

PLAZA SALTILLO TOD STATION AREA PLAN



Transit - Oriented
Development

DRAFT REPORT FEBRUARY 2008



PREPARED BY: PB PLACEMAKING FOR THE CITY OF AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD
PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT



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All participants in the planning process who live, work, and own or rent property in and around the Plaza Saltillo TOD District.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ES	Executive Summary	1
1	Chapter 1 - TOD Principles and Planning Policy	15
2	Chapter 2 - Plaza Saltillo TOD Station Area Plan	27
3	Chapter 3 - Implementation	63

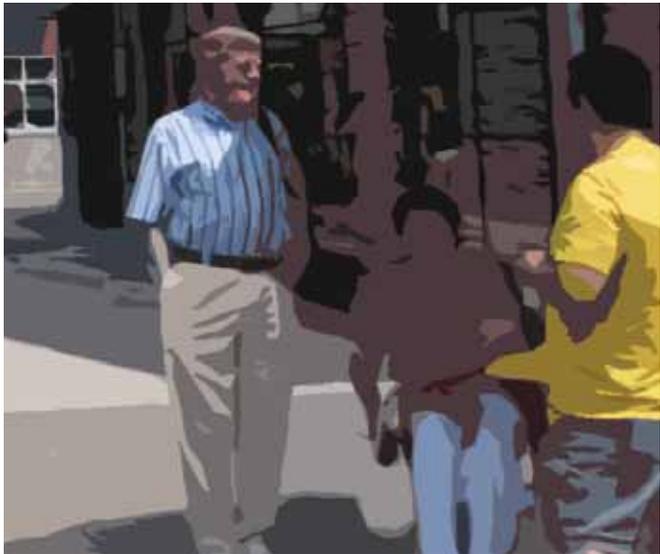
Appendices

- A. Creating the Plan
- B. Regulating Plan
- C. Affordable Housing Report
- D. Water and Wastewater Report
- E. Watershed Protection
- F. Financial Analysis
- G. Market Report
- H. Extracts from the E. 7th Street Corridor Concept Plan
- I. Lance Armstrong Bikeway (LAB) Alignment



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The first Capital MetroRail line is under construction with passenger service to begin at the end of 2008. The 32-mile Red Line will connect downtown Austin to Leander on existing rail tracks with nine initial stations planned. The City, in support of the Capital Metro "All Systems Go!" Long Range Transit Plan, initiated a broad public engagement effort to develop station area plans around several of these future MetroRail stops. The first station areas to undergo the station area planning process were Plaza Saltillo, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (MLK), and N. Lamar Boulevard/Justin Lane (a.k.a. Crestview Station).

New development that takes advantage of its location near transit is often referred to as "Transit-Oriented Development" (or TOD), and it is an important part of the City's goal to manage growth in ways that reduce reliance on automobile use, promote transit use, walking and biking, and create lively and safe areas around transit stations. The City of Austin developed the TOD station area plans to leverage this significant public transit investment to achieve these broad community goals.

To realize these benefits, the City first adopted a TOD Ordinance, which identified specific station area boundaries, interim land use and design requirements, and a commitment to develop station area plans. Planning for the Plaza Saltillo TOD was begun in February 2007 by a team of consultants led by PB Americas. Public education and involvement meetings were held over the course of the next ten months to draft a plan that incorporated TOD principles and best practices and was shaped by the community input gathered throughout the planning process. The planning work was integrated with a professional assessment of market conditions and finance, affordable housing, and basic public infrastructure facility needs. The plan includes recommendations for open space, street and other infrastructure improvements, and affordable housing and is intended to guide future development and the provision of public improvements.

The implementation strategy describes a variety of key actions that will contribute to the successful redevelopment of the station area. The responsibilities for implementation not only rest with the City, but its agency partners, development community, and citizens. A primary element of the implementation program is the Plaza Saltillo TOD Station Area Regulating Plan. It is based on *Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use of the Austin Code*, which applies citywide. The Regulating Plan provides development standards with a specific focus on the context of the Plaza Saltillo Station Area and the vision articulated in this plan.

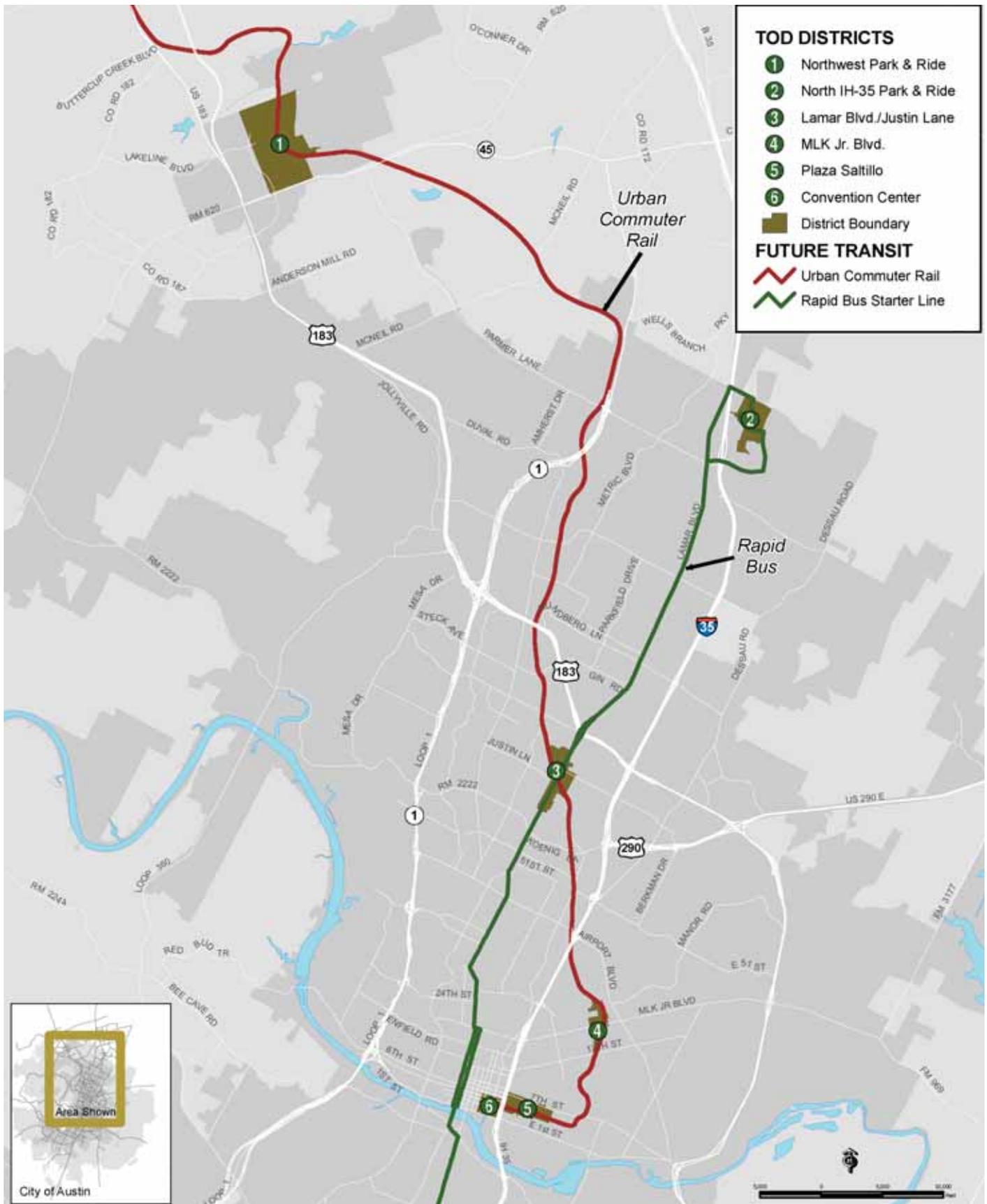


FIGURE ES.1: TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) DISTRICTS

The Plaza Saltillo station planning area was identified in the TOD Ordinance to include the area generally bounded by E. 3rd Street to E. 7th Street and between I-35 and Chicon Street. It includes portions of three Neighborhood Planning Areas – Central East Austin, East Cesar Chavez, and Holly.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

The consultant team, informed by community input throughout the planning process, developed the Plaza Saltillo TOD Station Area Plan, which:

- Is summarized below and described in more detail in Chapter 1;
- Includes an implementation strategy described in Chapter 2;
- Followed transit-oriented design principles and Austin planning policy as described in Chapter 3;
- Featured an inclusive public involvement process as described in Appendix A; and
- Utilized background information and studies presented in the Appendices.

PLAN SUMMARY

The Plaza Saltillo TOD Station Area Plan includes three primary elements:

- **Land Use and Design Concept Plan**, which describes the desired land uses and development characteristics in the TOD.
- **Circulation Concept Plan**, which identifies the functional and design elements for streets and walkways.
- **Open Space and Trails Concept Plan**, which describes the important open space components of the TOD.

The concept plan maps and summary of the key elements are presented on the following pages.

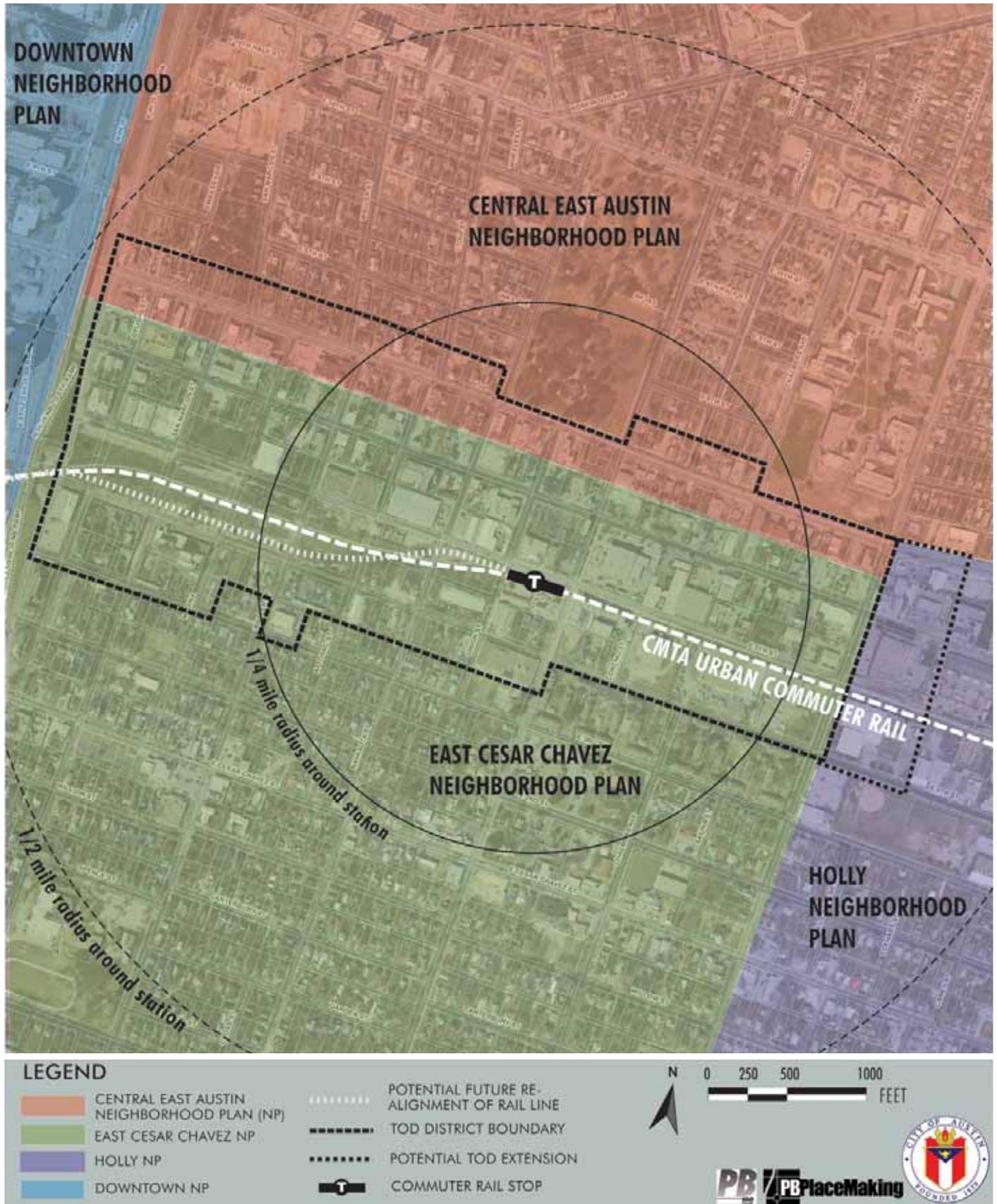


FIGURE ES.2: LOCATION MAP OF PLAZA SALTILLO WITH NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREAS

LAND USE AND DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN

The Land Use and Design Concept for the Plaza Saltillo TOD Station Area Plan includes four land use designations:

- **TOD Mixed-Use.** This is the highest density designation, which encourages urban-style development including active ground floor uses with commercial, office, or residential uses on the upper floors. Residential densities may exceed 45 units per acre if a specific level of affordable housing is provided. Moderate height bonuses up to 60 feet may also be granted with additional affordable housing. These areas are located in the closest proximity to transit and are intended to become neighborhood centers.



- **Corridor Mixed-Use.** This allows a slightly more liberal mix of uses compared to TOD Mixed-Use. These properties are farther from the transit station and have less of an urban character compared to TOD Mixed-Use. Normal residential densities may reach 45 units per acre, and additional density may be permitted when affordable housing is provided.



- **Live/Work Flex.** This encourages ground floor business activity with residential units on the upper floors. Residential uses are required and a ground floor business is optional. Residential densities range from 17 to 45 units per acre, and additional density may be permitted when affordable housing is provided.



- **Low Density Residential.** This designation also provides a transition between the higher density center of the station area and surrounding neighborhoods. Residential densities range from 9 to 16 units per acre.

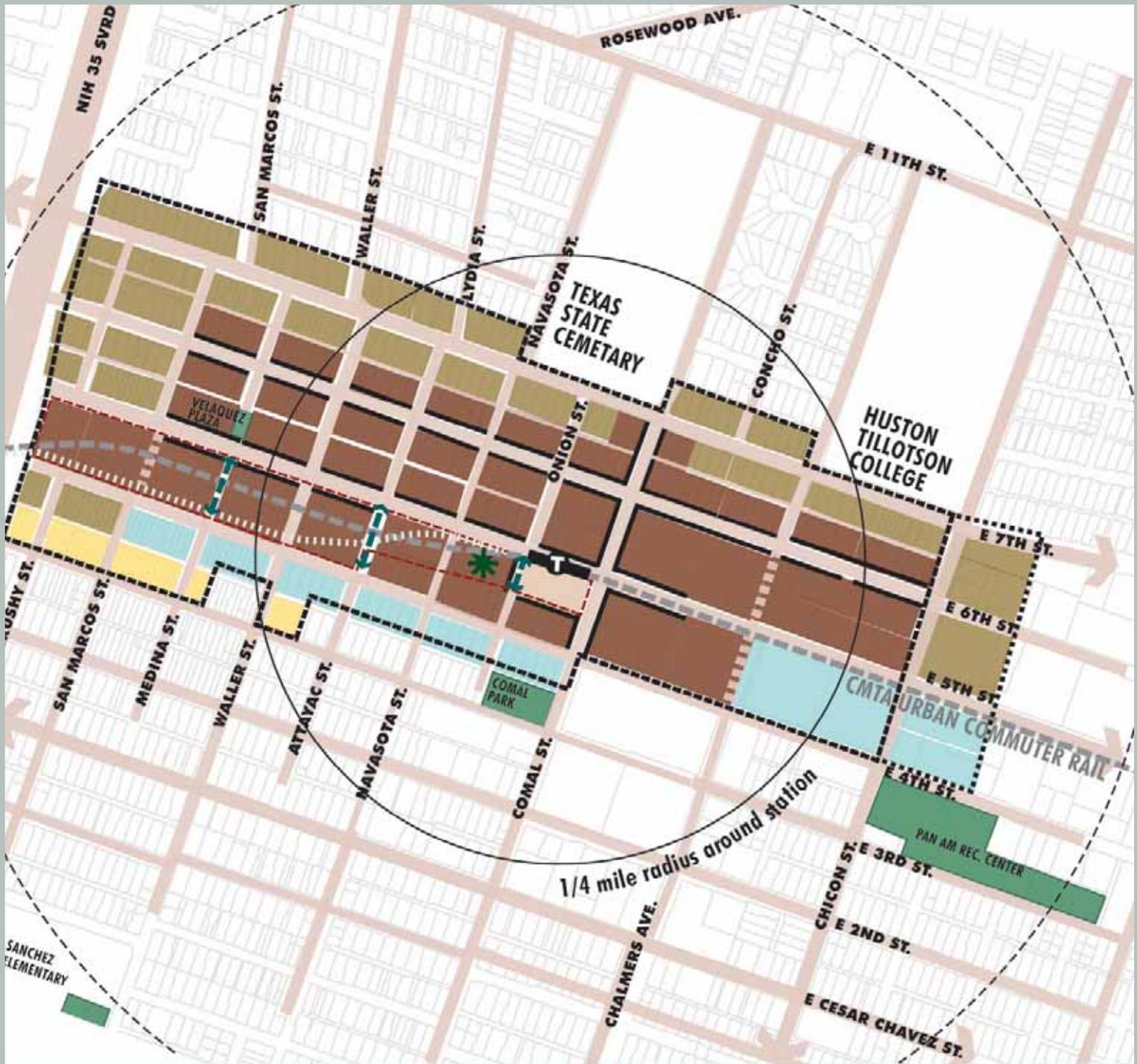


LAND USE AND DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN

The Land Use and Design Concept Plan includes the following primary elements:

1. **High density mixed-use development** concentrated near the Capitol Metro station along E. 5th and 6th Streets. This would be the center and primary pedestrian activity area in the station area.
2. **Active edges**, which create a more lively and pleasant pedestrian environment by requiring that buildings along specific street frontages be built up to the sidewalk with the ground floor designed to accommodate active business uses. The active edge designation is only used with the TOD Mixed-Use designation.
3. **Corridor mixed-use development** that allows an urban form. This is slightly more auto-oriented than the mixed-use areas along E. 5th and 6th Streets.
4. **Live/work uses** where small businesses would be allowed with residential units above. This is in response to neighborhood support for this type of use and for creating a transition between the higher density core and the lower density neighborhoods surrounding it.
5. **Low Density Residential** uses in the southwest portion of the TOD to provide a transition to existing single family homes that face the TOD district.

LAND USE AND DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN



LEGEND

- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- TOD MIXED USE (showing active edges)
- CORRIDOR MIXED USE
- LIVE/WORK FLEX
- EXISTING CITY PARKLAND
- POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE
- POTENTIAL PASEOS

- SALTILLO DISTRICT REDEVELOPMENT AREA (Capital Metro)
- PLAZA SALTILLO
- EXISTING STREETS
- POTENTIAL STREETS
- TOD DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- POTENTIAL TOD EXTENSION
- T FUTURE COMMUTER RAIL STOP
- POTENTIAL FUTURE RE-ALIGNMENT OF RAIL LINE

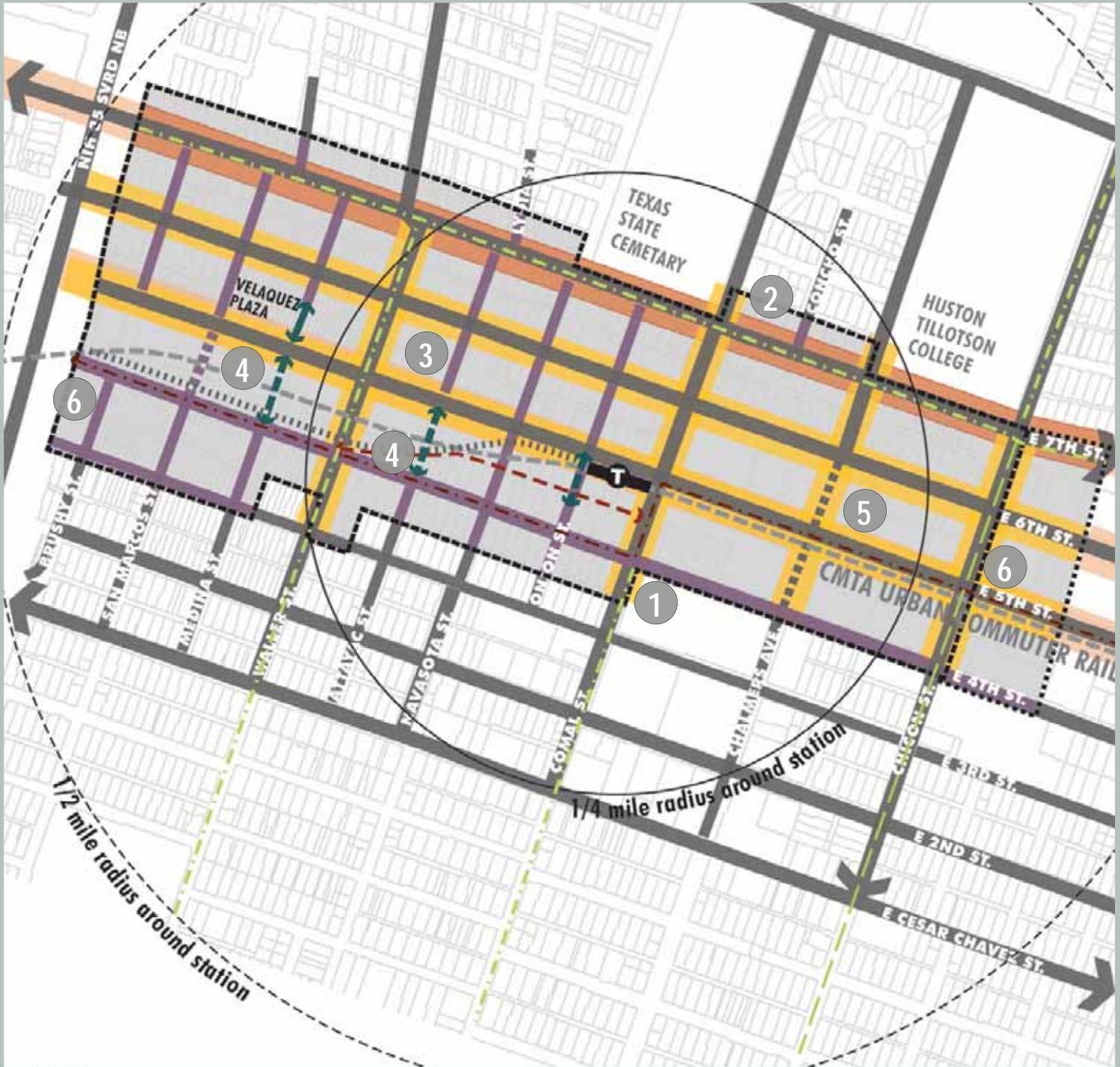


CIRCULATION CONCEPT PLAN

The Circulation Concept Plan for the Plaza Saltillo TOD Station Area Plan includes the following primary elements:

1. **An integrated street and pathway network** to provide safe and convenient travel for all modes.
2. **TOD Core Transit Corridor** design standards for E. 7th Street, which require wider sidewalks and enhanced pedestrian facilities to support existing and planned transit service and redevelopment activity.
3. **TOD Pedestrian Priority Streets**, which are also required to have enhanced pedestrian facilities because they will serve as the primary pedestrian routes in the station area. E. 5th, E. 6th, Waller, Comal and Chicon Streets and Chalmers Avenue are so designated.
4. **New pedestrian connections** on Medina, Attayac, and Onion Streets to provide easier access between the E. 7th Street corridor, the station, and the neighborhoods to the south. For larger blocks on the east side of the TOD, these types of connections are also highly encouraged to break-up the large block structure and improve connectivity and efficiency for all modes of transportation.
5. **A new TOD Pedestrian Priority Street** to connect the northern and southern segments of Chalmers Avenue to enhance circulation and convenience for all modes.
6. **Lance Armstrong Bikeway** as a key east-west bicycle connection through the station area.
7. **On-street bicycle facilities** to encourage bike riding and make it safe and efficient to ride around and through the TOD. A direct route from the Station Area to Town Lake and the trail system is recommended along Comal Street with signage indicating the pathway.

CIRCULATION CONCEPT PLAN



LEGEND

- EXISTING STREETS
- TOD CORE TRANSIT STREETS
- TOD PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY STREET
- TOD LOCAL STREETS
- POTENTIAL NEW STREETS
- POTENTIAL NEW TOD LOCAL STREETS
- DESIGN STANDARDS CORE TRANSIT/FUTURE CORE TRANSIT CORRIDORS
- PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS (POTENTIAL PASEOS)
- EXISTING BIKE LANES
- RECOMMENDED BIKE FACILITY IN AUSTIN BIKE PLAN
- LANCE ARMSTRONG BIKEWAY (LAB)
- POTENTIAL FUTURE REALIGNMENT OF THE LAB
- POTENTIAL FUTURE REALIGNMENT OF RAIL LINE
- TOD DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- POTENTIAL TOD EXTENSION
- COMMUTER RAIL STOP



OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS CONCEPT PLAN

The Open Space and Trails Concept Plan for the Plaza Saltillo TOD Station Area Plan includes the following primary elements:

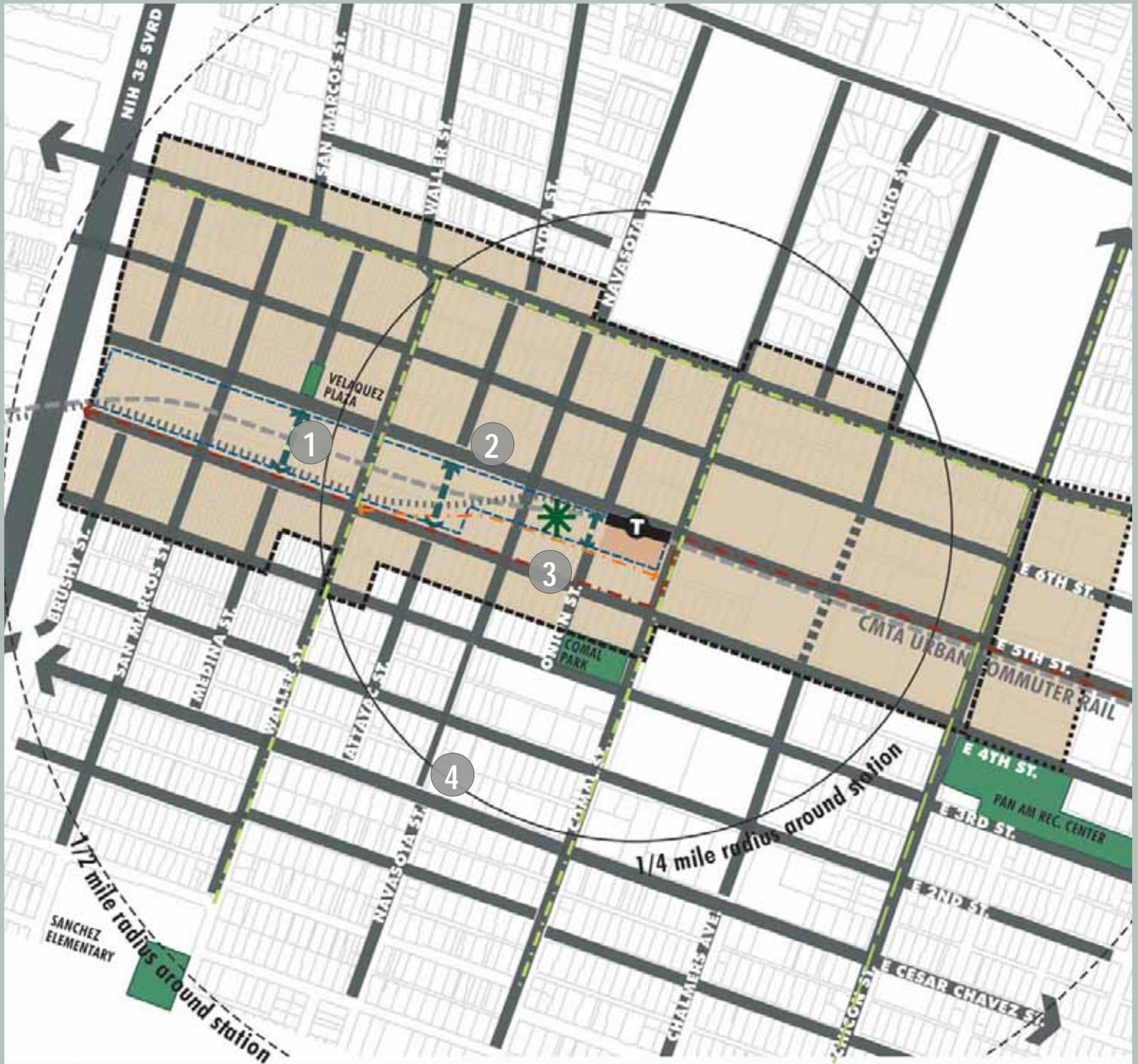
1. **Paseo Parks** to provide linear open spaces to complement the pedestrian connections on Medina, Attayac, and Onion Streets and to link-up with existing park space in and around the TOD. Paseo parks could provide a number of open space functions and meet various needs, from a passive sitting/gathering space with benches, fountain, and public art, to a grassy area for active play, to a playscape for young children. Paseos are also strongly encouraged on larger blocks on the east side of the TOD between Comal and Chicon Streets.
2. **Pocket park** to the west of the station to provide convenient active recreation opportunities for local residents. The park is recommended to be a minimum of one-half acre.
3. **Lance Armstrong Bikeway** as an integrating element to help tie the paseos, pocket park, and other local open spaces together with this pathway connection and to link the TOD via bicycle to Downtown and deeper East Austin.
4. **Comal Street-Lady Bird Lake Pathway** to provide a direct connection via Comal from the Station Area to Lady Bird Lake and the Town Lake trail network. Signage along the route is recommended as a wayfinding device and to publicize the presence of the on-street path and connection.

IMPLEMENTATION

Chapter 2 Implementation describes a variety of important steps the City, its agency partners, and development community should take to realize the full potential of the station area:

- **Planning and Administration.** The critical element is the formation of an inter-agency working group and designated staff to oversee all implementation activities.
- **Transit-Oriented Development Catalyst Projects.** Catalyst projects, both public infrastructure and private development, will be necessary to stimulate market and development interest in the station area.
- **Circulation and Streets.** Street improvements, including pedestrian facilities and amenities, can have a dramatic positive impact upon a place's identity and can create the framework for creating a truly transit-oriented development that is less auto-dependent.
- **Open Space and Trails.** Building upon the natural resources in the area, integration of the Parks and Recreation Department in planning and development review decisions, and creation of usable open spaces are essential.
- **Supporting Infrastructure.** Key public-private investments will need to be made to support the development proposed.

OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS CONCEPT PLAN



LEGEND

-  EXISTING STREETS
-  POTENTIAL STREETS
-  EXISTING CITY PARKLAND
-  POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE
-  PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS (POTENTIAL PASEOS)
-  PLAZA SALTILLO
-  SALTILLO DISTRICT REDEVELOPMENT AREA (Capital Metro)
-  EXISTING BIKE LANES
-  RECOMMENDED BIKE FACILITY IN AUSTIN BIKE PLAN
-  LANCE ARMSTRONG BIKEWAY (LAB)
-  POTENTIAL FUTURE RE-ALIGNMENT OF THE LAB
-  POTENTIAL FUTURE RE-ALIGNMENT OF RAIL LINE
-  TOD DISTRICT BOUNDARY
-  POTENTIAL TOD EXTENSION
-  COMMUTER RAIL STOP

