



# TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC WORKS

## Living Streets Program Briefing Urban Transportation Committee – 3/5/2024

Kirk Scanlon, AICP, Division Manager, Smart Mobility Office

Matt Macioge, Capital Improvements Program Manager, Living Streets Program Manager



TRANSPORTATION  
PUBLIC WORKS

## Agenda:

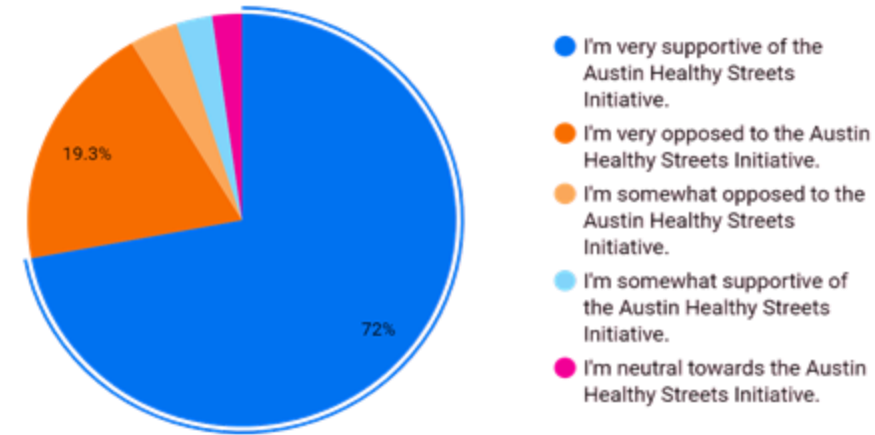
1. Living Streets background and overview
2. Types of activations:
  1. Neighborhood Block Parties
  2. Healthy Streets
  3. Play Streets
3. Methodology and selection criteria
4. Program demand and public response
5. Program first activations
6. 2024 Living Streets Program schedule

Transforming Streets, Building Community

## Healthy Streets Pilot Initiative

- Started in May 2020 at the beginning of COVID Pandemic, Healthy Streets sought to make residential streets safer and more communal during a period of intense isolation.
- Healthy Streets utilized soft closures to reduce through traffic and vehicle speeds.
- There were 16 Healthy Street installations throughout the city.
- Lessons Learned from the Pilot:
  - Residents wanted notice and inclusion in the process
  - The street type matters

Do you support the Austin Healthy Streets Initiative?



Why are you using Healthy Streets?

*\*people could choose all that apply, so percentages do not add up to 100%\**



A resident survey showed high levels of support for the initiative



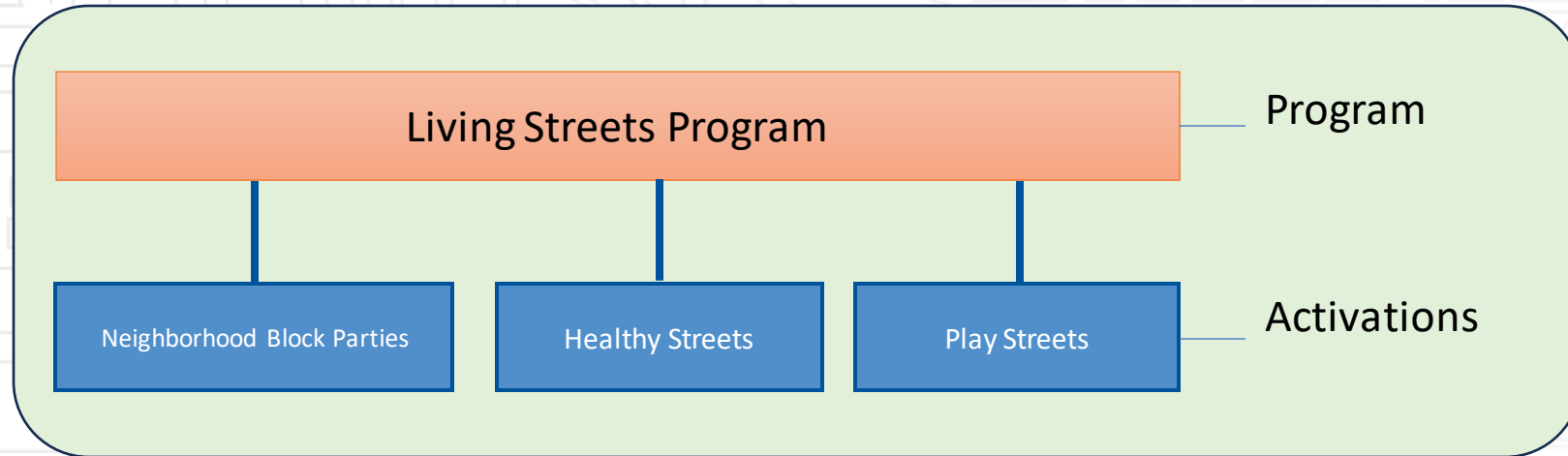


## Living Streets Program – Initiation

Resolution No. – 20211021-02

1. Council directs the City Manager to create the "Street Programs" - Living Streets
2. Living Streets Program will be a resident-led process.
3. Use "soft" closures to reduce vehicle speed, improve safety, and create connectivity and community.
4. 60% of the residents of a proposed street must approve with a signature to support an activation.
5. 3-6 months with an option for renewal.
6. Address equity issues by making Living Streets accessible

Transforming Streets, Building Community



## Living Streets Program is 3 types of activations:

- Neighborhood Block Parties
- Healthy Streets
- Play Streets



# Neighborhood Block Parties

- Applied for and managed by a resident who resides on the street
- City staff provides barricades with signage, lights and safety vests
- 1 block in length.
- A one-time closure, up to 24 hours in length that abides by noise regulations

## [Apply for a Neighborhood Block Party](#)

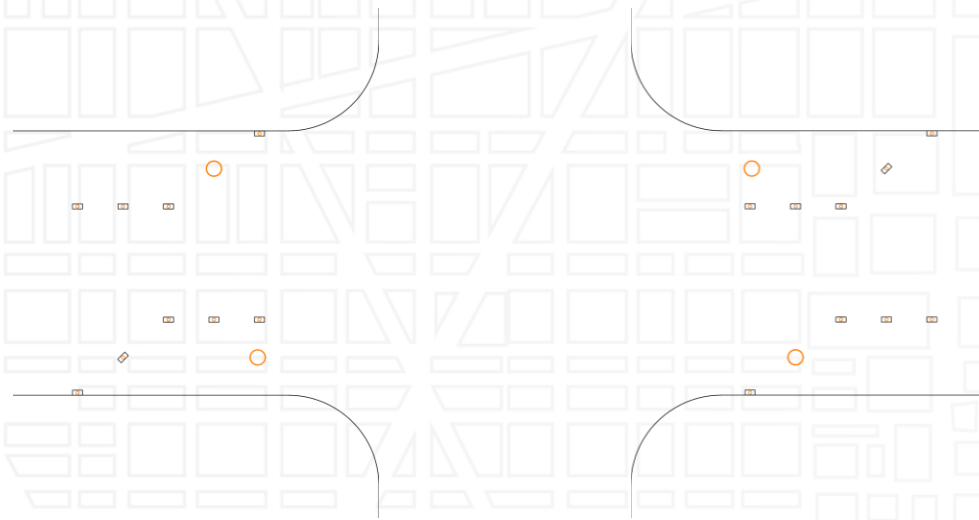




# Healthy Streets

- Applied for by a resident
- The city installs and manages cones, barrels, barricades and signage to create street access points
- ~3-4 blocks in length
- Around the clock “soft” closures that are meant to deter through traffic
- 3-6 months, with the opportunity to renew

[Apply for a Healthy Street or Play Street](#)





## Play Streets

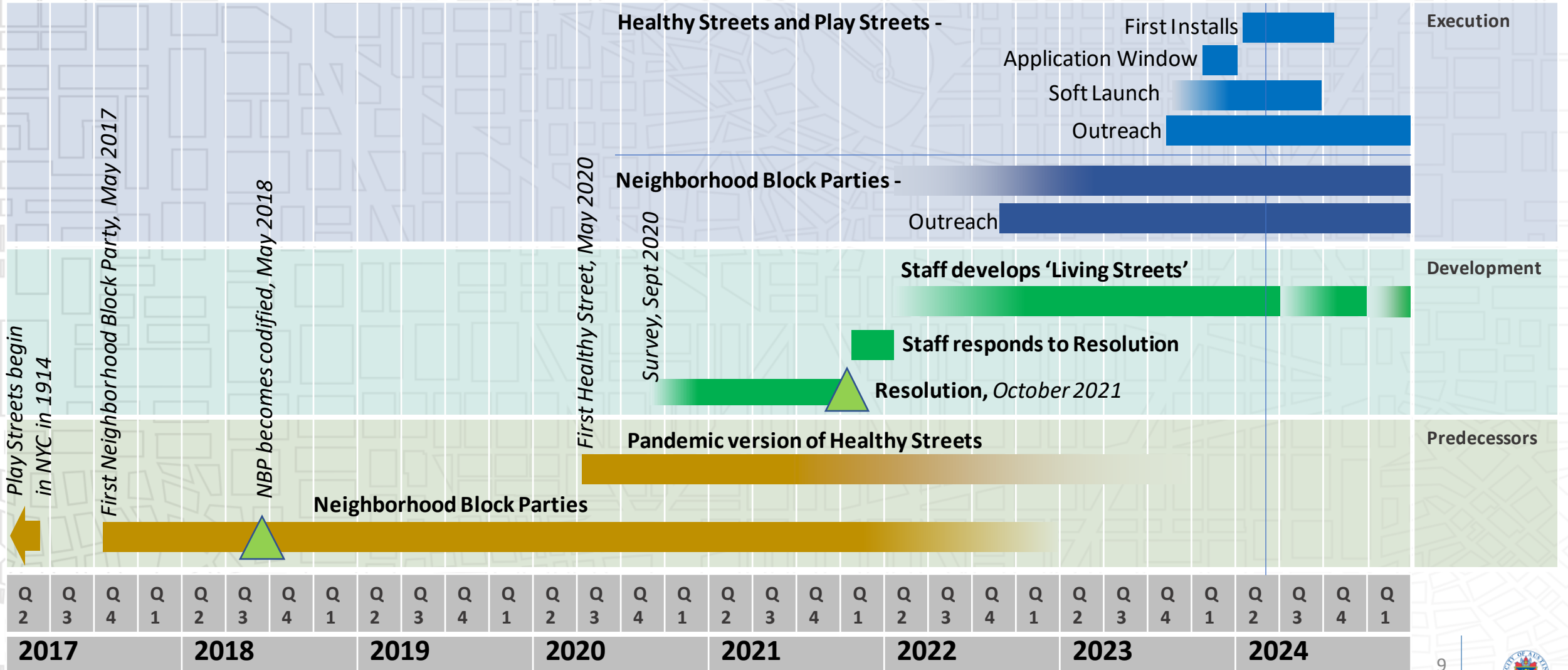
- Applied for and managed by a resident
- Resident will set up and take down Play Street barricades and signage provided by the City
- 1 block in length
- Uses “soft” closures with city provided barricades
- Up to 3 days a week for up to 12 hours a week
- 3-6 months in duration, with the opportunity to renew

### [Apply for a Healthy Street or Play Street](#)





# Living Streets' Program Timeline



Cities re-examine how right of way is used during pandemic

## Call to Action

Visit <https://www.austintexas.gov/LivingStreets> and apply for your Living Street

## Target Audience

*Equity Analysis Zones:*

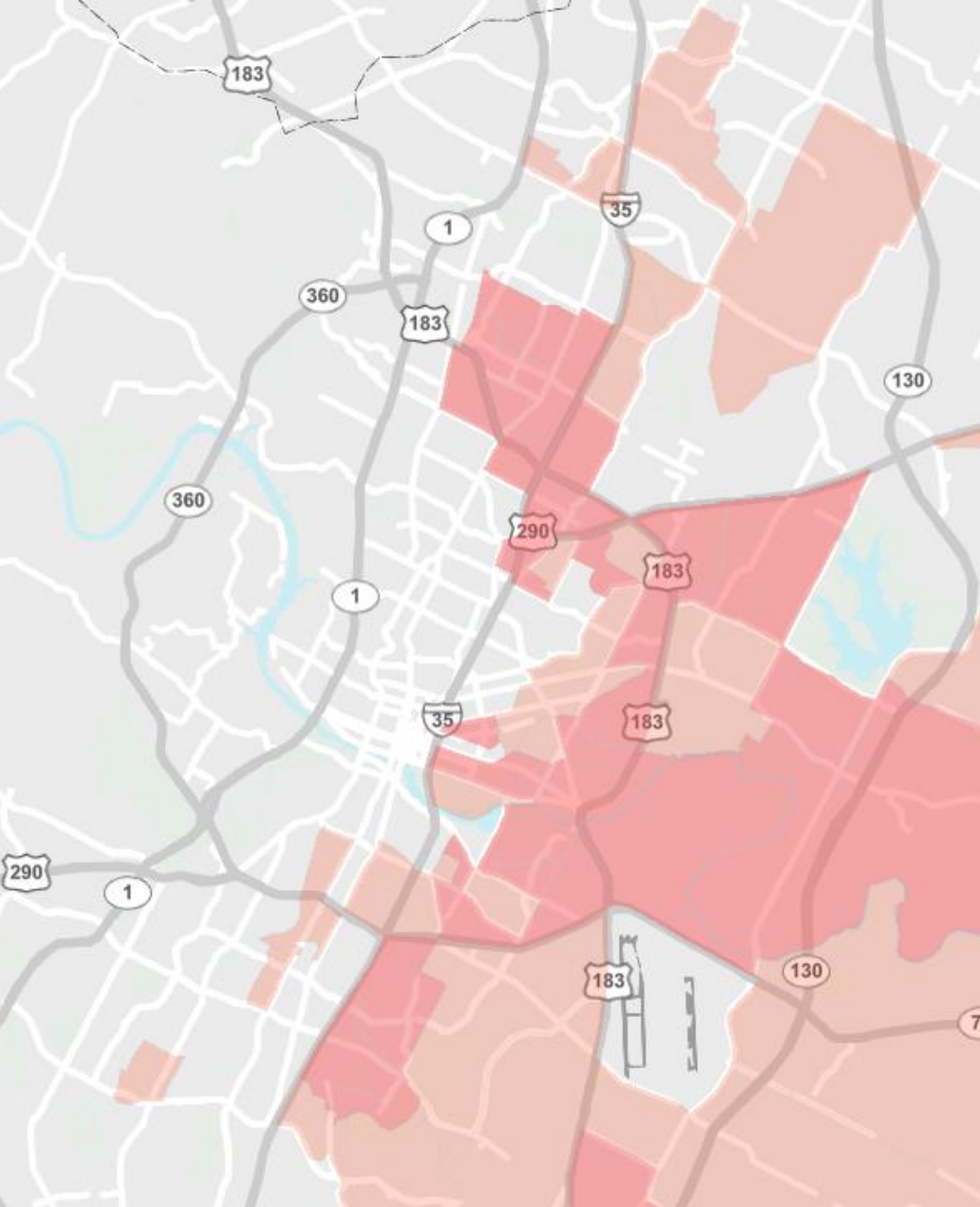
- *Medium-High Vulnerable*
- *Most Vulnerable*

## Methods

- Outreach at Events and Meetings
- Tri-fold pamphlet and flyers
- Yard Sign Campaign
- Social Media Campaign
- Capital Metro Bus Campaign

## Dates of Run

- June, July and August 2024



Equity Analysis Zones



# Interests, Applications, and Installations



- 1. Express your interest** – The resident fills out an Expression of Interest (EOI) online.
- 2. Coordinate with City staff** – Program staff will communicate with the resident to choose the best nearby street for an activation.
- 3. Complete the application** – The resident will collect signatures, find a sponsor if needed, and complete the application.
- 4. Staff review** – City staff will review all applications submitted and choose the applications that best fit program intentions and resources.
- 5. Project installation** – City staff will install or deliver the equipment for the activation.

























- ### Ineligible streets :

- Connect directly to a major arterial road
- Affect a traffic signal
- Affect a transit route



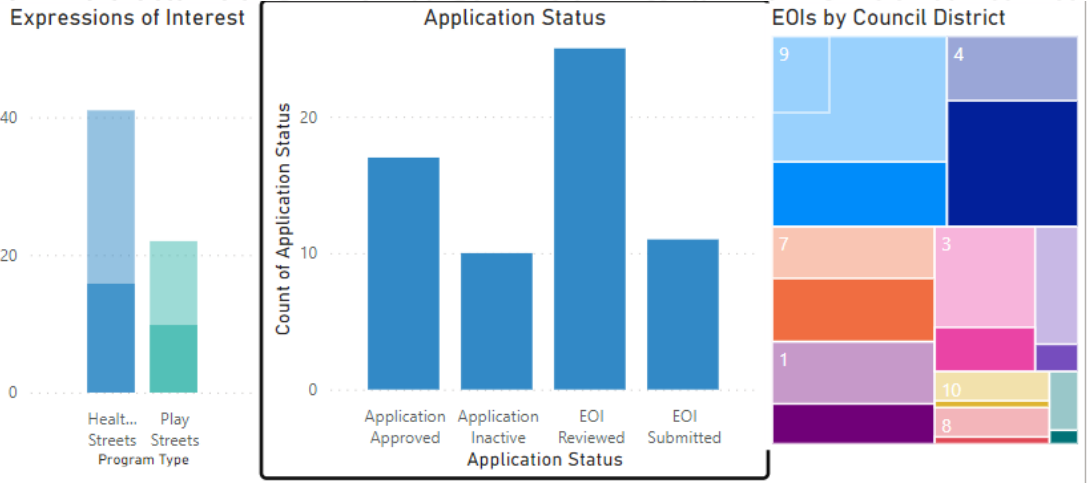
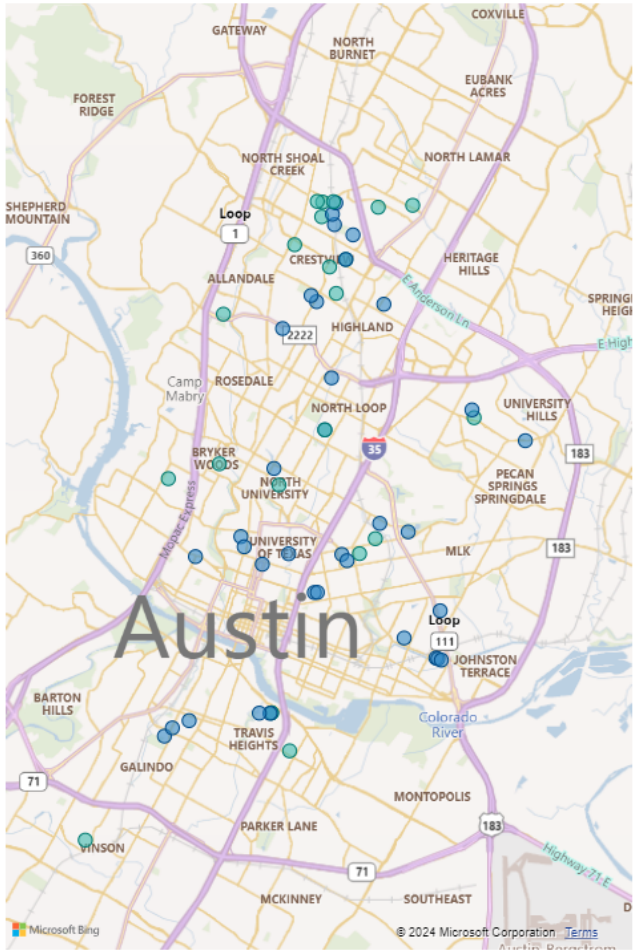
# Healthy and Play Streets Prioritization

Equity	Public Amenities	Civic Destinations	Food and Entertainment	Multimodal Transportation Options	Sidewalks (Healthy Streets only)
 Equity Analysis Zones**	 Parks	 Banks	 Movie Theaters	 Urban Trails	 No Sidewalks
 Seniors (Healthy Streets Only)	 Libraries	 Post Offices	 Show Venues	 AISD Bus Stops	 Partial Sidewalks
 Children	 Schools	 Hospitals & Urgent Care	 Museums	 Transit Stops	 Complete Sidewalks
 Park Deficient Areas	 Rec Centers		 Grocery Stores	 High Comfort Bike Routes	
Category max points: 5 ** Worth up to 2 points	Category max points: 1	Category max points: 1	Category max points: 1	Category max points: 1	Category max points: 1

## Prioritization is based on:

- Location in the TPW Equity Analysis Zones
- The presence or lack of sidewalks
- Location in an area with few parks
- Connections to destinations such as parks, schools, and cultural locations
- Connections to multimodal infrastructure
- Neighborhood support
- $P_v * Res App = Prioritization$

# Interests, Applications, and Installations



Average # of signatures required for a Healthy Street

31.73

Average % Approval for Healthy Streets

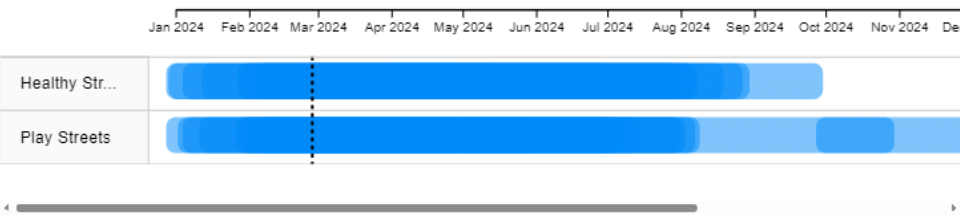
66.86

Average # of signatures required for a Play Street

8.65

Average % Approval for Play Streets

80.48



- Key take-aways:**
- 1. Ave. % of 60% required signatures garnered per application was **73%**.
  - 2. **~40 Healthy Streets applications** received in first 6-weeks open program launch.
  - 3. FY23 Living Streets budget supports 18 activations annually. Additional funding may be considered once a history of demand is developed.



## 37<sup>th</sup> Street



Highly successful cultural event with approx. 3,000 attendees per evening.

Complete road closure to through traffic resulted in attendees staying for a longer time and exploring the exhibits.

Staff provided temporary crosswalks at Guadalupe and ADA accessible parking to provide access.

## Ave G



Public engagement is an important component of the Living Streets Program.

Staff meet with residents to discuss any issues prior to the activation.

For Ave G, residents expressed concern about look and appearance of the installation, specifically how the cones convey construction, not pedestrian activity.

## Fischer Garden



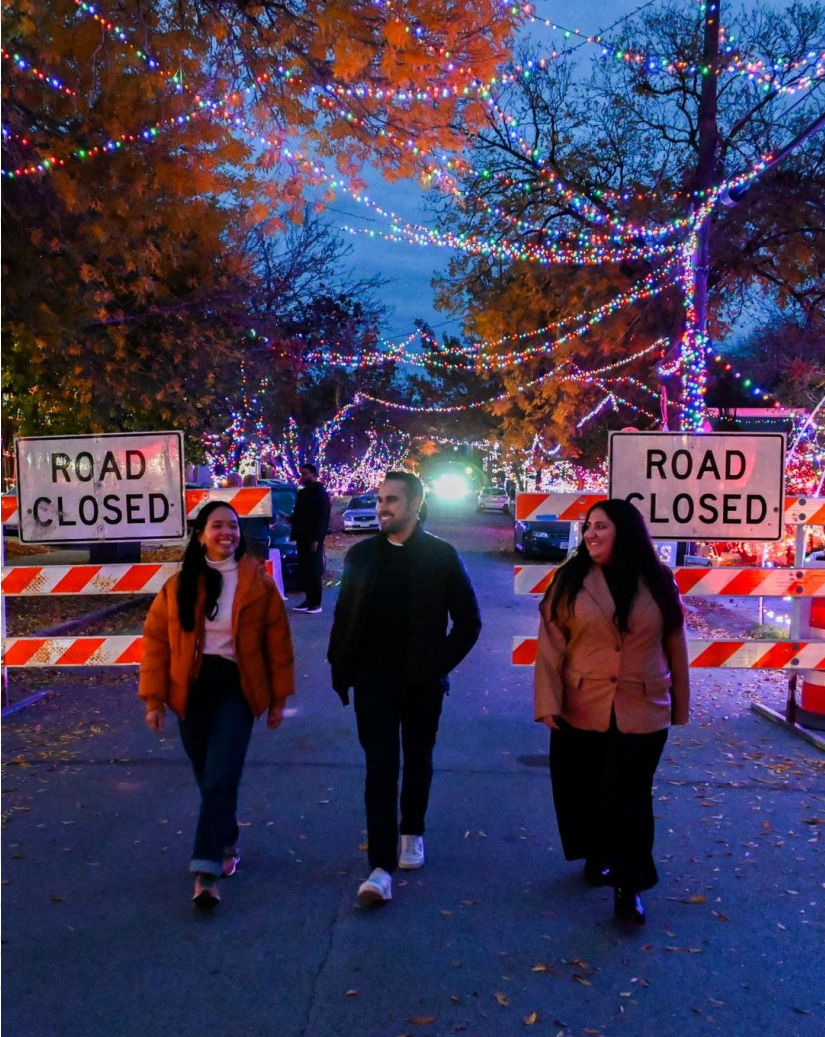
Cultural and community relations are critical to the success of Living Streets.

- Fischer Garden is surrounded by a high level of crashes. Living Streets increases safety by reducing through traffic to communities.

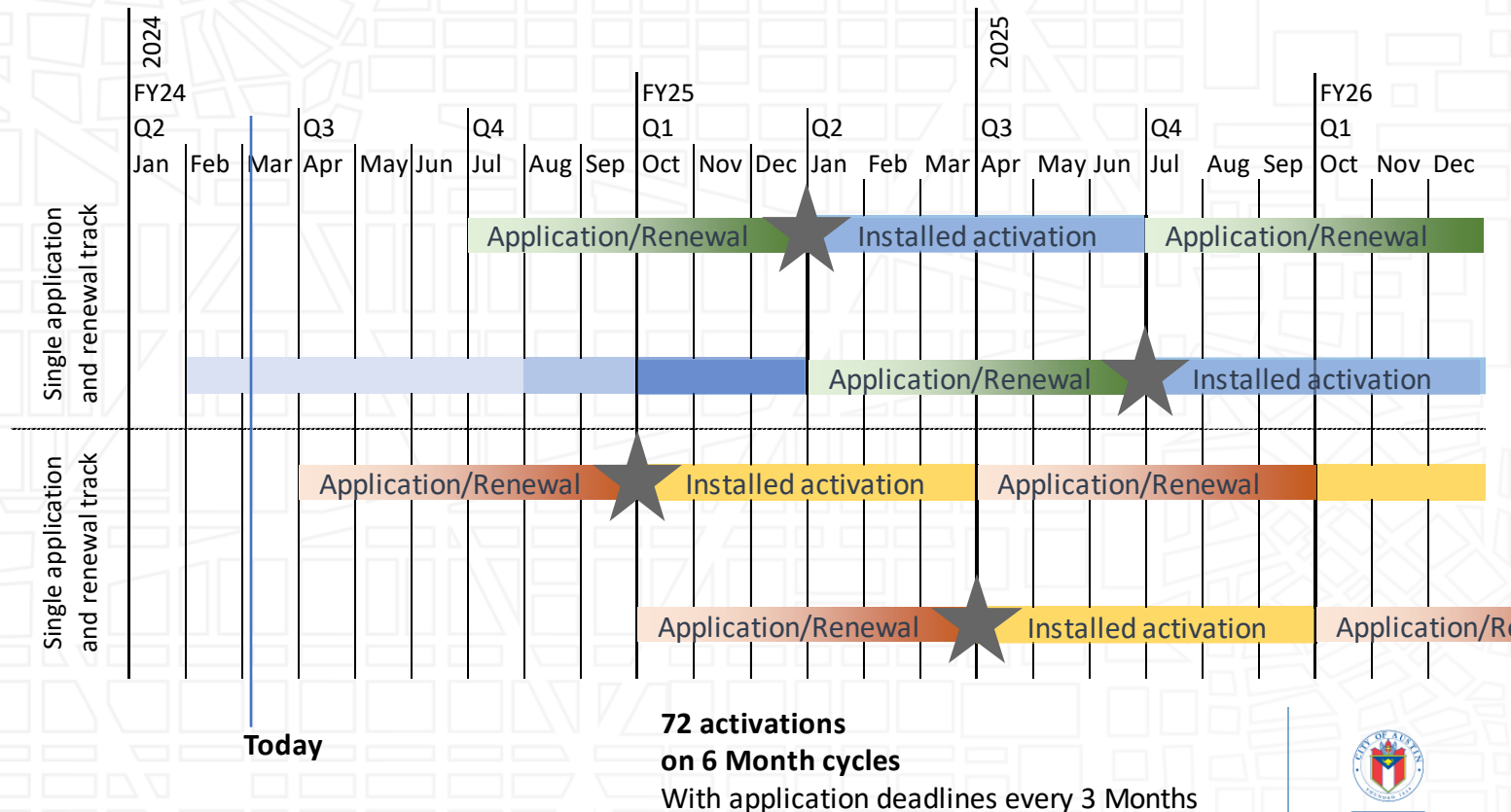
For neighbors in this area, collecting signatures was difficult while balancing changes in the neighborhood and work life







- Running two consecutive and offset cycles will allow staff to double the program capacity and address the back log of applications.
- Current staff of 3 can support a maximum of 72 activations annually at current efficiency.





# Thank You!

## Questions?

<https://www.austintexas.gov/LivingStreets>

[LivingStreets@AustinTexas.gov](mailto:LivingStreets@AustinTexas.gov)