



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Kevin Ramberg, Chair and Commissioners  
Environmental Commission

**FROM:** Katie Coyne, Environmental Officer  
Watershed Protection

**DATE:** April 25, 2023

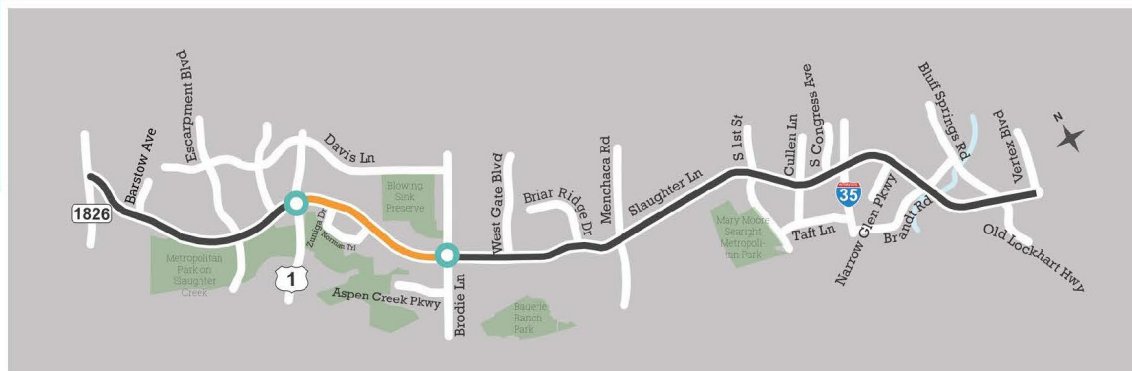
**SUBJECT:** SOS and Other Code Amendments for Slaughter Lane Improvement Project  
SP-2022-0336D

On the May 3, 2023 Environmental Commission agenda is a proposed amendment to the City's Save Our Springs ordinance and related variances to Chapter 25-8 of the Land Development Code. The ordinance is being brought forward to enable the Transportation and Public Works Department (TPW) to proceed with the construction of the Slaughter Lane Improvement Project from Loop 1 (MOPAC) to East of Brodie Lane.

### Project Description and Background

Slaughter Lane is one of the nine corridor projects identified for mobility improvements and is part of the City of Austin Corridor Mobility Program, funded by the 2016 Mobility Bond. The Slaughter Lane Improvement Project from Loop 1 (MOPAC) to East of Brodie Lane is shown below in Exhibit 1

### Exhibit 1

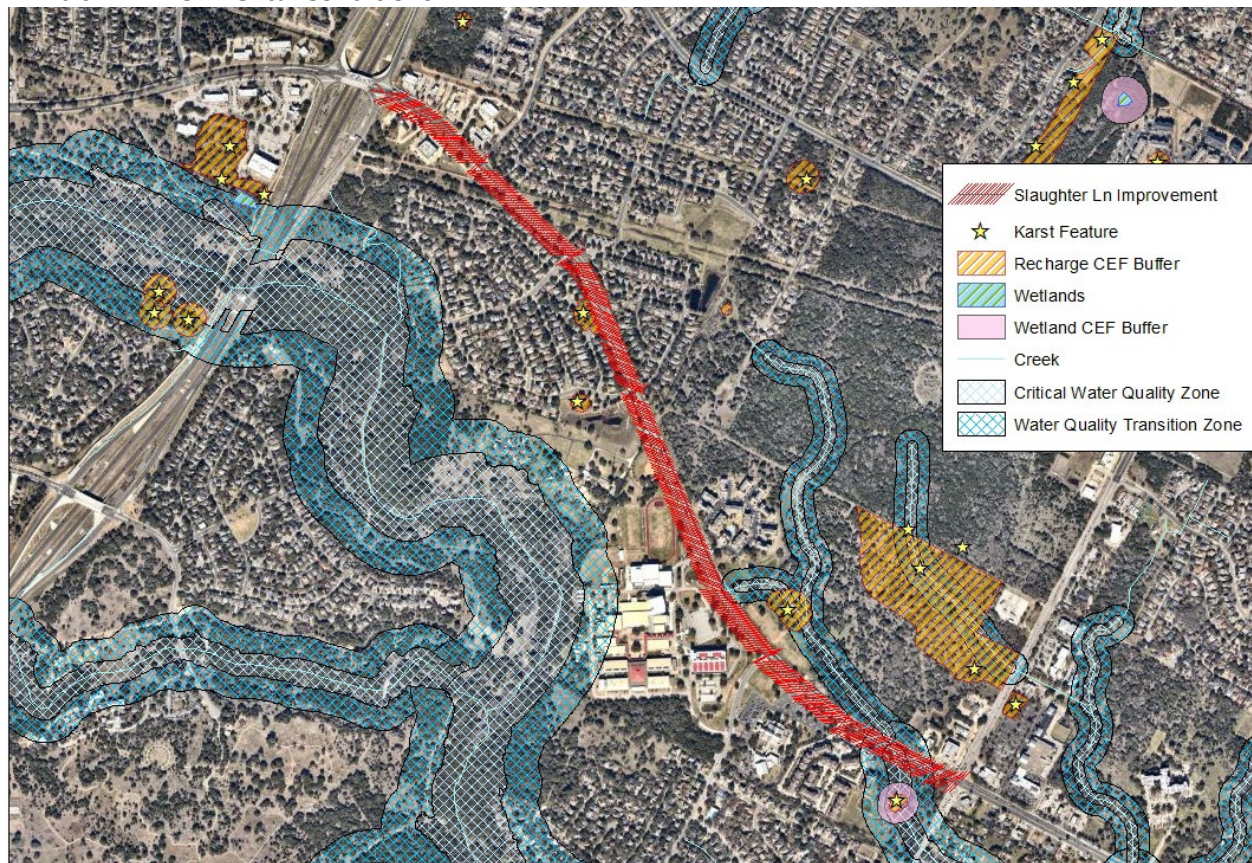


The project is sponsored by TPW and consists of improvements including the installation of one added lane in each direction (less than 18" excavation depth), traffic signal improvements at multiple locations (limited excavation), installation of shared use paths and vegetative strips behind roadway curbs, a pedestrian hybrid beacon near Zuniga, two new water quality ponds, refurbished existing water quality

ponds, and additional water quality infiltration areas for existing water quality ponds. Overall impervious cover will increase.

The Slaughter Lane Improvement Project from Loop 1 (MOPAC) to East of Brodie Lane is located within both the Williamson Creek and Slaughter Creek watersheds within the Barton Springs Zone (BSZ) as defined by the City of Austin. The project site contains several Critical Environmental Features, Heritage Trees, Floodplain, CWQZ and WQTZ; Exhibit 2. An amendment to the Save Our Springs Ordinance and variances to code sections 25-8-364 (Floodplain Modification) and 25-8-641 (Prohibited Removal) are required to allow construction of improvements to the roadway.

### Exhibit 2 Environmental Conditions



### Code Amendment and Variance

The portion of Slaughter Lane on SP-2022-0336D within the Barton Springs Zone already exceeds the maximum allowable 15% impervious cover. The existing impervious cover limit is 54%. The SOS Ordinance would require the full site described on SP-2022-0336D to be brought into compliance with the 15% impervious cover limits for areas within the Barton Springs Zone in the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. Because 25-8-515 prohibits variances from the SOS Ordinance, a site-specific amendment to the SOS Ordinance approved by the City Council is necessary to allow construction of the Slaughter Lane Improvement Project from Loop 1 (MOPAC) to East of Brodie Lane.



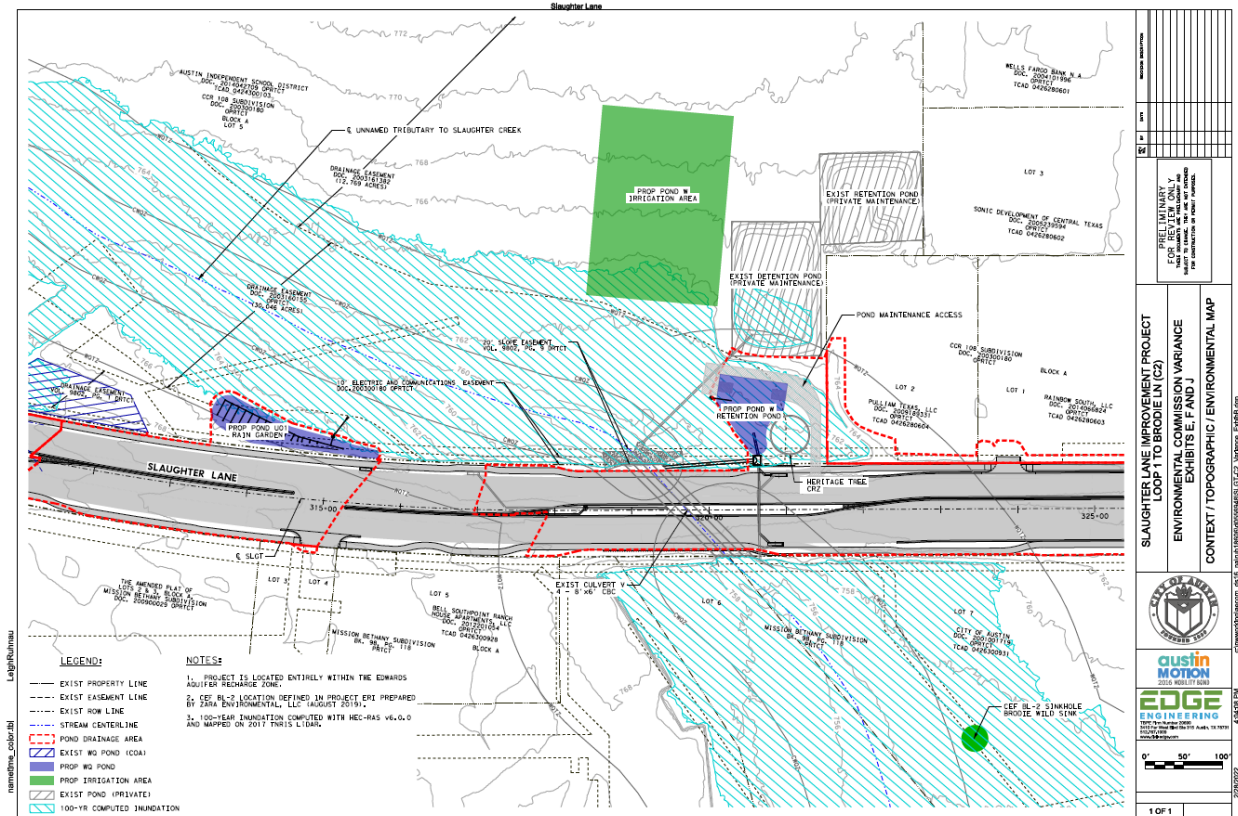
For the Slaughter Lane Improvement Project to complete the site development permit application process, two variances are also necessary:

- 25-8-364(B)(3) (*Floodplain Modification*) to allow floodplain modification within a floodplain that is in good or excellent condition.
- 25-8-641 (*Removal Prohibited*) to allow the removal of a heritage tree that has at least one stem that is 30 inches or larger in diameter.

The variance to code section 25-8-641 (*Removal Prohibited*) related to the removal of a heritage tree is supported by the Development Services and the City Arborist.

Construction of the Slaughter Lane Improvement Project from Loop 1 (MOPAC) to East of Brodie Lane will require floodplain modification within a floodplain area designated as good condition to build the two new SOS water quality ponds (see Exhibit 3 below). The new water quality ponds will treat runoff currently impacting a tributary of Slaughter Creek and two downstream Critical Environmental Features (point recharge features in the creek channel).

### Exhibit 3 Proposed Ponds in Floodplain



Due to the substantial improvement to water quality proposed by the project both regionally and for the entire reconstructed section of roadway, the proposed site-specific ordinance will also authorize the SOS amendment and the two necessary variances. The offsite drainage areas improved by the project are shown in Exhibit 5.

TPW is the project sponsor and has developed the design in consultation with engineering staff from WPD. TPW is pursuing development of the Slaughter Lane Improvement Project under a site plan permit. Staff from Development Services and other City of Austin departments have completed one round of review of the site plan application.

Staff recommends approval of the proposed amendment and associated variances for the following reasons:

- The project is providing compliance with SOS non-degradation water quality treatment for all new and reconstructed impervious cover.
- The project is providing improved water quality treatment for all existing impervious cover.
- The project is updating 2 existing water quality ponds to provide SOS non-degradation water quality treatment for 121.6 acres of offsite drainage including 31.9 acres of offsite impervious cover.
- The project will reduce impact to 2 Critical Environmental Features – recharge features within a tributary of Slaughter Creek
- The project will pay into the Riparian Zone Mitigation Fund in lieu of providing mitigation for the Floodplain Modification associated with the new water quality ponds.
- Other than the SOS amendment and variances identified, the project complies with City Code.