

**Bicycle Advisory Council (BAC) Recommendations in response to the
Project Connect Public Scoping Meetings regarding the
Proposed Blue Line, Orange Line, and MetroRapid Expansion**

Recommendation 20210316-001

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Bicycle Advisory Council (BAC) is to advise the City of Austin and other jurisdictions on all matters relating to the use of the bicycle, bicycle infrastructure, and individuals of all ages and abilities who utilize bicycles;

WHEREAS, in December 2018, the Capital Metro Board of Directors approved the Project Connect Vision Plan, which identifies corridors for potential investment in High-Capacity Transit, in addition to other improvements;

WHEREAS, in April 2019, the Austin City Council unanimously approved the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP), which calls for a reduction in the percentage of single occupancy trips to 50% by 2039;

WHEREAS, in November 2020, Austin voters passed Proposition A, which provided for an 8.75 cent tax rate increase for the purpose of financing a citywide traffic-easing rapid transit system known as Project Connect;

WHEREAS, Proposition A included ballot language identifying a number of policy objectives sought to be achieved through Project Connect, including (i) addressing traffic congestion, (ii) expanding service for essential workers, (iii) reducing climate change emissions, (iv) decreasing traffic fatalities, (v) creating jobs, and (vi) providing access to schools, health care, jobs and the airport;

WHEREAS, Proposition A included ballot language requiring the inclusion of neighborhood supportive affordable housing investments along transit corridors and a fixed rail and bus rapid transit system, including associated road, sidewalk, bike, and street lighting improvements, park and ride hubs, on-demand neighborhood circulator shuttles, and improved access for seniors and persons with disabilities; to be operated by the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority;

WHEREAS, the Project Connect Vision Plan calls for a proposed Blue Line Project, which is an 8.2-mile light rail transit (LRT) corridor that would operate from Republic Square in downtown Austin to Austin-Bergstrom International Airport;

WHEREAS, the Project Connect Vision Plan calls for a proposed Orange Line Project, which is a 20-mile light rail transit (LRT) corridor that would travel along Lamar Boulevard and Congress Avenue from the Tech Ridge Park & Ride at Howard Lane south to Slaughter Lane;

WHEREAS, the Project Connect Vision Plan calls for the creation of four proposed MetroRapid routes: (i) Pleasant Valley – Mueller to the Goodnight Ranch Park & Ride; (ii) Expo Center – East Austin to University of Texas and downtown Austin; (iii) Gold Line – Austin Community College-Highland to Republic Square; and (iv) The Domain to Menchaca and Oak Hill;

WHEREAS, between January 2021 and March 2021, Capital Metro hosted several public scoping meetings, requesting feedback on the Blue Line Project, Orange Line Project, and the Pleasant Valley and Expo Center MetroRapid Project Lines (collectively, the “Projects”).

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the BAC provides the feedback herein to the aforementioned public scoping meetings and recommends that all Projects allow for the implementation of protected all ages & abilities high comfort bikeways which are separated from both motor vehicle lanes and pedestrian sidewalks along all Project corridors;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the BAC recommends that all Projects allow for the design and operation of multimodal city streets using target speeds, design speeds, and posted speeds of 30 mph or less in accordance with NACTO and City of Austin design guidelines, including sufficient safety lighting for all users;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the BAC recommends that all Projects allow for minimal implementation of slip lanes and that any slip lanes in the Project corridors be designed with tight tolerances and clear sight lines to crossing walkways and bikeways that slow right turns to improve safety for people crossing those slip lanes, and that crossings be raised;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the BAC recommends that the Projects allow for the design of bike-ped crossings that are safe for vulnerable road users, especially in areas where a drivers' attention is primarily focused on merging with traffic;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the BAC recommends that all Projects allow for the creation of effective wayfinding systems to provide well-structured directions for people walking and biking. These would have distances to key destinations, as well as estimated time to bike or walk to those destinations;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the BAC recommends that all Projects allow for the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure like street furniture, water fountains, and tree plantings, improve environmental quality, and provide shade without displacing or preventing people using the space. Trees should be between fast-moving cars and people to add safety and comfort for vulnerable road users.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the BAC recommends that any above-ground bridges proposed as part the Projects allow for the inclusion of separated pedestrian sidewalks and high-comfort bikeways;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the BAC recommends schedules that accommodate the needs of late night, very early morning commuters and travelers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the BAC recommends that all rail lines and bus lines proposed as part of the Projects allow for the safe and convenient transport of bicycles and micro-mobility devices;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the BAC recommends that the location of service stops on all rail lines and bus lines proposed as part of the Projects be designed in consideration to the City of Austin's Bicycle Plan;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the BAC recommends immediately adopting an open option parking plan within five miles of each proposed stop along the new transit lines;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, for commuter lines that have limited space for bikes, the BAC recommends there be bikeshare access and bike lockers at all of the stops and that the use of a bikeshare bike be included in the commuter line trip fare.

Date: March 16, 2021

Vote: 7-0 with Salvaggio and Smith absent

Attest: Briana, Cohen, Chair Bicycle Advisory Council

Briana Cohen