



Transit System Projects Ordinance Amendment

Austin Project Connect | April 28, 2026

Transit System Projects Ordinance



- **Response to:** Resolution No. 20211029-003 which directed staff to:
 - *Review City Code, criteria manuals, and permitting procedures to identify impediments to the design, construction, implementation, and operation of Project Connect*
 - *Develop new regulations and procedures to address those impediments*
- ✓ **Foundational ordinance** approved by Council on Nov. 15, 2022
 - ✓ Established home for Transit System Project regulations
 - ✓ Modified permitting tools to accommodate Austin Light Rail
- Anticipated **additional impediments would be identified** as project progressed
- **Amendments address these issues** and support the project as it enters final design

Components of this Ordinance



1. Site Plan Modification

2. Removal of Outdated Utility Policy

3. Austin Light Rail Streetscape Standards

4. Austin Light Rail Water Quality Compliance Program

5. Administrative Review of Heritage Trees

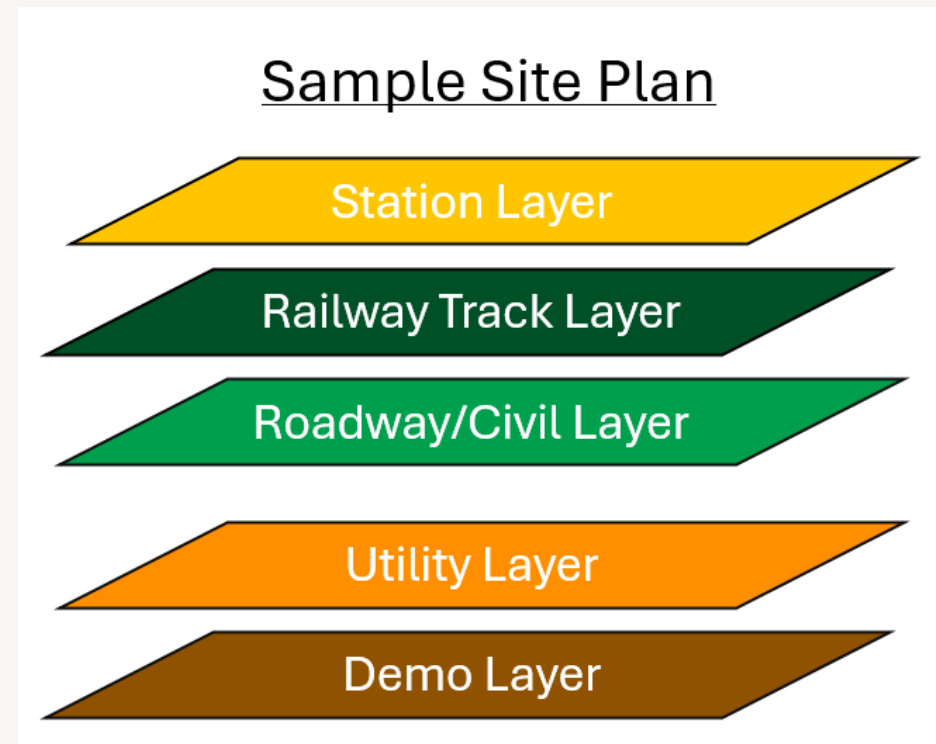
6. Administrative Rule Modifications

1. Site Plan Modifications

- To facilitate the permitting process for Austin Light Rail site plans will be allowed to have non-contiguous limits of construction (LOC).

- **Refresher: Site Plan Layers Tool**

- Modified from Fast Tracks tool.
- Allows construction to begin on permitted layers while future layers in design.
- Provides variety of options for efficient permitting and scheduling of project.



2. Removal of Outdated Utility Policy



- In 2000, utilities policy was passed in preparation for a potential future light rail system with an earlier alignment.
- This policy does not support the current Austin Light Rail alignment.
- Because this policy is obsolete and to prevent confusion, a rescission is being issued.

3. Light Rail Streetscape Standards



Project Connect Design Criteria

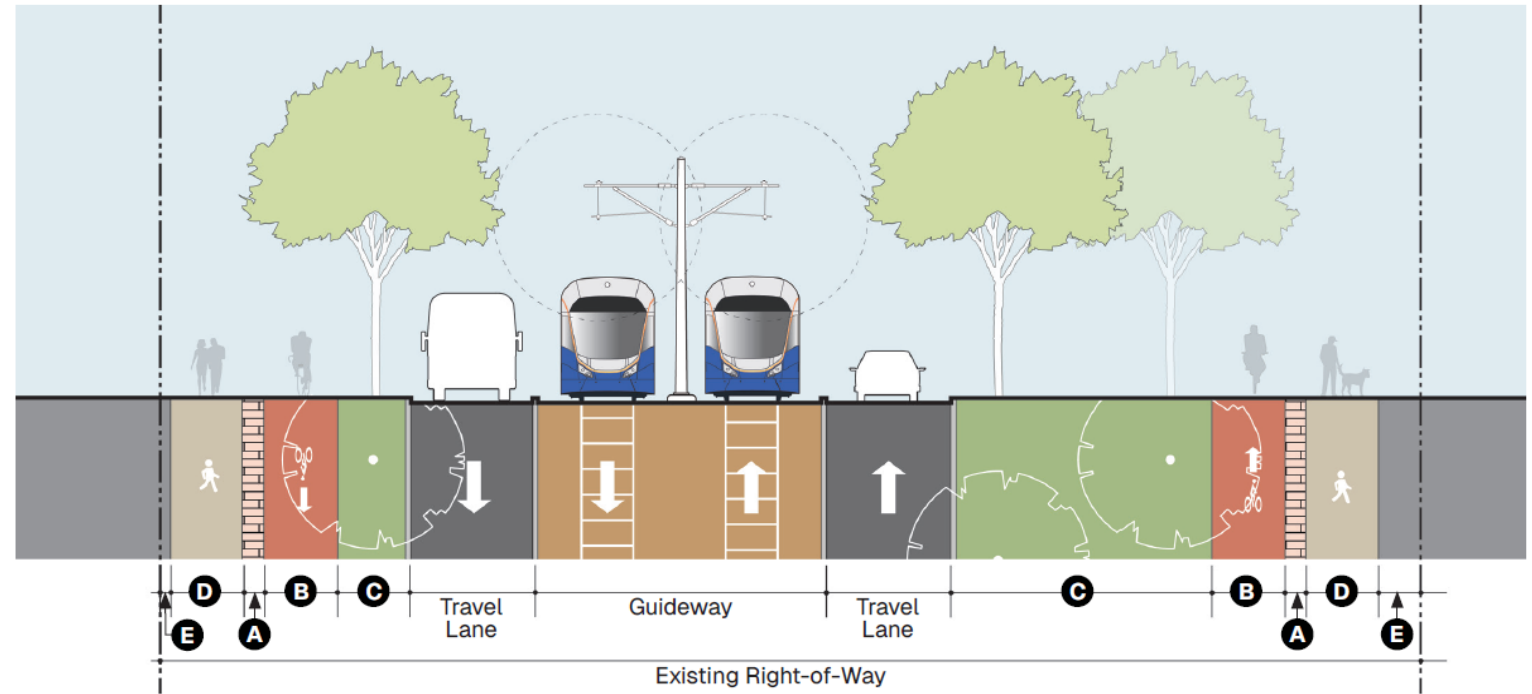
Purpose: *Contain back-of-curb streetscape standards for Austin Light Rail*

- The Transportation Criteria Manual (TCM) acknowledges that tailored standards for Project Connect may be needed to align with highly localized contextual design.
- Provide a consistent design for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, street tree and furniture zones, and associated setbacks and buffers
- Identify priorities based on the character and needs of each segment along the light rail alignment
- Respond to constrained and unique conditions
- Reduce the need for waivers and align adjacent development with the Austin Light Rail design

3. Light Rail Streetscape Standards

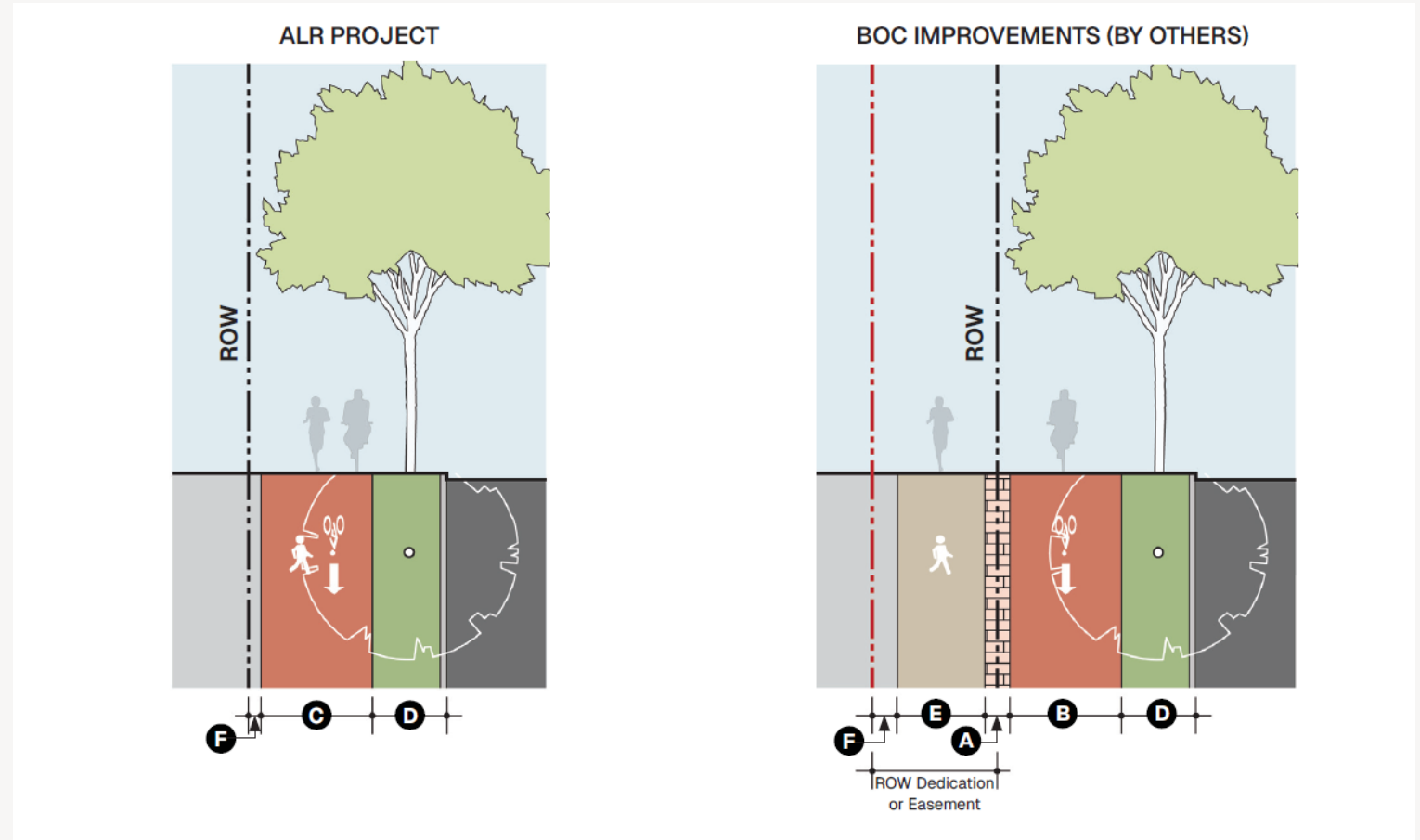
- Illustrates typical street cross sections that will be built in the ROW (often constrained) by the Light Rail project
- In most cases, the width requirements match the current TCM, but flexibility is provided for constrained conditions

Figure 2-11: Typical Cross Section for Guadalupe St – W 22nd St to W MLK Jr Blvd (looking North)



3. Light Rail Streetscape Standards

- Illustrates future enhancements when an adjacent property redevelops
- In this example, if a tree and shared-use path are provided by the Austin Light Rail Project, the shared-use path converts to a bike lane, and a separate sidewalk is constructed
- Provides consistent standards for Light Rail designers, COA reviewers, and developers



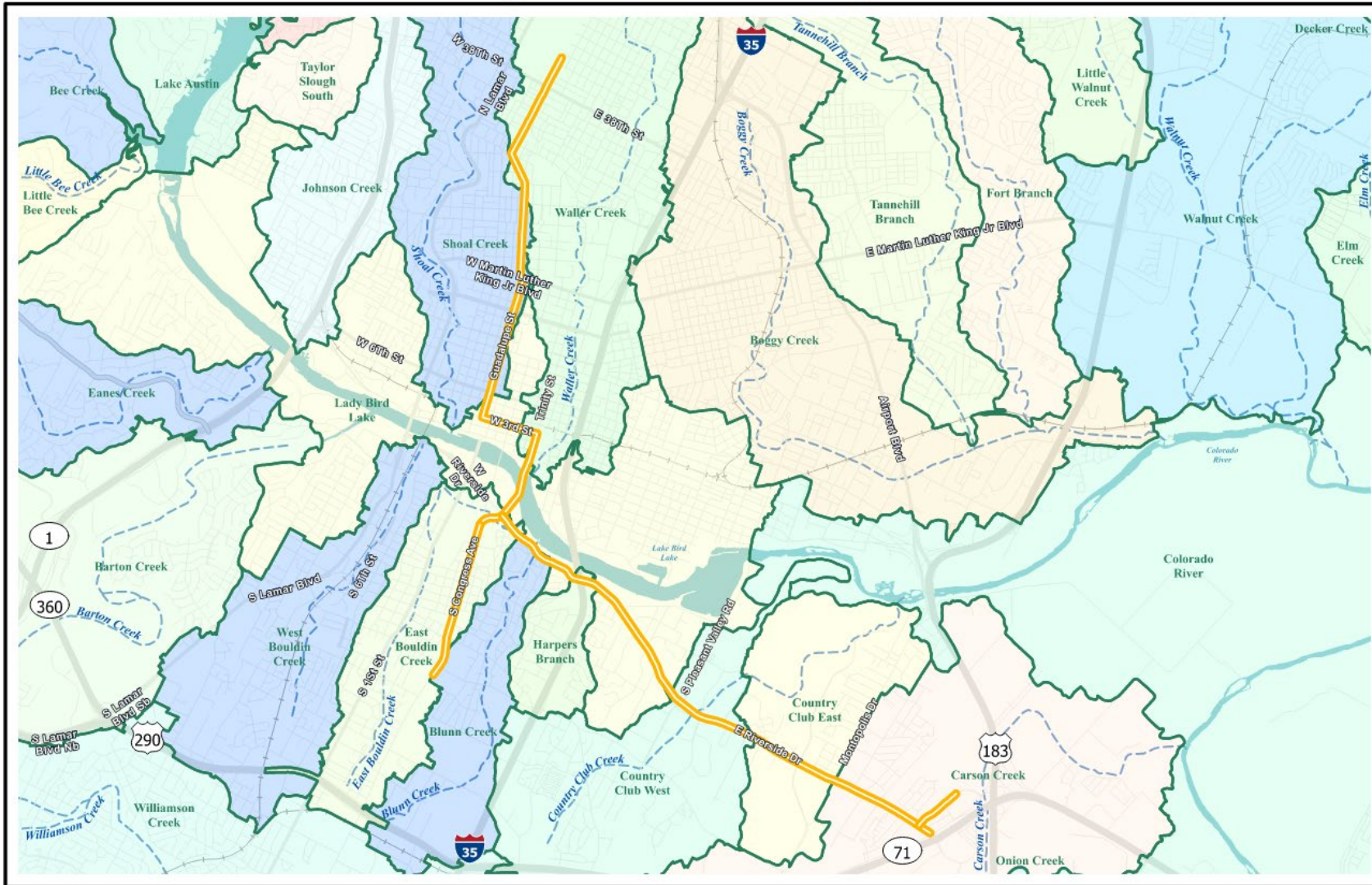
4. Light Rail Water Quality Compliance Program



Goals:

- **Incentivize project to build water quality infrastructure rather than apply for payment in lieu (PIL).**
 - Allows water quality treatment compliance across watersheds and site plans
 - Provides credit for equivalent off-site treatment

Austin Light Rail Phase 1 Water Quality Treatment



- Legend**
- Light Rail Route
 - Watershed Boundary
 - Streams & Creeks



4/6/2026







4. Light Rail Water Quality Compliance Program



Goals:

- **Incentivize project to build water quality infrastructure rather than apply for payment in lieu (PIL).**
 - Requires submission of a project-wide Water Quality Treatment Plan to utilize program, expediting site plan approvals.
 - ATP does not pay PIL until triggered, expediting early permits that do not require water quality review.





5. Administrative Review of Heritage Trees



- Does not alter tree regulations; modifies review process.
- Ensures expeditious review addressing resolution's goals of addressing impediments to project schedule.

6. Administrative Rule Modifications

- Project-specific Code modifications that:
 - Address constrained right of way where compliance will be challenging.
 - Ensure consistency in expiration of site plan components.
- Modifications developed over the course of a year and through joint working groups with stakeholder departments and ATP.

Schedule



Boards & Commissions and City Council:

- **April 15, 2026** – Forwarded to Planning Commission by Codes and Ordinances Joint Committee without a recommendation.
- **April 15, 2026** – Recommended with conditions by Environmental Commission
- **April 28, 2026** – Public hearing and consideration by Planning Commission
- **May 21, 2026** – Public hearing and consideration by City Council