



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Council

From: Gregory I. Guernsey, AICP, Director
Planning and Zoning Department 

Date: March 29, 2018

Subject: Future of Small Area Planning/Pilot North Lamar Imagine Austin Corridor Plan

Background

In May 2018 I distributed a [memorandum](#) which outlined a recommended approach to developing new types of small area plans and a new way to select future planning areas. The memorandum also identified two corridors within which the Planning and Zoning Department (PAZ) proposed to develop pilot Imagine Austin Corridor Plans (see attachment A).

Since then, PAZ staff has:

- Engaged with numerous City departments;
- Reviewed relevant city policy documents;
- Researched existing conditions along the North Lamar Corridor;
- Begun to identify the scope of work for a pilot planning process; and
- Briefed the Planning Commission, Zoning and Platting Commission, and Small Area Plan Joint Committee, and made several public presentations including a presentation in coordination with the AIA Austin Urban Design Committee and a presentation at the January General Meeting of the Austin Neighborhoods Council.

Upcoming Request for Council Action

PAZ anticipates requesting Council to formally initiate a pilot Imagine Austin Corridor Plan along North Lamar between IH 35 and US 183. This request will ask Council to consider approving a resolution that:

- Identifies a study area for the pilot North Lamar Imagine Austin Corridor Plan;
- Outlines the scope of the pilot planning process;
- Provides direction related to public engagement;
- Provides policy guidance related to enabling transit-supportive development patterns that will leverage near-term mobility investments and support future mobility options envisioned by Project Connect and the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan while accommodating and preserving affordable housing consistent with the Strategic Housing Blueprint, and supporting other major elements of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan; and

- Directs staff to collect and analyze data throughout the planning process that will allow lessons learned to be incorporated into future Imagine Austin Corridor planning processes.

Timing and Next Steps

We anticipate bringing forward a Request for Council Action related to initiation of the North Lamar Imagine Austin Corridor Plan at the April 25 Regular Meeting of City Council. Based on recent inquiries we have received from a few Council offices, as well as discussions we have had with internal agency partners, we recognize that there may be a desire to delay initiation of the Pilot North Lamar Imagine Austin Corridor Plan. A slight delay may allow the planning process to be better coordinated with other major city initiatives underway and/or for Council to provide additional policy guidance to the overall PAZ Small Area Planning Program. PAZ is prepared to launch the pilot North Lamar Imagine Austin Corridor Plan when we receive the direction to initiate the planning process.

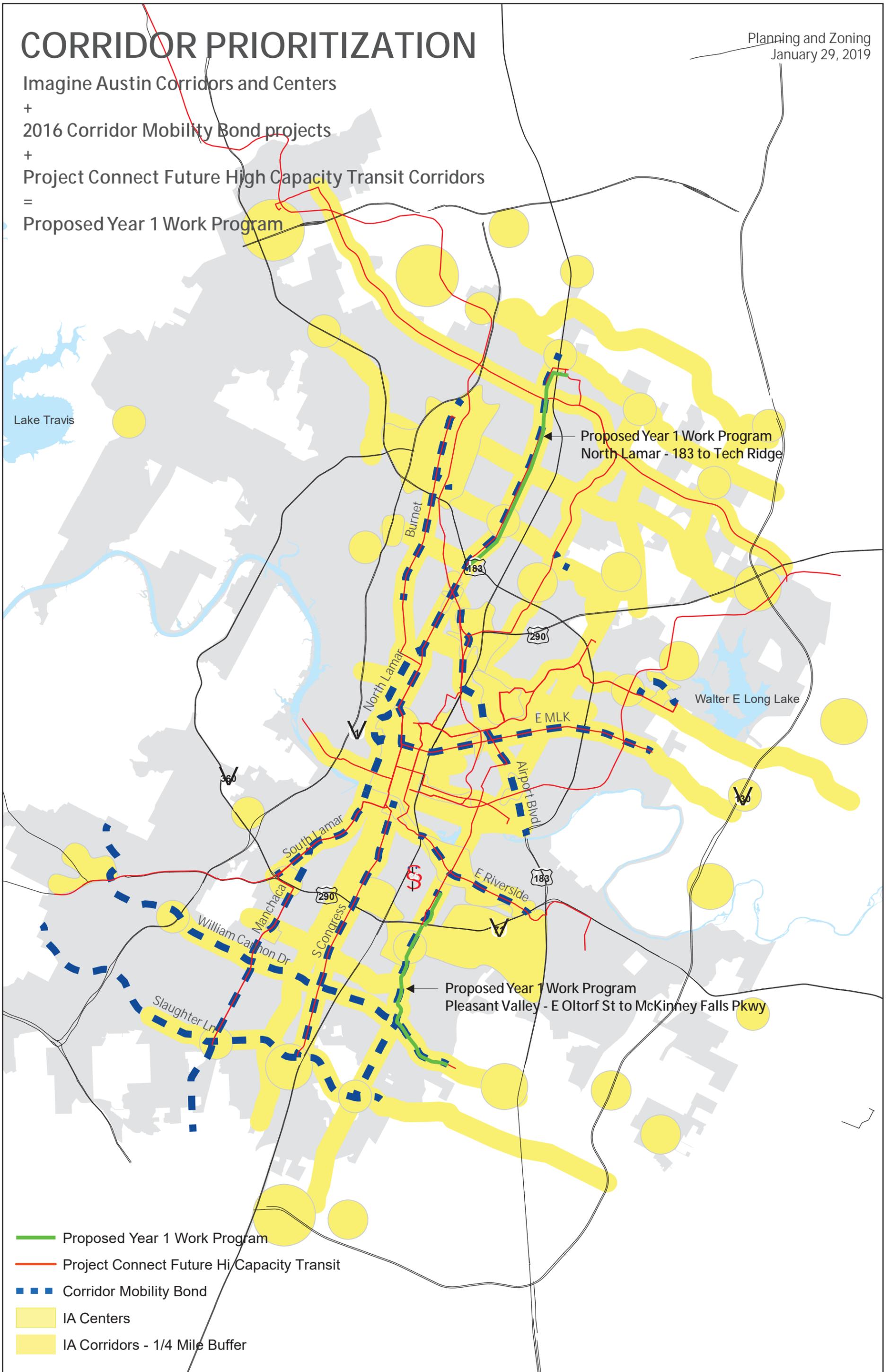
Attachment(s):

- A. Corridor Prioritization Map
- B. Future Planning Services Comparison Matrix

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
J. Rodney Gonzales, Assistant City Manager
Jerry Rusthoven, PAZ Assistant Director
Stevie Greathouse, PAZ Program Manager
Matt Dugan, PAZ Division Manager

CORRIDOR PRIORITIZATION

Imagine Austin Corridors and Centers
 +
 2016 Corridor Mobility Bond projects
 +
 Project Connect Future High Capacity Transit Corridors
 =
 Proposed Year 1 Work Program



- Proposed Year 1 Work Program
- Project Connect Future Hi Capacity Transit
- - - Corridor Mobility Bond
- IA Centers
- IA Corridors - 1/4 Mile Buffer

ATTACHMENT B

Future Planning Services Comparison_3 21 2019

	IA Centers and Corridors Planning	Complete Community Planning	Special Studies and Planning
Mission/ Goal	Create more livable and sustainable places along major corridors and within activity centers by linking diverse housing choices, transportation options—with an emphasis on transit—to accessible employment, goods, services, entertainment, and education opportunities.	Improve access to opportunity and to residents' basic daily needs through planning interventions designed to deliver near-term improvements.	Conduct specialized planning as needed to implement Vision and Goals of the <i>Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan</i> .
Selecting Areas	<p>Prioritization Process: (<i>City Council Resolution No. 20170928-101</i>)</p> <p><u>Identify:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imagine Austin Activity Corridors and Centers 2016 Mobility Bond Corridors Capital Metro Project Connect high-capacity transit system Austin Strategic Mobility Plan Corridors <p><u>Evaluate and Prioritize based on:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage transportation investments Preserve and create affordable housing Build on past planning and development pattern Focus on areas that are susceptible to change Create positive community impacts Geographic equity 	<p>Two Methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offered along corridors concurrent with Imagine Austin Corridors Planning or Identified based on a citywide complete communities analysis, then field test 	Areas determined based on needs/direction from Council/City Management.
Defining Boundaries	Set boundaries based on context. Minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All parcels with frontages on corridors Parcels within ¼ mile of transit stops Non-residential and multi-family parcels within ½ mile of transit stops (by foot or bike) 	Set boundaries based on context. Typically between ½ mile radius and neighborhood scale.	Set boundaries based on context. Could range in scale from a large parcel to citywide depending on the goals of the special study or plan.
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background data/information document Vision Future land use map and land use policies Comprehensive zoning map changes Plan for urban design and public realm improvements Identify infrastructure improvements, including sidewalks and parks Implementation element May include: technical studies, regulating plan, tactical/catalytic projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background data/information document Prioritized list of CIP investments One or more “early out” interventions May include: Minor changes to existing FLUMs, zoning map, etc. 	Varies
Possible Consultant Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialized technical analysis Specialized engagement services 	N/A	Varies
Planning Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-3 months preplanning 6-8 months active planning (time will be contingent on size of planning area) 2-3 month adoption process May include: Other City Departments engaged via interdepartmental team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 months for analysis and engagement 1-3 months to develop plan 1-2 month adoption process 1-12 months to identify and deliver early out interventions (may be concurrent with adoption process) May include: Other City Departments engaged via interdepartmental team 	Varies
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopted as attachment to <i>Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan</i> Character district-based FLUM or amendments to existing NP FLUMs Recommendations added to implementation database and monitored May include land development code and zoning map changes May include one or more tactical projects, catalytic investments, or financing strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations added to small area plan implementation database and monitored for completion One or more tactical projects, catalytic investment, or other “early out” project May include land development code and zoning map changes 	Depends on needs and scope, may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations added to implementation database Land development code and zoning map changes One or more “early out” projects Adoption as attachment to <i>Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan</i> Character-based FLUM or amendments to existing NP FLUMs