

September 23rd, 2021

Re: [403 East Koenig Lane](#); [SP-2020-0419C](#)

To whom it may concern,

The property at 403 E. Koenig Lane is immediately adjacent to the Red Line. Since there is a new development proposal under discussion, we are taking this opportunity to provide input.

**While we are not taking a position to oppose or support this development or the parkland dedication appeal**, we would like to provide some context of the Red Line Parkway in this area and describe some of the benefits that the development would provide to the Red Line Parkway.

## Background

The Red Line Parkway is a proposed linear park and public space along the planned Red Line Trail, extending 32+ miles from Downtown Austin to Leander. Our vision is a thriving, inclusive, multi-functional parkway that provides convenient, enjoyable, car-free access to transit, parks, public art, and other urban, suburban, and rural destinations.

The Red Line Parkway Initiative (RLPI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 2017 that empowers diverse communities to enjoy, develop, and enhance the Red Line Trail and Parkway corridor to serve Central Texas mobility, recreation, parks, arts, affordability, social equity, physical & mental health, public space, and economic needs.

[The North Loop Neighborhood Plan](#), approved May 23rd, 2002 describes the “Upper Boggy Creek Hike and Bike Trail”, which is essentially the same concept as the Red Line Parkway. From the plan on page 46:

*“The Neighborhood Plan supports the creation of a hike/bike trail in or adjacent to the rail corridor that runs along the western side of Airport Blvd. This trail could provide safe non-auto links to Highland Mall, Hancock Center, and downtown Austin. The hike/bike trail could be a catalyst to improved maintenance and appearance of the rail corridor.”*

In this area, the Red Line Parkway Initiative envisions the Red Line Parkway as a continuous pedestrian and bicycling trail route along the Capital Metro Red Line railway, using a combination of railway right-of-way and easements adjacent to the railway. Later this year, we anticipate beginning

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the process to develop the Red Line Parkway Plan, and will engage the broader community on their vision for the Red Line Parkway and determine an end-to-end alignment for the 32+ mile trail, including through this area.

## Benefits of the development to the Red Line Parkway

The development, as presented to us ([Version 9/17/2021 1:13 PM](#)), provides these benefits:

- The easement, trail, and park amenities on the east side of the development provide important, public, pedestrian and bicycling connectivity from 56th St. and the North Loop neighborhood to Koenig Lane and destinations east of the railway.
- These park amenities (on the east side of the development) also ensure that this route is not simply a strip of pavement but also provide tree shade and activities to stop for along the trail.
- In addition, we appreciate that the developer and Austin Energy have worked together to make the transmission easement area available for public use.
- While we have not yet determined whether the primary Red Line Parkway route will travel along the east or west side of the railway here, in either case, a easement and a trail on the west side of the tracks (within the development) would either provide additional access (in the case of having the primary trail on the east side) or would serve as the primary trail itself (in the case of having the primary trail on the west side).
- The two-way bikeway and walkway along Koenig Lane provide important connectivity along Koenig that will connect into future paths to the west and east. Importantly, this will provide a bicycling connection from Skyview and North Loop neighborhoods (including this development) to the future shared-use paths along Airport Blvd., due to be completed in 2024, and to the future Red Line Parkway.
- The development includes income-restricted affordable housing, which will be connected via pedestrian and bicycling access to the future Red Line Parkway, and existing transit, ACC Highland, and activity centers. Affordable housing complements the affordable transportation offered by the pedestrian, bicycling, and transit access in the area.
- The affordable housing also provides adjacent access to the future Red Line Parkway so that people of a broad range of socioeconomic background can enjoy the Parkway.
- The proposed parkland fee-in-lieu can go toward nearby park amenities, including implementing additional portions of the Red Line Parkway.

Thank you for your consideration of our input regarding this property. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

**Tom Wald**  
Executive Director  
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