

Great Streets

Recommendations on Fee-in-lieu Options

“Planning for the transportation as a component of the development of an active and vibrant downtown must begin with the premise that ‘Streets are for people.’”

From: 1991 AIA Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT)



Goals and Objectives of Great Streets



Balance use of the public right-of-way



Create Streets as Places



Create Interactive Streets



Occupy the wider sidewalk zone with an array of well designed, functional elements



Encourage private sector initiatives to activate the street scenes

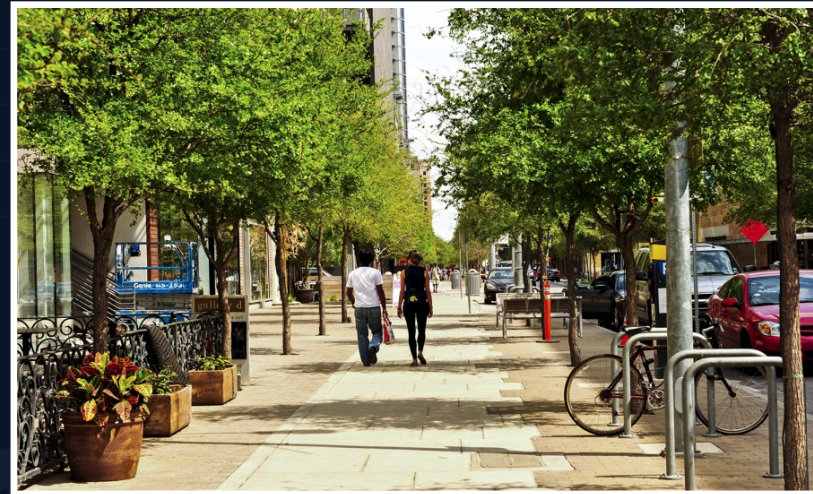


Public Art

Goals and Objectives of Great Streets

The Great Streets program is the main source for providing:

- **Shade trees** to incentivize an active and safe pedestrian realm for walkability
- **Specific street furniture:** benches, bike racks, trash receptacles
- **Consistent street lighting**

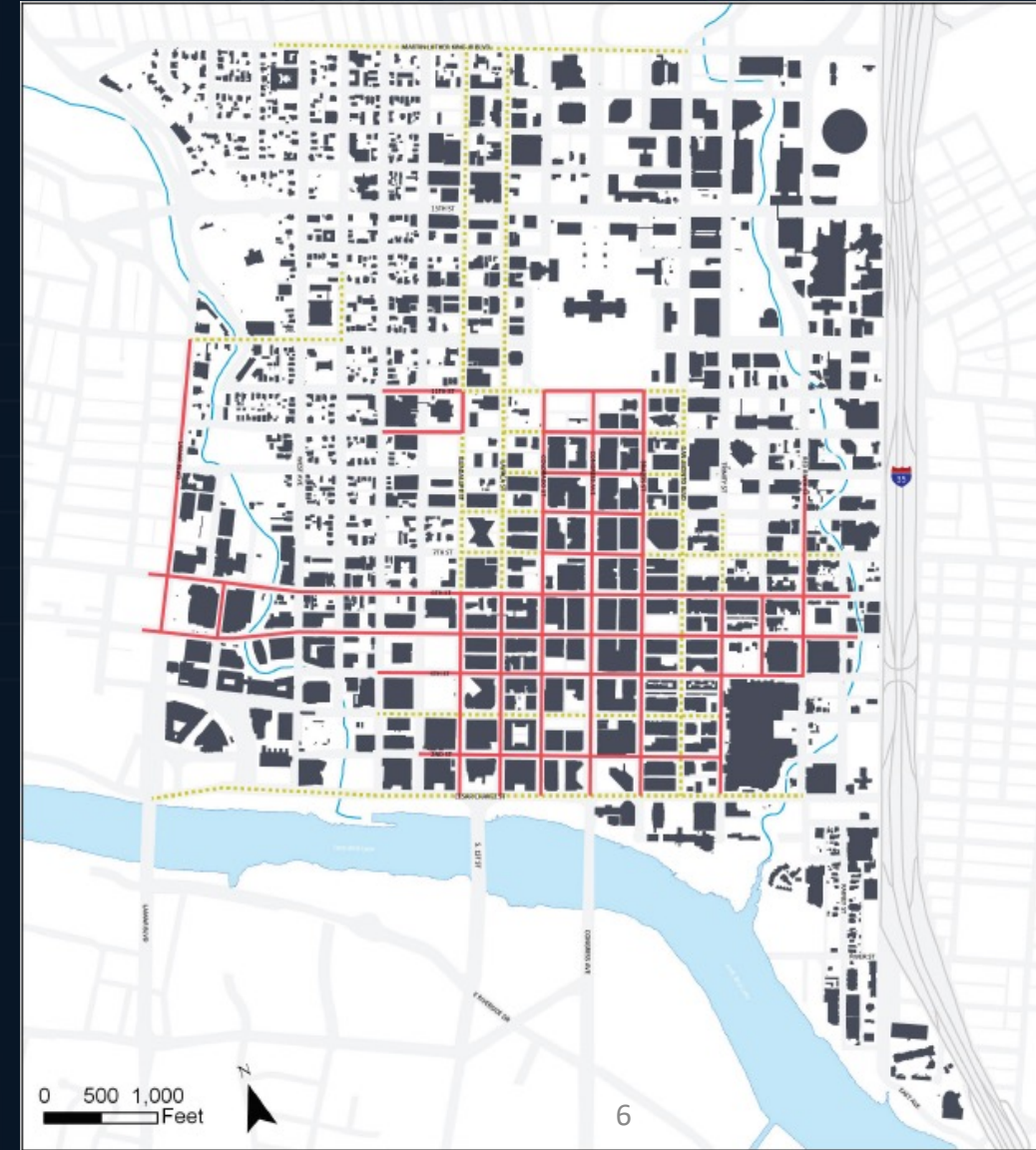


These elements work as part of an infrastructure system

Fee-in-lieu Recommendations

Applicability of Great Streets Standards

Certain properties in Downtown are eligible to participate in the Downtown Density Bonus Program (the Program) as outlined in 25-2-586. In accordance with Program requirements, the applicant is required to execute a restrictive covenant committing to provide streetscape improvements along all public street frontages, consistent with the Great Street Standards (the Standards).

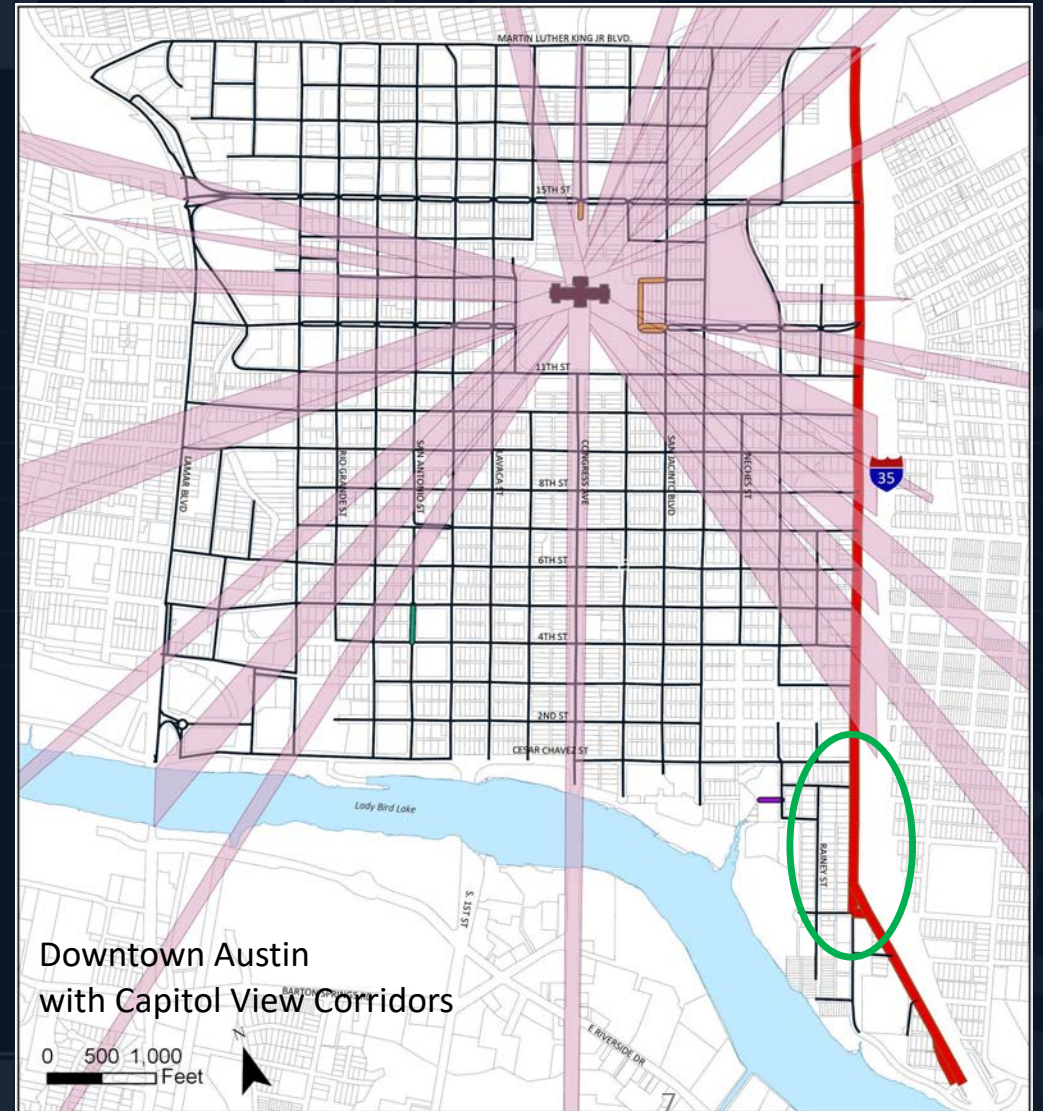


General Boundary of Great Streets with locations of improvements highlighted

Conflict with extra-jurisdictional control

- Properties in the Rainey St. Subdistrict of the Waterfront Overlay are eligible to participate in the Program per 25-2-739.
- Certain properties in the subdistrict front on Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) right-of-way (ROW).
- On such portion where properties front said ROW, the City of Austin has no jurisdiction to require streetscape improvements. Any proposed improvements outside private property on said frontage are to be coordinated with TxDOT.

TxDOT ROW and jurisdiction:
5,584 linear feet outside of CVC



Council Direction

Resolution No. 20200312-040

- Recommendations for creating FIL option
- Applies to specific projects
- Establishing an administrative process
- Establish a fund to collect FIL contributions to be used for Great Streets

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

The City Manager is directed to bring forward a recommendation for creating a fee-in-lieu option for the Great Streets requirement of the Downtown Density Bonus Program for projects unable to provide such streetscapes due to other jurisdictional opposition to their construction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to bring forward a recommendation for establishing a fund into which such fees-in-lieu can be deposited and creating an administrative process for allocating these funds only for the provision of Great Streets within the areas of Downtown included in the Great Streets and Downtown Density Bonus Program boundaries.

Staff Recommendations

- Specify an initial range costs average of **\$55-\$60 per square foot** for construction of Great Streets improvements based on calculations used for the South-Central Waterfront initiative which will be implementing Great Streets.
- Include an additional amount of **10% of the cost for construction (\$5.50-\$6 per square foot)** to cover maintenance of any Great Streets improvements, including landscape elements, trash receptacles, benches, bike infrastructure, and streetlights. This additional amount to cover maintenance will be paid up front and deposited into the FIL Fund.
- **Creation of a specific fund** within the Public Works Department for the sole purpose of design, construction, and maintenance of Great Street improvements in downtown based on the area and cost calculations above. Such a fund should only be accessible via a direct contribution and in assistance to design, construct, or maintain CIP projects implementing Great Streets in the area defined by the Council Resolution.

(Continued)

Staff Recommendations (Continued)

- A deposit for the amount of the proportional assessed FIL would be required to be posted to the fund housed in the Public Works Department **prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy (CO)** for the building. This would be consistent with how FIL funds are collected for affordable housing contributions.
- **Adjust the fee for construction periodically**, but not more than once per fiscal year, to account for increases in the cost of construction.
- Identification and analysis of alternative locations for Great Streets improvements in order to create a **project prioritization process**.
- Establish **design criteria for alternative improvements** where Great Streets cannot be provided. These alternative improvements should meet the intent of the Great Streets program of providing aesthetically pleasing, cohesive, pedestrian oriented design elements in the downtown core adjacent to the subject development. *(Will require an update to the GS Standards)*
- **Monitor and track fee-in-lieu collections**. This would include audits for when, where, and how funds have been allocated, along with management of the collected funds.

Next Steps



Present recommendations to City Council - Fall 2021



Initiate Code amendments to 25-2-586 to include FIL option- Fall 2021



Gather public input through Code amendment process – Winter 2022



Council consideration of Code Amendment – Early spring 2022



**URBAN
DESIGN**
HOUSING & PLANNING

QUESTIONS?