

**AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT MASTER  
DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE REVIEW SHEET**

**Amendment:**

Consider an updated Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (AUS) Master Development Plan Ordinance (MDO).

**Proposed Language:**

See attached.

**Background:**

The Master Development Plan (MDP) establishes the regulatory framework for development projects within the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (AUS) campus. City Council adopted the first MDP by ordinance in 1994 when the campus was transforming from the recently closed Bergstrom Air Force Base into the new Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. City Council adopted the most recent version of the MDP Ordinance (Ordinance 20120628-014) on June 28, 2012 and it is required to be reviewed every ten years. The current draft ordinance will incorporate a set of variances to guide the AUS future expansion while ensuring the City's environmental and sustainability requirements and principles are upheld.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff recommends approval of the proposed amendment.

**Board and Commission Actions**

July 5, 2023 – Environmental Commission recommended approval of the Ordinance with conditions on Commissioner Bristol's motion, with Commissioner Rambert's amendment with a vote of (9-1), Commissioner Brimer voted nay, Commissioner Einhorn absent.

**Council Action**

November 17, 1994 – Council approved original ABIA Site development Ordinance

June 28, 2012 – Council Approved the updated MDP ordinance per the required 10-year review

September 14, 2023 – Conduct Council public hearing

**City Staff:**

Keith Mars, Assistant Director, Development Services Department  
Keith.Mars@austintexas.gov, 512-466-4598



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Todd W. Shaw, Planning Commission Chair  
Planning Commissioners

**FROM:** Keith W. Mars, Assistant Director, Development Services Department  
J. Somer Shindler, Chief Development Officer, Austin-Bergstrom International Airport

**DATE:** August 16, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Updated Airport Master Development Plan Ordinance

Chair Shaw,

On August 22, 2023, the City of Austin Planning Commission will hear a request to update the Master Development Plan Ordinance (MDO) for the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (AUS). This update requires Council approval and will allow AUS to effectively deliver its development and expansion program while ensuring environmental stewardship and upholding community driven sustainability practices. The new ordinance would replace the existing MDO from 2012.

### History

In 1994—five years before AUS opened to the public—the City created an ordinance that served as a blueprint for development at the new airport, including a Master Plan of public improvements. The goal was to deliver the City of Austin’s largest capital project to date as efficiently as possible by treating the airport as a singular development program. In 2012, Council approved an updated MDO that aligned with future development needs and drainage planning requirements created since the original 1994 ordinance. Both the 1994 and 2012 MDOs included specific variances to City Code.

### MDO Overview

This update will streamline AUS implementation of the Airport Expansion and Development Program. Some highlights of the MDO are:

1. Enables AUS to be governed under one site plan.

2. Includes variances to City Code and recognizes the constraints and opportunities to treat the airport comprehensively rather than plan-by-plan compliance.
3. Establishes consistent permitting requirements for the 10-year duration of the MDO.
4. Implements a campus wide approach to exceed water quality requirements.
5. Addresses vegetation conflict with Federal Aviation Administration protected airspace requirements.

This update has been a collaborative effort between AUS, Watershed Protection and Development Services—all of which are in full support of the proposal and recommend approval. We ask that the Planning Commission provide Council with recommendations and take action at its August 22 meeting. The MDO is scheduled for Council hearing and action on September 14.

Should you have any questions, please contact Keith Mars, Assistant Director with the Development Services Department. He can be reached at (512) 466-4598 or via email at [keith.mars@austintexas.gov](mailto:keith.mars@austintexas.gov). You can also contact Somer Shindler, Chief Development Officer with the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport at (512) 530-6336 or via email at [somer.shindler@flyaustin.com](mailto:somer.shindler@flyaustin.com).

The City of Austin departments of Aviation (AUS), Watershed Protection (WPD), and Development Services (DSD) have collaborated to develop the following variances to City Code as part of the updated Master Development Plan (MDP) Ordinance for the airport. Approval of the updated MDP by the new ordinance will grant the following variances to provisions of City of Austin Code:

<b>Variance</b>	<b>Impacted Section(s) of Code</b>	<b>Why This Variance Is Needed</b>	<b>Mitigation and Oversight</b>
A	Section 25-2-2 ( <i>Site Plan Exemptions</i> )	Allows AUS to use the airport's Master Site Plan as the site plan to obtain a building demolition permit for Air Force structures over 10,000 sf.	A site development permit will still be obtained by AUS from DSD. All building demolition requirements will be followed and any development will still adhere to the LDC.
B	Section 25-2, Zoning, Subchapter E ( <i>Design Standards and Mixed Use</i> ), 25-2, Subchapter E.	Allows AUS to exempt land within its boundaries from specific requirements; consistent with existing exemptions for land zoned for aviation (AV).	AUS will continue to implement sustainable construction practices and grow its campus wide pedestrian path system that includes internal and external commute solutions.
C	Section 25-5-44 ( <i>Previously Approved Site Plan</i> )	Allows for overlapping site plans under review, or for there to be new site plans established.	Site plan applications will be submitted to DSD, and AUS will work with DSD on an organized approach for tracking site plan reviews and a consistent nomenclature for site plan permit numbers so all airport site plans can be easily associated with the Master Site Plan.
D	Section 25-5-81 ( <i>Site Plan Expiration</i> )	Allows AUS' Master Site Plan to be a living document, with a 10-year Master Development Plan review and individual project site plans submitted, in lieu of the Code requirement that site plans expire after three years.	The Master Site Plan will have periodic review, at least every ten years, among DSD, WPD, and AUS. The Master Site Plan will continue to be updated development/redevelopment occurs.
E	Section 25-7-152 ( <i>Dedication of Easements and Right-of-Way</i> )	Allows AUS to avoid having to grant itself (as a city entity) an easement, given that the airport is city-owned land.	AUS will comply with all floodplain requirements and other setbacks required by City Code and will provide full access to the floodplain administrator (WPD).

F	Subsections (B)(3) and (C) of Section 25-8-211 ( <i>Water Quality Control Requirement</i> )	Allows new or redeveloped taxilanes to be exempt from water quality control requirements given that these areas are not high-pollutant areas.	AUS will remove existing impervious cover (IC) in a 1:1 ratio, as there is much legacy IC across the 4200-acres in which the runoff drains to the same overall drainage system. AUS will continue to actively implement the airport wide storm water pollution prevention plan that significantly reduces impacts to the watershed. AUS currently has four full-time positions dedicated to this program.
G	Subsection (A) of Section 25-8-213 ( <i>Water Quality Control Standards</i> )	Allows AUS to leverage its large existing green spaces (via vegetative filter strips) to satisfy certain water quality pond requirements (this is consistent with FAA safety requirements).	AUS performs “rubber removal” cleaning of the runways twice per year. The pavement is cleaned with high-pressure water, which is recovered and discharged to the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). Watershed Protection Engineering will be part of the initial phases of civil projects to identify project opportunities for increased water quality treatment.
H	Subsection (B)(2) of Section 25-8-213 ( <i>Water Quality Control Standards</i> ), to limit capture volume to the first half inch of runoff for the Constrained Development Area, identified on Exhibit B (Water Quality Plan).	Allows AUS to limit capture volume amount for runoff in the Constrained Development Area (CDA) only, avoiding cost-prohibitive requirements and a significant interruption to airport operations.	All areas developed outside the CDA adhere to newer code. Infrastructure will be upsized with redevelopment to account for changes in rainfall criteria. AUS has a comprehensive water quality compliance program, which includes State of Texas and Watershed Protection permits, regular storm water infrastructure maintenance, inspections, monitoring, and spill response. AUS has committed 1% of its CIP, up to \$10M during the lifecycle of the Ordinance to water quality improvement projects.
I	Section 25-8-261 ( <i>Critical Water Quality Zone Development</i> )	Allows AUS development in segments of the Critical Water Quality Zone (CWQZ), based on certain conditions.	All natural channels and riparian zones will be protected. Only specific channels in conflict with the airfield, that are currently maintained, mowed channels or channels with concrete trickle channels or flumes, are designated as potential development, with the focus on protecting and

			enhancing natural channels by establishing extended buffers along natural channels and providing riparian restoration.
J	Section 25-8-341 ( <i>Cut Requirements</i> )	Allows AUS to develop the airfield and surrounding support infrastructure in compliance with FAA height and site requirements (where City code is in conflict)	AUS will work with WPD to ensure grading and drainage infrastructure is modeled such that there are no adverse downstream impacts, peak flows are managed and erosive conditions are not created.
K	Section 25-8-341 ( <i>Cut Requirements</i> )	Allows AUS to develop the airfield and surrounding support infrastructure in compliance with FAA height and site requirements (where City code is in conflict)	AUS does not anticipate projects associated with this variance will include any critical environmental features.
L	(L) Section 25-8-342 ( <i>Fill Requirements</i> )	Allows AUS to develop the airfield and surrounding support infrastructure in compliance with FAA height and site requirements (where City code is in conflict)	AUS does not anticipate projects associated with this variance will include any critical environmental features.
M	Section 25-8-342 ( <i>Fill Requirements</i> )	Allows AUS to develop the airfield and surrounding support infrastructure in compliance with FAA height and site requirements (where City code is in conflict)	AUS does not anticipate projects associated with this variance will include any critical environmental features.
N	(N) Section 25-8-624 ( <i>Approval Criteria</i> ), Section 25-8-642 ( <i>Administrative Variance</i> ); Section 25-8-643 ( <i>Land Use Commission Variance</i> )	Allows AUS to comply with FAA protected airspace requirements, and to clarify that trees encroaching within protected air space that may create an aircraft safety hazard meet hazard requirements.	This only applies to areas where trees encroach on protective air space. AUS will ensure tree trimming or removals will be conducted with the least disturbance to the riparian zone, and will commit to regular tree plantings in areas on campus well outside protective air space areas.
O	Article 5 ( <i>Additional Water Conservation Requirements</i> ) of Chapter 25-9 ( <i>Water and Wastewater</i> ), Article 5, Chapter 25-9 of the City Code.	Allows AUS to avoid cost-prohibitive requirements for water reuse while improving existing 750,000 square ft. Barbara Jordan Terminal.	Other water re-use measures are implemented within the BJT (e.g. low flow fixtures). The new concourse, CUP and other facilities that trigger the requirements will comply with Water Forward conservation requirements, and will use either

			rain-water harvesting or reclaimed water for toilet flushing. The airport has consistently grown its reclaimed water system since 2012 which has saved 100's of millions of gallons of potable water for the community.
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**Public Input Opportunities:**

Public comment opportunities will be available at the following boards and commission and City Council tentative dates. Dates are tentative at this time.

- Environmental Commission July 5
- Airport Advisory Commission August 9
- Planning Commission August 22
- City Council September 14



# Master Development Plan Ordinance Update

Somer Shindler, Chief Development Officer



# Airport Development and Expansion History

- Bergstrom Air Force Base decommissioned in 1993 and converted to Austin-Bergstrom International Airport as part of the Base Realignment and Closure Program.
- Original terminal constructed in 1999
  - \$585 million budget (\$1.04 billion in 2022 dollars)
  - 25 gates, 126 daily flights
  - Designed to serve 11 million annual passengers
- 2019 expansion
  - \$350 million budget
  - Added 175,000 square feet, 9 new gates – Total 34 gates
  - Designed to serve 15 million annual passengers
- 2022 Growth
  - 21.1 million annual passengers served
  - Designed to serve 15 million annual passengers



# MDP Ordinance Background

- Proposed update developed in concert among the departments of Aviation, Watershed Protection and Development Services.
- AUS Master Development Plan Ordinance serves as a regulatory framework to guide development within the defined airport boundary.
  - Enables the 4,200-acre airport to be governed under one site plan.
- Serves as an omnibus compilation of preapproved variances to city code.
- Establishes the airport campus as a singular site plan, providing clarity for city code reviewers.
- MDP Ordinance is subject to administrative review every 10 years. Current review was initiated in 2022.



Storm water sample 6/5/2023

# MDP Ordinance History

- 1994: Original Master Plan Ordinance is passed to serve as a blueprint for redevelopment of Bergstrom Air Force Base into Austin-Bergstrom International Airport.
  - Included pre-approved variances to Land Development Code necessary to construct an international airport and a Water Quality Compliance plan that governed drainage infrastructure development.
- 2012: Updated MDP Ordinance aligned master planning with future development needs and addressed changes in drainage planning requirements.
- 2023: Proposed update will guide the airport's future expansion efforts while abiding by the City's environmental and sustainability principles.



# Why is the update necessary?

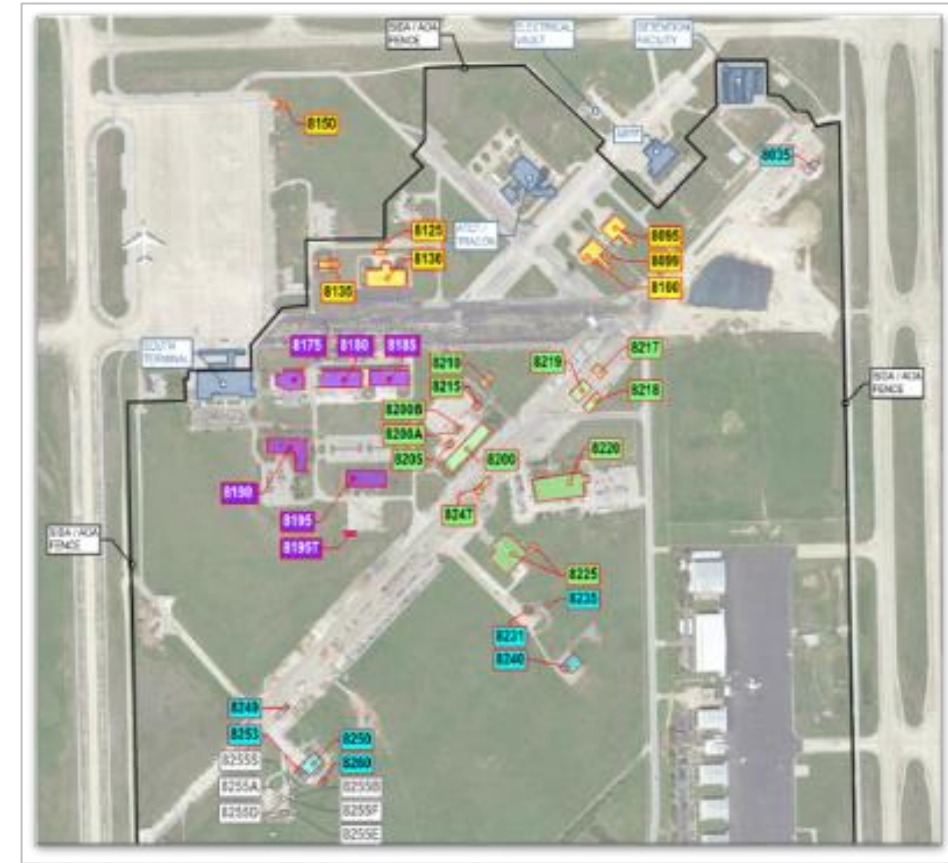
- Establishes consistent permitting requirements for the airport's long-term development.
- Provides pre-approved variances needed for the strategic progression of enabling projects as part of the comprehensive expansion and development program.
- Ensures the program advances in a timely order that meets airline and community commitments.
- Aligns future development with current city code.



Cargo Apron Water Quality Pond

# Proposed Variances to City Code Sections

- Section 25-2-2 (*Site Plan Exemptions*): Allows AUS to use the airport's Master Site Plan as the site plan to obtain a building demolition permit for Air Force structures over 10,000 square feet.
- Section 25-2 (*Design Standards and Mixed Use*): Allows AUS to exempt land within its boundaries from specific requirements; consistent with existing exemptions for land zoned for aviation.
- Section 25-5-44 (*Previously Approved Site Plan*): Allows for overlapping site plans under review, or for there to be new site plans established.

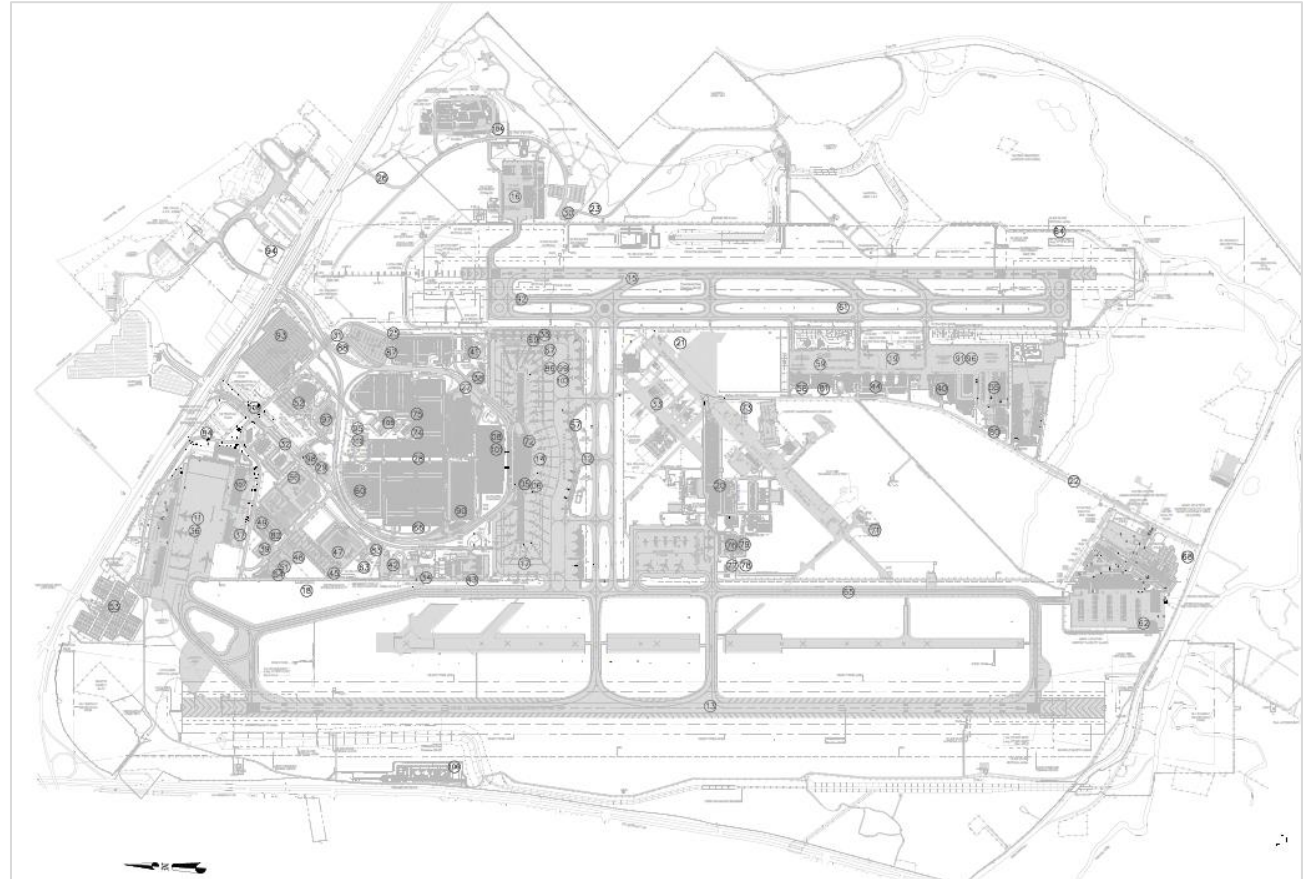


AEDP Building Demolition Projects



# Proposed Variances to City Code Sections

- Section 25-5-81 (*Site Plan Expiration*): Allows AUS' Master Site Plan to be a living document, with a 10-year Master Development Plan review and individual project site plans submitted, in lieu of the Code requirement that site plans expire after three years.
- Section 25-7-152 (*Dedication of Easements and Right-of-Way*): Allows AUS to avoid having to grant itself (as a city entity) an easement, given that the airport is city-owned land.



Master Site Plan with more than 100 Individual  
Project Site Plans Incorporated

# Proposed Variances to City Code Sections

- Subsections (B)(3) and (C) of Section 25-8-211 (*Water Quality Control Requirement*): Allows new or redeveloped taxilanes to be exempt from water quality control requirements given that these areas are not high-pollutant areas.
- Subsection (A) of Section 25-8-213 (*Water Quality Control Standards*): Allows AUS to leverage its large existing green spaces (via vegetative filter strips) to satisfy certain water quality pond requirements (this is consistent with FAA safety requirements).



Vegetative Filter Strip

# Proposed Variances to City Code Sections

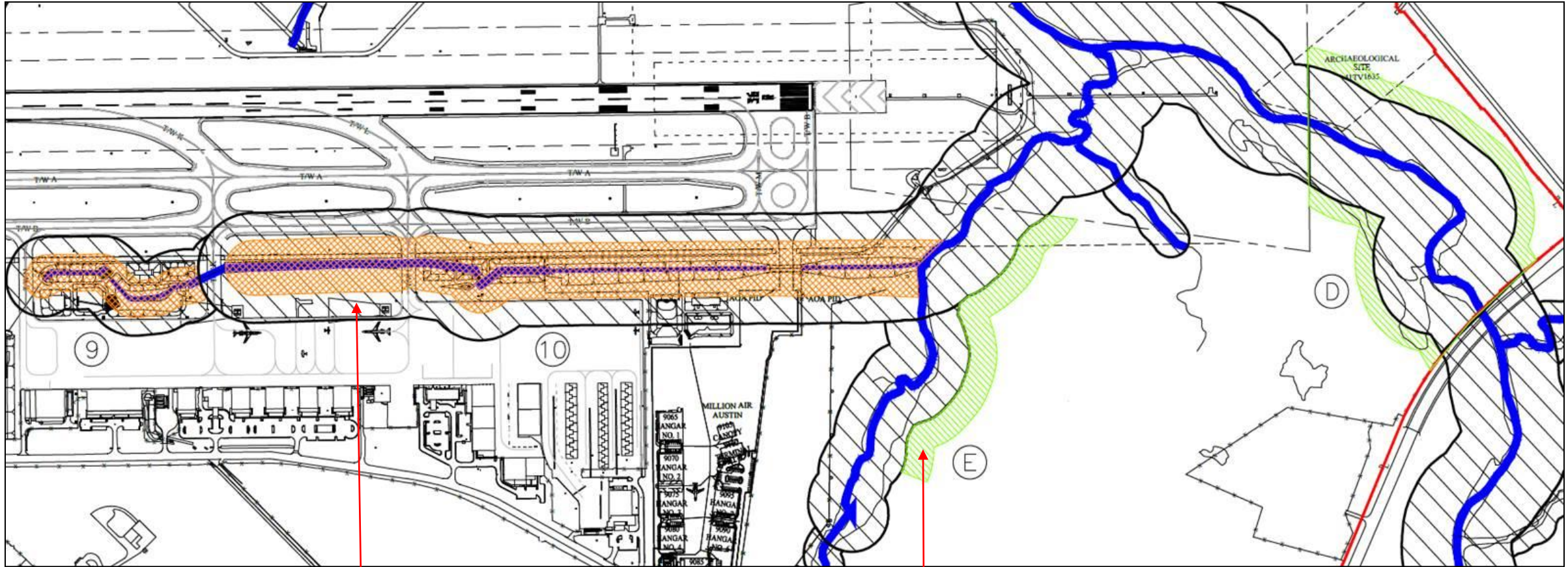
- Subsection (B)(2) of Section 25-8-213 (*Water Quality Control Standards*): Allows AUS to limit capture volume amount for runoff in the Constrained Development Area only, avoiding cost-prohibitive requirements and a significant interruption to airport operations.
- Section 25-8-261 (*Critical Water Quality Zone Development*): Allows AUS development in segments of the Critical Water Quality Zone, based on certain conditions.



Outfall Inspection



# Critical Water Quality Zone Setback



CWQZ conflict with existing  
airfield pavement

Increased buffer and riparian restoration mitigation area

# Proposed Variances to City Code Sections

- Section 25-8-341 (*Cut Requirements*) and 25-8-342 (*Fill Requirements*): Allows AUS to develop the airfield and surrounding support infrastructure in compliance with FAA height and site requirements (where City code is in conflict)
- Section 25-8-624 (*Approval Criteria*), Section 25-8-642 (*Administrative Variance*); Section 25-8-643 (*Land Use Commission Variance*): Allows AUS to comply with FAA protected airspace requirements, and to clarify that trees encroaching within protected air space that may create an aircraft safety hazard meet hazard requirements.
- Article 5 (*Additional Water Conservation Requirements*) of Chapter 25-9 (*Water and Wastewater*), Article 5, Chapter 25-9 of the City Code: Allows AUS to avoid cost-prohibitive retrofit of the existing Barbara Jordan Terminal for water reuse requirements.



# AUS Commitments

- Water conservation measurements for the new concourse and other new developments will comply with Water Forward conservation requirements.
- Commitment of 1% of Capital Improvement Program, up to \$10 million during the lifecycle of the Ordinance (10 years), to water quality improvement projects.
- Continued commitment to storm water pollution reduction strategies



CIP Drainage Improvement Project (2018): Outfall 13 Erosion Repair and Stabilization Project (before and after photos)



# Questions