



**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MOTION 20190306 007a**

**Date:** March 6, 2019

**Subject:** Austin Strategic Mobility Plan

**Motion by:** Hank Smith

**Seconded by:** Pam Thompson

**RATIONALE:**

**WHEREAS**, the performance of the Austin Transportation System has a significant impact on public health, air and climate, water, land and ecology and other environmental factors; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed current transportation plan has received extensive public outreach; and

**WHEREAS**, the planning and analysis phase has been completed and a preferred strategy has been developed; and

**WHEREAS**, the plan has specific indicators and targets to:

- increase the access by active modes to and around parks and trails
- increase the number of sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and urban trails that are within ZIP codes with disproportionate prevalence of chronic diseases or conditions;
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- reduce average ozone level region-wide
- reduce the risk of flooding on all roads and road crossings in the 100-year floodplain, including provision of adequate warning at dangerous crossings
- reduce the danger of street flooding created by substandard storm drains
- increase tree canopy along the transportation network

**THEREFORE**, the Environmental Commission recommends support of the current draft of the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan with the following:

**Environmental Commission Recommendations:**

- encourage trip consolidation such as combining as many trips together as possible;
- encourage lighting at intersections to improve crosswalk visibility in compliance with dark skies where possible;
- provide additional education regarding potential air quality standards non-attainment;
- provide success measures for key indicators and targets;

- implement holistic green infrastructure into the proposed upgrades and the Transportation Criteria Manual;
- ensure that tree planting standards for right-of-way (ROW) align with City Arborist advice on appropriate spacing and anti-compaction techniques to ensure a healthy urban forest;
- ensure metrics and design standards maximize the optimized provision of ecosystem services;
- evaluate overall ROW requirements; as well as ROW requirements for current roadway classifications and ROW trees in areas of proposed improvements;
- provide necessary infrastructure such as public showers and showers in new offices to promote bicycle opportunities and other transportation alternatives;
- encompass all available technology and use the diversity of innovation that is available throughout the City;
- incorporate sustainability with all tree planting criteria in the transportation plan and manuals;
- incorporate no-idle zones in the overall plan;
- identify and track non-work related trips; and,
- promote the use of electric bicycles and educate the public on available rebates for electric bicycles.

## VOTE 7-0

For: Creel, Thompson, Guerrero, Coyne, Neely, H. Smith and B. Smith

Against: None

Abstain: None

Recuse: None

Absent: Gordon, Maceo and C. Smith

Approved By:



Linda Guerrero, Environmental Commission Chair

## Pedestrian Advisory Council (PAC) Recommendation:

### Austin Strategic Mobility Plan

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Pedestrian Advisory Council (PAC) is to advise the City of Austin on pedestrian planning, policy, design, funding, education, and enforcement efforts regarding the creation, maintenance and operation of pedestrian facilities;

WHEREAS, adoption and implementation of the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP) is very important to improving the quality of life for all the people of the City of Austin;

WHEREAS, no loss of life or serious injuries are acceptable in our transportation system;

WHEREAS, all of our transportation system should be accessible to all people of all abilities;

WHEREAS, climate change and rapidly decreasing transportation emissions are urgent;

WHEREAS, all children in all neighborhoods deserve the freedom of safe multimodal access.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the PAC supports the overarching top priority of safety in the ASMP and urges the Austin City Council to adopt the ASMP as soon as possible and ensure that it is used to guide policy, funding, and planning decisions;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC supports the prioritization of walking as a leading mode of transportation

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends the Austin City Council take steps to ensure that the ASMP will achieve a safe transportation system giving abundant affordable access for all people of all ages and abilities and all modes;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends the Austin City Council empower staff to develop even stronger partnerships with Travis County, the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Capital Metro, the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, the Texas Department of Transportation, the US Department of Transportation, and any other entity able to assist in rapidly changing our built form and transportation system to achieve reductions in traffic deaths and serious injuries, reductions in vehicle miles traveled, and increased safe, easy, comfortable access by various modes to all sectors of the city;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends the Austin City Council amend the ASMP to include or expand upon the following:

1. Design Speeds – Target design speeds should not exceed 35 mph
2. Speed Management – Prioritize Action Item #9 (Speed Management Guidelines) and implement it as soon as possible
3. Sidewalk Construction – Ensure Council Strategic Direction 2023 achieves Action Item #65 (Sidewalk Construction)
4. Sidewalk Plan – Expand Sidewalk Plan / ADA Transition Plan to fund all missing sidewalks in the City
5. Latent Demand and Signalization – Consider where to change signal timing include areas that may not currently have high pedestrian levels but could have a latent demand if prioritization of signalization were to change.
6. Accessibility – The definition of accessible and safe transportation network include all modes at all hours of the day and night
7. Car Free Zones – Add an Action Item for determining a process to consider whether / how a right of way might be converted to a car free space (e.g. Speedway on UT Campus)

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8. Missing Middle Mobility – The emerging mobility solutions summary text should include Neighborhood Electric Vehicles (NEVs) and Pedicabs because they are safer transportation choices in pedestrian zones due to their small size, low weight and speed
9. Ped Bike Transit Connections – Ensure that new road connections are not exclusively vehicular and can also include exclusively pedestrian and bike connections
10. Sprawl and Roadways – New roadways should only be built connecting areas with transit supportive densities, whether as-built or entitled
11. Sidewalk Obstructions – Achieve Action Item #69 (Vegetative Obstruction and Removal Program) within 3 years and develop policies to ensure motor vehicles do not obstruct the pedestrian right of way

Date of Approval: March 4, 2019

Vote: 6 – 0 with Henderson, Wochner, and Bauereis absent

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JBC', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jay Blazek Crossley, Pedestrian Advisory Council Chair



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Urban Transportation Commission

Recommendation Number 20190318-04C: Austin Strategic Mobility Plan

WHEREAS, the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2012 as a vision for Austin's future, focusing on sustainability, social equity, economic opportunity; and,

WHEREAS, Imagine Austin identified preserving livability, expanding transportation choices, tackling the ethnic divide, protecting our natural resources, promoting prosperity for all, and collaborating regionally as key challenges and opportunities; and,

WHEREAS, codified racial inequity, housing affordability, and transportation and traffic concerns are among the foremost issues for the City's citizens; and,

WHEREAS, Imagine Austin had as one of its key actions to create a mobility plan; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Austin's Land Development Code is likely to be updated in the next 12 months, building on the CodeNEXT process, which identified that the existing code lacks the tools our city needs to effectively shape and manage growth, and has exacerbated our congestion, displacement, and segregation issues; and,

WHEREAS, the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan will guide future growth of the city's transportation network; and,

WHEREAS, the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan is a comprehensive multimodal transportation plan that integrates the recommendations from previous transportation plans dedicated to specific modes, such as our Sidewalk, Bicycle, and Urban Trails plans, into one comprehensive document to align them into complementary systems; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Austin and the Central Texas region will not build its way out of congestion and transportation issues with current growth patterns and transportation priorities; and,

WHEREAS, the Urban Transportation Commission, via Recommendation 20181113-04B, indicated its support for the Project Connect vision; and,

WHEREAS, the Urban Transportation Commission issues its complete support for the motion related to the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan passed on March 4, 2019 by the Pedestrian Advisory Council;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Urban Transportation Commission recommends that the approved Austin Strategic Mobility Plan should include the following to reflect the values in Imagine Austin and best practices for addressing the City's most pressing transportation issues:

#### Prioritizing Our Safety

- Change the language in Policy 1 from “Manage for safe speeds” to “Design for safe speeds” as a City of Austin value statement.
- Require a transportation safety analysis for every infrastructure and development project that reflects existing infrastructure and collision problems, as well as induced demand and actual travel speeds, and truly prioritizes transportation safety with respect to design decisions and transportation funding (Consistent with Action Item 158 – Health Impact Assessments).
- Update Action Item 9 to state: “Develop a comprehensive data-driven approach to speed management to evaluate systemwide speeds and make recommendations for reforming speed setting methodology, implementing countermeasures to address streets with documented speeding concerns, and adopting street design guidelines that help achieve targeted operating speeds systemwide, with no design speed to exceed 35 MPH. This action item will be prioritized and implemented as soon as possible.”

#### Managing Our Demand

- With respect to Action Item 21, update the Land Development Code related to housing and transit-supportive density to:
  - Increase density not just on identified transit-friendly corridors but within  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of those corridors to further shift mode choice away from single-occupancy vehicles; transition zones from corridor should reflect Imagine Austin and extend one to four blocks on either side of the corridor;
  - Increase residential zoning to more ably address the housing affordability crisis and provide more options (including “missing middle” housing);
  - Incentivize shared driveways for all types of development to both reduce impervious cover and better manage access points along roadways.
- With respect to Action Item 21, update the Land Development Code related to parking to:
  - Eliminate parking minimums in all land use categories throughout the City, particularly in areas that are supported by high-frequency transit and/or identified as Imagine Austin Activity Corridors, as a means to achieving mode split and climate change goals (Consistent with Action Item 164 – Reduce Impacts of Global Warming);
  - Support any opportunity for sites to reduce parking requirements.
- Insert new action item after Action Item 22 to state: “Plan for downtown growth. Plan and zone for the downtown and the university to grow in both residential and employment density as fast as the region's growth or faster.” Downtown is a special part of the transportation network as the one part of the city that can reach and be reached by public transportation to and from anywhere in the city that is on public transportation. The existence of the downtown housing and job cluster makes it much easier for job movers and two-earner households to find transit-supportive residential and job locations.
- Update Action Item 26 to include new bullets:
  - “Eliminate the exemption of above-grade parking facilities from FAR.” This exemption acts as a form of a parking subsidy.

- “Replace existing parking opt-out incentives with other incentives.” Current land development code in certain zoning areas (e.g. VMU, UNO, etc.) allows developers to provide less parking by providing affordable housing and other community benefits; other incentives will need to be provided.
- With respect to Action Items 27, 28, and 32, empower staff to set and adjust parking rates as necessary to achieve average occupancy rates no greater than 85 percent per blockface, reflecting a main implementation item in the Downtown Austin Parking Strategy document.
- Update Action Item 28 to state: “Identify and implement geographical Parking and Transportation Management Districts [as the preferred method of managing parking demand in excess of on-street parking supply in](#) coordination with local business and neighborhood districts.”
- With respect to Action Item 32, develop a detailed curb management plan that allows staff to identify issues and address through a number of options, including flexible designations.
- Develop priorities for locating dockless vehicle parking (including bicycles) within the curb-to-curb spaces (including existing on-street parking spaces) to not reduce available sidewalk space as part of Action Items 32 and 61.

#### Supplying Our Infrastructure

- Update Action Item 65 to state: “[Ensure Council Strategic Direction 2023 calls for the construction of all ~~high and very high priority~~ sidewalk segments and address ADA barriers and gaps in the sidewalk system according to the Sidewalk Plan/ADA Transition Plan.](#)”
- Update Action Item 72 to state: “Develop a prioritization process for the design and construction of new roadway connections and capacity projects. [New roadway capacity projects shall be built only to places entitled or built to transit-supportive densities. New connectivity projects shall include multimodal connectivity. New connections should have a projected decrease in system Vehicle-Miles Traveled \(VMT\).](#)”
- Revise the text of Action Plan Item 73 to “Develop projects that increase ~~vehicle-person~~ capacity on our roadway system at strategic locations to manage congestion, facilitate emergency response, and provide connectivity, [but not at the expense of achieving mode share goals. Lane additions and roadway widening along the Transit Priority Network and Bicycle Priority Network must first dedicate space to building that segment of the networks.](#)”
- Where right-of-way is constrained, prioritize bicycle and transit improvements over roadway improvements for private automobiles.
- Update the bicycle supply goals to be as ambitious as the Austin Bicycle Master Plan.
- Commit to the proposed Bus Rapid Transit network proposed as part of the Project Connect plan
- Update text regarding Emerging Mobility Solutions (page 128) to state: “Emerging technologies [are not limited to include](#) new modes of vehicular travel, like scooters, ~~and~~ connected and automated vehicles, [neighborhood electric vehicles, and pedicabs](#). They also include innovation in operating our transportation network, such as sensors and communication systems.” Reflect these changes in Action Items 115-124.

#### Operating Our Transportation Network

- Update Action Item 132 to state: “Develop guidance, evaluate, and implement pedestrian crossing improvements, including leading pedestrian intervals and pedestrian scrambles at signalized intersections with high pedestrian volumes [and signalized crossings at areas with high potential for pedestrian crossings.](#)”

## Protecting Our Health and Environment

- Move away from “level of service” language in Action Item 159 – Walkability and Bikeability Evaluations. Focus on separate evaluations for roadway segments and for intersections treatments.

## Supporting Our Community

- Before Action Item 207, insert a new accessibility action item that states: “Complete Accessibility: Accessibility in transportation shall include all modes at all hours of the day and night.”

## Implementing Our Plan

- As part of Action Item 234, require that the updated Transportation Criteria Manual reflect the following goals:
  - Transportation Impact Analyses should focus less on peak 15-minute period traffic congestion and more on aligning with larger plans and goals, such as the ASMP, Vision Zero, active transportation plans and goals, and Capital Metro operating and capital plans;
  - Specifically, remove intersection level of service (LOS) as a metric and include VMT per person-trip and target mode share as replacements to better align analyses with the City’s goals;
  - Change the language of these analyses to reflect person trips and not vehicle trips;
  - Create and/or adopt a person trip generation model specific to the City of Austin that includes the specific context of the development and location and has as its major output person trip generation by mode;
  - In the event that any parking requirements are maintained, create a parking generation model specific to the City of Austin that includes the specific context of the development and location;
  - Incentivize low VMT per person-trip and high non-SOV mode share developments;
  - Re-examine the Rough Proportionality and cost-sharing requirements to more directly reflect the impact of the development and not the cost of historical infrastructure;
  - Focus on Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies rather than supply-side improvements (LOS analysis);
  - Develop TDM standards for development that focus on the inclusion of TDM elements rather than trip reduction results;
  - Develop a TDM model specific to the City of Austin that predicts the impacts of TDM strategies.
- Expedite development review for projects strongly align with Austin Strategic Mobility Plan goals.

Date of Approval:

Record of the vote:

Attest: