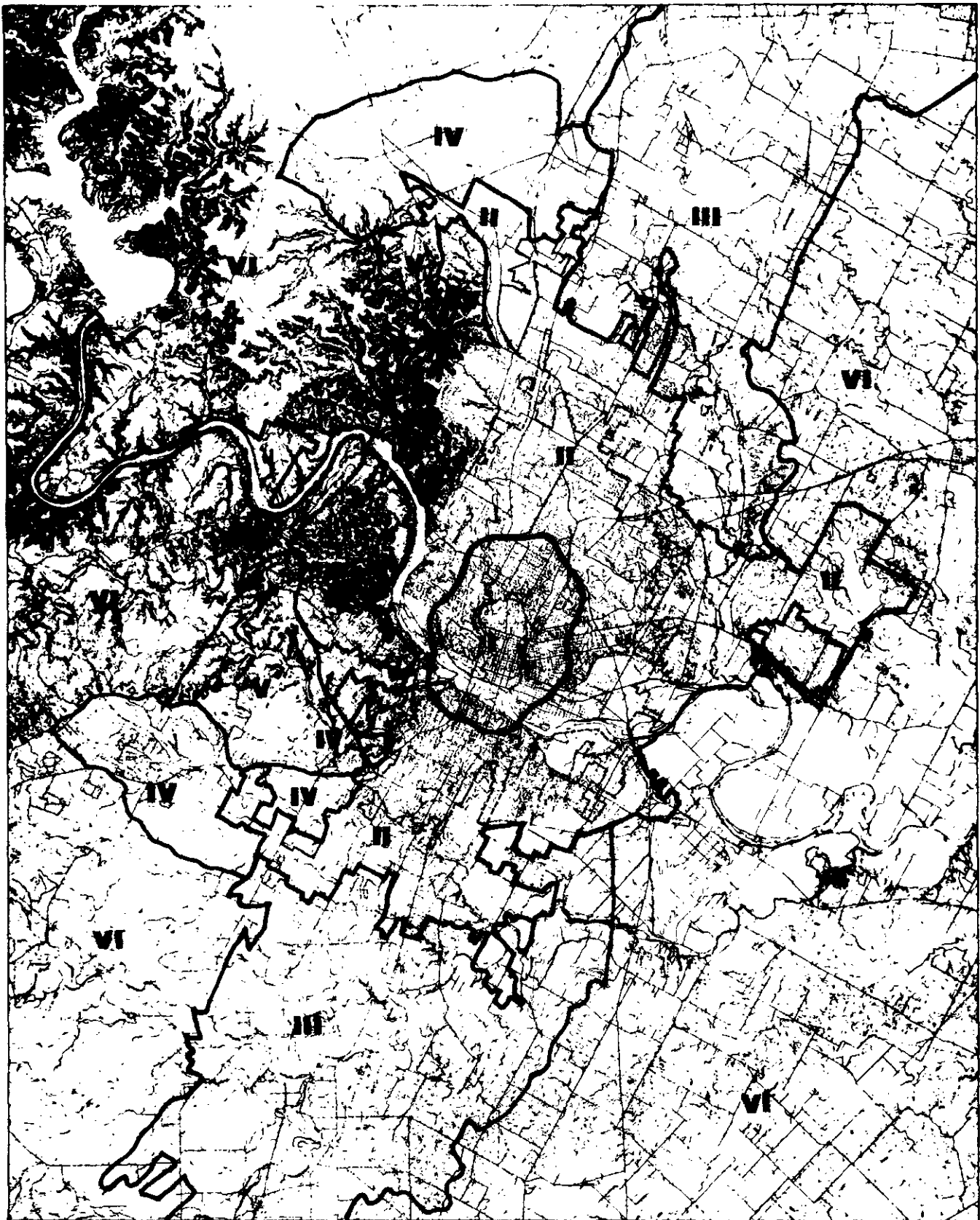
Growth Area designations are intended as a growth management technique to emphasize the concepts of development suitability and more efficient utilization of land in the central city. The principles and programs delineated for each Growth Area are guidelines for municipal investments and decisions. Implementation of the selected urban pattern and the goals and objectives of Chapter II will ultimately require translation of these guidelines into specific ordinances. A comprehensive approach to growth management will be necessary to assure that the various branches of municipal government work together to promote the transition from current trends to "Directed Expansion and Inner-City Development".

A. PRIORITY GROWTH AREAS - those areas of best environmental suitability for Austin's future growth.

1. Priority Area I

Highest priority for public investment is assigned to the center,

FIGURE 3



PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Department of Planning  
City of Austin, Texas



or core of the city (Figure 3). Assignments of this priority is a response to the goals' emphasis on inner-city redevelopment and its accompanying urban benefits. More efficient urban transportation, neighborhood preservation, increased open space, more efficient provision of utilities and government services, increased housing opportunities within the city and environmental protection depend upon preservation and revitalization of the inner-city. Municipal policies and investments designed to preserve and revive the core area should provide incentives for more intensive and efficient use of undeveloped and underutilized inner-city land resources. Appropriate principles for promoting development in Priority Area I include:

1. Designation of Capital Improvements Program funds for specific Core Area projects, such as:
  - Correction of street, drainage and bridge deficiencies
  - More efficient, convenient parking facilities
  - Mass transit, pedestrian malls and bicycle paths
  - Utility improvements to facilitate revitalization
2. Maximization of the use of federal funds available for Core Area revitalization, such as:
  - Housing and Community Development Block Grants
  - Economic Development Agency Funds
3. Expansion and improvements of public services, such as:
  - Refuse collection
  - Police protection
  - Transportation
4. Initiation of an economic development program to facilitate public and private development activity.
5. Improved planning and coordination by the City of Austin, State of Texas and University of Texas to include:
  - Historic preservation

- Services to promote inner-city residency
- Designation of very high intensity residential areas
- Improved appearance through landscape and sign control
- Neighborhood preservation.

## 2. Priority Area II

Land in Austin which is outside the Core Area but within the 1977 Incorporated Area receives second highest priority for urban development. The use of undeveloped and underutilized land within the city for new residential and commercial growth should decrease the pressure of urban sprawl at the city's periphery, thus promoting many of the goals and objectives in Chapter II. Such development should not, however, proceed to the detriment of existing residential neighborhoods or public open space. Principles to direct growth in Priority Area II include:

1. Allocation of CIP funds for projects which improve the level of municipal services and facilities in already-developed areas
2. Extension of municipal utilities, services and facilities to promote the use of undeveloped and underutilized land and correct current environmental problems.
3. Emphasis on planning and coordination activities which include:
  - Encouraging Planned Unit Developments to increase flexibility in developing troublesome tracts and increasing the proximity of residences to employment centers
  - Revising zoning regulations to promote development of vacant land
  - Neighborhood planning
  - Sale or lease of surplus State and City land for private development
  - Encouraging industrial location in appropriate areas
  - Designation of multi-family residential areas

### 3. Priority Area III

Priority Area III includes that land outside Austin's 1977 Incorporated Area with fewest environmental constraints. A north-south corridor of development suitability provides an avenue for future expansion while protecting sensitive natural regions, principally along the western fringe of the present urbanized area. Principles to direct growth into Priority Area III include:

1. Annexation and provision of necessary municipal services to that part of Priority Area III immediately adjacent to the 1977 Incorporated Area
  - Package treatment plants and private water systems should be discouraged in favor of connection to the City's water and wastewater system. Systems which are permitted should be carefully monitored
  - Septic tank systems for subdivision development should be prohibited where soil, geologic, slope and other factors are not suitable for their use
2. Development incentives devised to encourage growth within the corridor, especially contiguous to the 1977 Incorporated Area and the Walnut Creek and Onion Creek watersheds
  - CIP projects should be scheduled to facilitate suitable development in Priority Area III.
  - Sites for public facilities and protected or preserved natural areas should be acquired by the City in advance of development.
3. Environmental constraints on development, such as:
  - Minimization of impervious surface coverage
  - Storm runoff retention measures
  - Controlled cutting and filling of land
  - Controlled and minimized erosion and sedimentation from construction activities.

- B. OTHER GROWTH AREAS - areas with comparatively severe environmental constraints to development.

The first three priority areas define a desirable urban growth pattern consistent with an environmentally-oriented growth management plan. Several

other areas, however, are already experiencing high levels of development activity, to which the City and State have made commitments for the provision of infrastructure. Existing and scheduled public facilities serving these areas include:

Wastewater - Crosstown Tunnel, Bull Creek Interceptor (terminating at Spicewood Springs Road), Bull Creek Lateral Line A, the Williamson Creek Interceptor, the Barton Creek Interceptor (terminating near Loop 360), and the Dry Creek Interceptor

Water Distribution -- Spicewood Springs Reservoir, Highway 183 and McNeil Reservoir, Eberhart Reservoir, and several large transmission mains, including the North Austin Transmission Main and the Southwest Austin Transmission Main

Transportation -- Loop 360, Loop 1 (MoPac Blvd.), U.S. 183, U.S. 290, State Highway 71, Spicewood Springs Road, William Cannon Drive, and Bee Caves Road

Fire Protection -- Northwest Austin fire station and Southwest Austin fire station.

In order to assure orderly, regulated growth, these areas will be included in the City's growth pattern, although their priority for City facilities and services will be lower than that of land inside the environmentally suitable Corridor.

1. Area IV includes the following regions:

A. The plateau region surrounding US 183 northwest of the central city

This relatively flat limestone terrain has proven attractive to homebuyers. Land within Travis County south and west of US 183 is in the Bull Creek watershed, while land within Travis County east of US 183 drains into Walnut Creek and the remaining northern section drains toward Brushy Creek, a tributary of the Brazos River. Most of the area can be served by one of several proposed wastewater interceptors.

B. The tributary valleys north of Lake Austin and east of Loop 360

The Loop 360 highway facilitates transportation access to these generally steep valleys. The region can be readily served by the Bull Creek wastewater interceptor and the municipal water system which already extends into the area. These valleys are already practically surrounded by the City of Austin on three sides.

C. The Upper Williamson Creek watershed

A wastewater collector will soon extend most of the length of Williamson Creek to Oak Hill; a water distribution main from the Ulrich Treatment Plant to the Davis Lane Reservoir will facilitate service to this region; and US 290 and State Highway 71 provide major transportation access. Sunset Valley, a small incorporated town, occupies a portion of this watershed which limits the actions of the City within that town's ETJ.

Principles for guiding development in Area IV include:

1. New subdivision development contingent upon connection to the City's water and wastewater supply
2. Municipal infrastructure, such as water and wastewater, available on a cost-sharing basis between the City and the developer
3. An impact analysis conducted as the basis of each major City infrastructure or annexation decision
4. A Development Guidelines Manual with standards addressing particular conditions in this area should be promulgated
5. City investigation of the feasibility of applying the following growth management tools: transferable development rights, taxing modifications, and the public purchase of development rights
6. New development should consider the following performance principles:

#### LIMITING FACTORS

Steep slopes

Clay soils and bedrock

Floodplains

Prime agricultural  
land

#### PERFORMANCE PRINCIPLES

Development activities on slopes greater than 15% should not increase erosion, flooding or water pollution nor should they require unsightly scarring of hillsides.

Development on clay soils and bedrock should include measures to ensure that the physical properties inherent in these materials do not result in foundation damage, erosion and slope collapse; drainage problems; corrosion or rupturing of buried pipes; or the surfacing of septic tank system effluent.

Any development or alteration proposed for a floodplain should not result in an increase in flood height, a reduction in storage capacity, greater flood potential downstream, increased risk of loss of life or increased potential for extensive property damage from flooding.

Development on prime agricultural land should be designed to minimize the amount of land permanently removed from cultivation and should not result in drainage or erosion problems for adjacent cultivated land.

Limiting FactorsPerformance Principles

Contribution zone  
for Edwards Aquifer  
recharge

Development in this zone should not contribute to any increase in pollution of surface or ground waters above that expected to occur in the natural state and impervious surfaces in the zone should be minimized in order to permit storm runoff infiltration to the aquifer. In addition, new development and utility construction within this zone should consider the principles and standards promulgated in the Texas Water Resources Department's Board Order for the Edwards Underground Reservoir.

Lake Austin watershed

Development and utility construction in this watershed should consider the Lake Austin Growth Management Plan and should not result in the deterioration of water quality in Lake Austin. Ordinances should be adopted or amended in consideration of the development criteria in the Lake Austin Growth Management Plan.

## 2. Area V

Area V is comprised of several regions west of the desired growth corridor which are experiencing, or are expected to experience, considerable development pressures. Unlike Area IV, very few public infrastructure commitments have been made for Area V.

Area V is an interim classification for lands which require further study prior to the determination of appropriate policies. Additional analysis will determine whether each individual region in Area V should be designated as either Area IV or Area VI. The policies associated with the designation shall then apply.

At this time Area V includes the following regions:

### A. A central region generally bounded by Loop 360 and Lake Austin

This includes two incorporated towns, West Lake Hills and Rollingwood, plus their extraterritorial jurisdictions. These two towns have chosen a fairly low level of infrastructure service, including the use of

septic tanks for sewage disposal. Extension of City of Austin utilities and services and annexations are precluded within their ETJ's. A large area north of West Lake Hills, however, is of considerable concern to the City.

B. The eastern part of the main Bull Creek Valley

This is a small subwatershed which is adjacent to two Area IV regions experiencing considerable development activity. It includes the valley floor of the main Bull Creek channel and some fairly steep slopes to the east and north.

C. The Barton Creek watershed

This region comprises a segment of the lower Barton Creek watershed above Loop 360 and although City-supplied infrastructure is essentially absent in this region, development pressure is high.

3. Area VI

Area VI lies outside the growth corridor and Areas IV and V. In terms of attaining the goals and objectives of the Plan land of this designation is least desirable for urban expansion. Because of its distance from the present city limits and poor environmental suitability, growth in this area would not conform to the intent of the Comprehensive Plan. In order to direct growth into the recommended Corridor strict performance principles should be enforced in this region. Standards and regulations should be adopted to support the principles enumerated below. Principles for Area VI include:



1. Ordinance amendments to assure that septic tank systems and package treatment plants do not contribute to the degradation of ground and surface waters
2. Availability of municipal infrastructure only at full cost to the developer
3. Promulgation of a Development Guidelines Manual with standards appropriate to this area
4. City investigation of the feasibility of applying the following growth management tools: transferable development rights, taxing modifications, and the public purchase of development rights
5. Conformance of new development to the following performance or principles:

#### LIMITING FACTORS

#### PERFORMANCE PRINCIPLES

Steep slopes

Development activities on slopes greater than 15% should not increase erosion, flooding or water pollution nor should they require unsightly scarring of hillsides.

Clay soils and bedrock

Development on clay soils and bedrock should include measures to ensure that the physical properties inherent in these materials do not result in foundation damage; erosion and slope collapse; drainage problems; corrosion or rupturing of buried pipes; or the surfacing of septic tank system effluent.

Floodplains

Any development or alteration proposed for a floodplain should not result in an increase in flood height, a reduction in watershed storage capacity, greater flood potential downstream, increased risk of loss of life or increased potential for extensive property damage from flooding.

Prime agricultural lands

Development on prime agricultural land should be designed to minimize the amount of land permanently removed from cultivation and should not result in drainage or erosion problems for adjacent cultivated land.

Contribution zone for Edwards Aquifer recharge

Development in this zone should not contribute to any increase in pollution of surface or ground waters above that expected to occur in the natural, undisturbed state and impervious surfaces in the zone should be minimized in order to permit storm runoff infiltration to the aquifer. In addition, new development and utility construction within this zone should consider the principles and standards promulgated

Limiting Factors

Performance Principles

23

Lake Austin watershed

in the Texas Water Resources Department Board Order for the Edwards Underground Reservoir.

Development and utility construction in this watershed should consider the Lake Austin Growth Management Plan and should not result in the deterioration of water quality in Lake Austin. Ordinances should be adopted or amended in consideration of the development criteria in the Lake Austin Growth Management Plan.

#### IV. MONITORING AND REVISION

##### Purpose

Throughout the development of the Comprehensive Plan the need for accountability has been a recurring theme. Consequently, the Plan provides for the careful and stringent assessment of the progress made toward its implementation.

This section describes a system of appraisal of how well the goals of the Plan have been achieved, and the impact of the growth management process upon the city.

Monitoring and evaluation processes are usually hampered by insufficient data. This is sometimes due to the subjective nature of certain goals and objectives, or to the intangible quality of certain features that might indicate progress toward implementation. In other cases, the collection and organization of indicative information may be prohibitively expensive or difficult to obtain. This section seeks to provide the means by which to measure the effects of the Plan on the character of the city and on the provision of municipal services. rather than encouraging attempts to quantify subjective assessments of conditions.

##### Reporting

The schedule of Growth Management Accountability, shown in Figure, below illustrates repetitive monitoring activities. The mainstay of the program will be a series of evaluative reports which are designed to help Austin's municipal government monitor and adjust its own performance and allow interested citizens to keep track of its progress.

During even-numbered years, beginning in 1978, all appropriate City departments and agencies will be responsible for preparing interim reports for review by



the Planning Commission and the primary citizen's board charged with comprehensive planning. The reports will describe each department's function in relation to the Comprehensive Plan. Interim reports will also contain (1) descriptions of the indicators selected for monitoring and (2) descriptions of how the indicators will be collected, organized and evaluated.

During odd-numbered years, beginning in 1979, the Planning Department will have the responsibility of preparing and presenting to the Planning Commission and the primary citizen's board charged with comprehensive planning a comprehensive report on the implementation of the Plan. The comprehensive report will consist of two sections.

1. The first section will be a compilation of statements from all appropriate City departments and agencies. These statements shall specify the following:
  - a. Progress toward achieving the goals of the Plan, as substantiated by recorded indicators and/or subjective evaluation
  - b. Impact of the Plan on the provision of City services and on the functions of all related City departments
  - c. Programs and/or policies of the City which are specifically intended to achieve a goal or objective of the Plan.
2. The second section will be an evaluation of the economic and land use impacts of the Comprehensive Plan. It will review changes in land use, growth patterns, demography, and the provision of capital improvements.

## Re-evaluation

As indicated by the time schedule diagram, the Comprehensive Plan and growth management system will be reviewed and re-evaluated every six years. To facilitate the review, the Planning Department will generate at least three alternative growth sketches for the city. The alternatives should consider the social, demographic, physical and economic impacts of growth on the city.

The Plan is based on the goals and objectives of the Austin Tomorrow Goals Program. Another such program should fully redefine citizens' goals after fifteen years, using the scope and detail of the original Austin Tomorrow Program as a model. This schedule will allow three years for goals identification which will be complete by the end of the third standard six-year cycle of plan review. This third cycle should include re-identification of goals, development of new alternative growth options and a full re-evaluation of the existing growth management process, itself.

## Neighborhood Planning

Prior to the next Goals Program the monitoring and revision process will depend on neighborhood planning to refine and modify the results of the Austin Tomorrow Goals Program. The primary objective of neighborhood planning will be the development of specific plans tailored to the needs of each neighborhood. The program will be based on the premise of "joint planning" - plans developed through the mutual cooperation of the City's staff and neighborhood residents. The resulting plans are intended to serve as guides for City decisions concerning housing, land use, zoning, transportation and other City facilities and services.

## Capital Improvements Programming

Capital improvements programming is the scheduling and coordination of public facility construction. The purpose of the C.I.P. is to provide adequate levels of public services in conformance with the community goals and objectives established in the Comprehensive Plan.

## Capital Improvements and Induced Development

Decisions concerning the location, capacity and timing of capital improvements constitute perhaps the single most important element in a program of urban growth management. The pace, pattern and fiscal impact of urban development depend, to a great extent, upon the provision of required public facilities, especially highways, major streets and sewers. Urban development is made easier by public facility construction, however, such development can have serious adverse effect upon the natural and urban environments. In Austin, the spread of low-density residential suburbs into areas which are relatively unsuitable for urbanization has been encouraged by the provision of highways, major streets and sewers. Provision of these facilities at public cost has increased the supply of economically developable land; demand for this land has also increased as a result of easier transportation access. If urbanization is to be successfully directed to the most environmentally suitable locations and adverse impacts kept to a minimum the capital improvements program must include a procedure for evaluating development and the associated effects induced by facility construction.

## Evaluating the Effects of Capital Improvements

A systematic procedure for evaluating the Capital Improvements Program and its possible land use ramifications should include the following elements:

1. A survey of existing land use, environmental and cultural characteristics;
2. An estimate of the supply of economically developable land and the impact the capital improvement will have on this supply;
3. An estimate of the demand for development of various kinds and the effect the proposed facility will have on that demand in terms of amenities, access and cost; and
4. An estimate of the consequences of these expected land use changes in terms of natural and urban resources.

The results of this evaluation should be compared with the community goals and objectives listed in Chapter II and relevant neighborhood plans. The Planning Commission, with assistance from the primary citizen's board charged with comprehensive planning, should provide recommendations to the City Council for the development of CIP priorities.

## Controlling the Impacts of Land Uses through Facility Design

Land development and consequent environmental changes can be significantly controlled by guiding new development toward the most suitable environmental



locations. Capacity, financing, access to and timing of capital projects can minimize adverse effects. For example, entrances and exits of high speed arterials can be designed to limit access to sensitive environmental resources. Sewer lines may be withheld from the upper reaches of watersheds until contiguous portions are fully developed, discouraging leap-frog development. Water, sewer and transportation facilities can be directed toward the most environmentally suitable growth areas and withheld from the most unsuitable. The use of capital increment fees, or charges, can reduce the costs of capital improvements to the public by allocating facility costs to developers. Land acquisition by the City is a very effective method of controlling land use impacts and could be particularly important when capital facilities must be located in or near natural features with great recreational potential. Land acquired for an airport, expressway, or energy facility should include buffer zones for noise, dust and other adverse effects.

#### Recapitulation of Capital Improvement Policies

The capital improvement policies presented below are summarized from Chapter II. These policies reflect the community's goals and objectives concerning the adequate provision of public facilities and their role in guiding growth toward the most suitable location.

1. Municipal utilities, especially water, wastewater and streets should be expanded into those areas with the greatest environmental suitability for urbanization and withheld from those areas with greatest environmental limitations.

2. Capital improvements should provide incentives for a compact, contiguous and efficient urban form.

3. Existing neighborhoods which are inadequately served should receive the highest priority for capital improvements.

4. The City of Austin should compile and evaluate the environmental impacts of major utility construction.

5. The City should review and comment on all applications to the Texas Department of Water Resources for package waste treatment plant permits around Austin. The City should oppose direct discharge of treated effluent in environmentally sensitive areas.

6. The location of power plants, electric substations, utility lines, water and wastewater treatment plants and other utility facilities should be determined with respect to surrounding land uses and the environmental suitability of the site.

7. Independent utility districts within Austin's ETJ should be discouraged where the City is capable of providing services. The City shall make the district's fiscal integrity a primary consideration.

8. The City should develop high intensity transit corridors and integrate utility improvements.

9. Utility fees and rates should continue to be higher for consumers outside the City.

10. Lift stations should not be used to transport sewage from watersheds which are not part of the City's gravity wastewater system unless deemed consistent with growth management objectives.

11. The overflow of sewage from wastewater mains during periods of peak flow should be reduced by replacing or relieving overloaded lines and lift stations.

In summary, the City should extend municipal facilities and services in such a manner as to facilitate urban growth which:

1. promotes and maintains environmental quality;
2. provides fiscal efficiency and integrity;
3. conserves scarce resources; and
4. maintains or improves the level of utility service in the existing incorporated area.

Furthermore, the City should decline to extend services where urban development would be in conflict with these general guidelines or the more specific policies delineated under each guideline.