

LAMAR/JUSTIN TOD STATION AREA PLAN



Transit - Oriented
Development

DRAFT REPORT MARCH 2008



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



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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All participants in the planning process who live, work, and own or rent property in and around the Lamar/Justin TOD District.

Other interested individuals who came to learn about transit-oriented development and give feedback on this citywide initiative.

Individuals and groups who are dedicated to promoting affordable housing throughout Austin.

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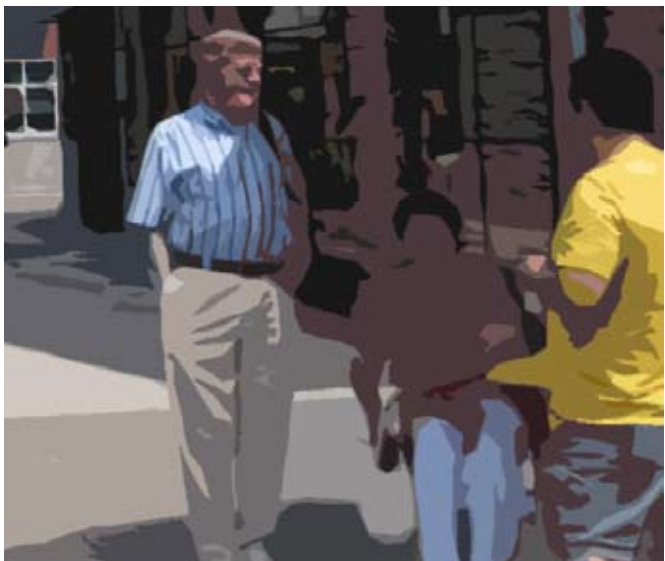
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- A. Creating the Plan
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The first Capital MetroRail line is under construction with passenger service scheduled 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 N. Lamar Boulevard/Justin Lane (Lamar/Justin), Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (MLK), and Plaza Saltillo.

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 Lamar/Justin TOD District 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 Lamar/Justin Station Area Regulating Plan. It is based on *Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use of the Austin Land Development Code*, which applies citywide. The Regulating Plan provides development standards tailored to the context of the Lamar/Justin Station Area and the vision articulated in this Plan.

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

The Lamar/Justin Station Area was identified in the TOD Ordinance to include the area generally bounded by Grover Avenue, Guadalupe Street, Morrow Street, and Denson Drive, including properties with mixed use, commercial, or office zoning and/or a similar designation on a Neighborhood Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM). It includes portions of three Neighborhood Planning Areas: Crestview, Brentwood, and Highland.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

The consultant team, informed by community input throughout the planning process, developed the Lamar/Justin TOD Station Area Plan, which:

- Followed transit-oriented design principles and Austin planning policy as described in Chapter 1;
- Is summarized below and described in more detail in Chapter 2;
- Includes an implementation strategy 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 Lamar/Justin 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.

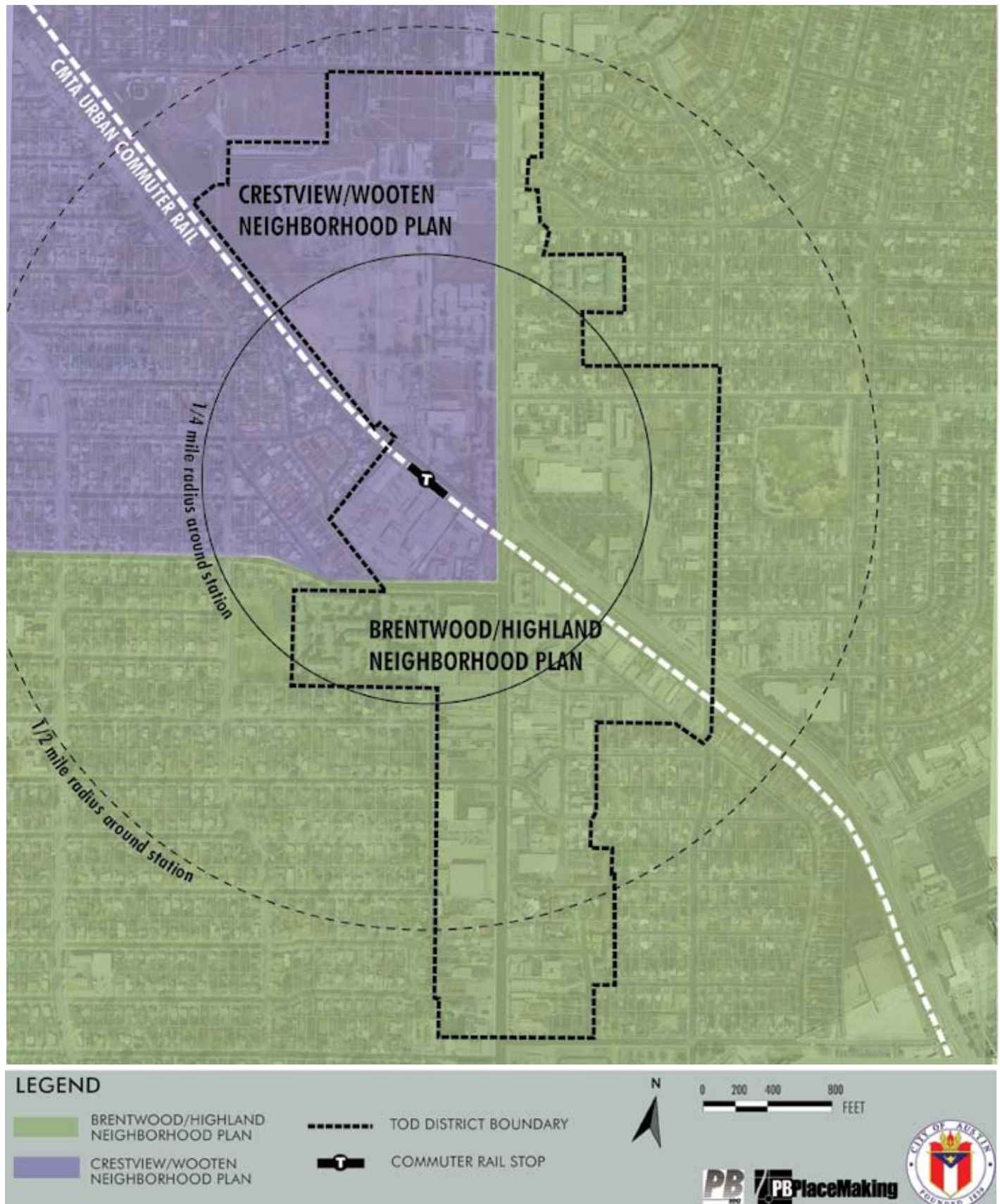
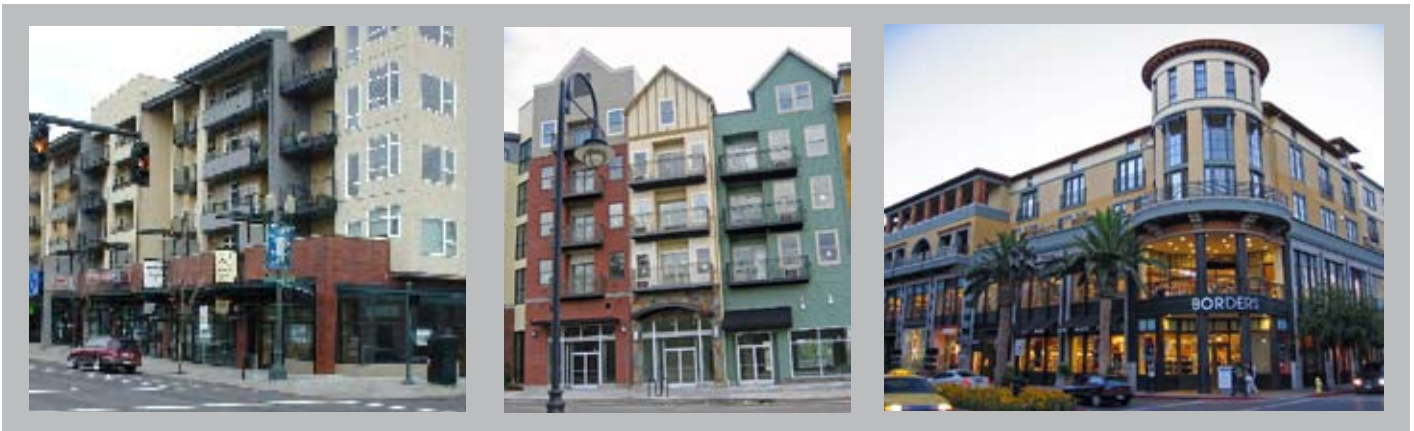


FIGURE ES.2: LOCATION MAP OF LAMAR/JUSTIN STATION AREA WITH OVERLAPPING NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREAS

LAND USE AND DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN

The Land Use and Design Concept for the Lamar/Justin Station Area Plan includes five land use designations:

- **TOD Mixed-Use.** These areas are located in the closest proximity to transit and are intended to become neighborhood centers. 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 and a moderate height bonus may be granted if additional affordable housing is provided (with total building height maximum of 60 feet).



- **Corridor Mixed-Use.** This allows a slightly broader 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. Mixed uses are encouraged either within the same building or on the same site, but they are not required. A range of development types could occur in this Subdistrict such as office buildings, apartments, or condominiums.



- **Live/Work Flex.** This encourages ground floor business activity with residential units on the upper floors. Depending on the environment the live/work subdistrict is located within, residential uses may be required with non-residential uses optional. Residential densities may reach 45 units per acre, and additional density may be permitted when affordable housing is provided. Development within the subdistrict could include a mix of uses or residential only development such as rowhouses, apartments, or condominiums.



- **High Density Residential.** High Density Residential is intended to be the most intensely developed residential zone. The buildings are urban in their character, located near the street with entrances oriented to them and parking out of sight. Most parking is intended to be tucked under the buildings or structured. Residential densities may reach 45 units per acre and additional density may be permitted when affordable housing is provided. Commercial uses are not permitted in this zone and uses could include apartments and condominiums.



- **Medium Density Residential.** This designation is found outside of the mixed-use areas and is intended to provide a transition into the surrounding neighborhoods. Residential densities range from 17 to 45 units per acre. Development in this subdistrict could include rowhouses, apartments, and condominiums.

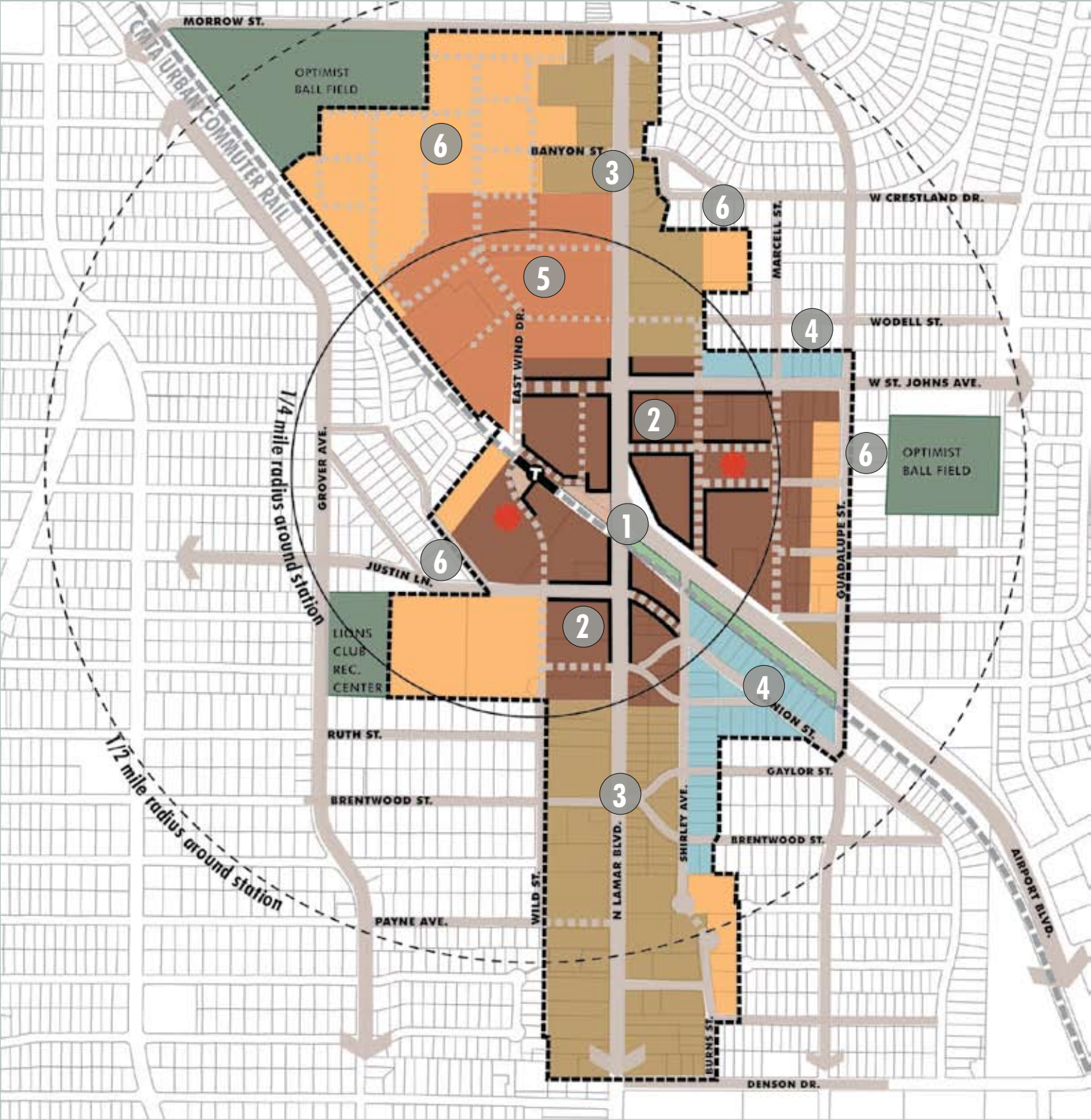


LAND USE AND DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN

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

1. **High density mixed-use development** concentrated near the Capital Metro Rail Station and intersection of Airport and Lamar Blvds. 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 a wide array of uses and more moderate urban form than the TOD Mixed-Use core. These areas extend north and south from the station area along Lamar Blvd.
4. **Live/work uses** where small businesses would be allowed in conjunction with residential units. 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. The live/work locations are on the east side of Lamar Blvd. along Canion Street and W. St. Johns Avenue. The live/work subdistrict on W. St. Johns Ave. is intended to be primarily a residential or mixed use area, providing a transition to the single-family homes to the north. The live/work subdistrict along Canion and Shirley Streets, in the near term is expected to remain predominantly a commercial area with opportunity to evolve into a more residential or mixed use area.
5. **High density residential** uses immediately northwest of the rail station.
6. **Medium density residential** uses along several station area edges to provide a transition between the higher density core and the existing neighborhoods.

LAND USE AND DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN



LEGEND

- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- TOD MIXED USE (showing active frontages)
- CORRIDOR MIXED USE
- LIVE/WORK FLEX
- PRIVATE OPEN SPACE

- POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE
- EXISTING STREETS
- POTENTIAL STREETS
- TOD DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- COMMUTER RAIL STOP
- TRANSIT PLAZA



0 200 400 800 FEET

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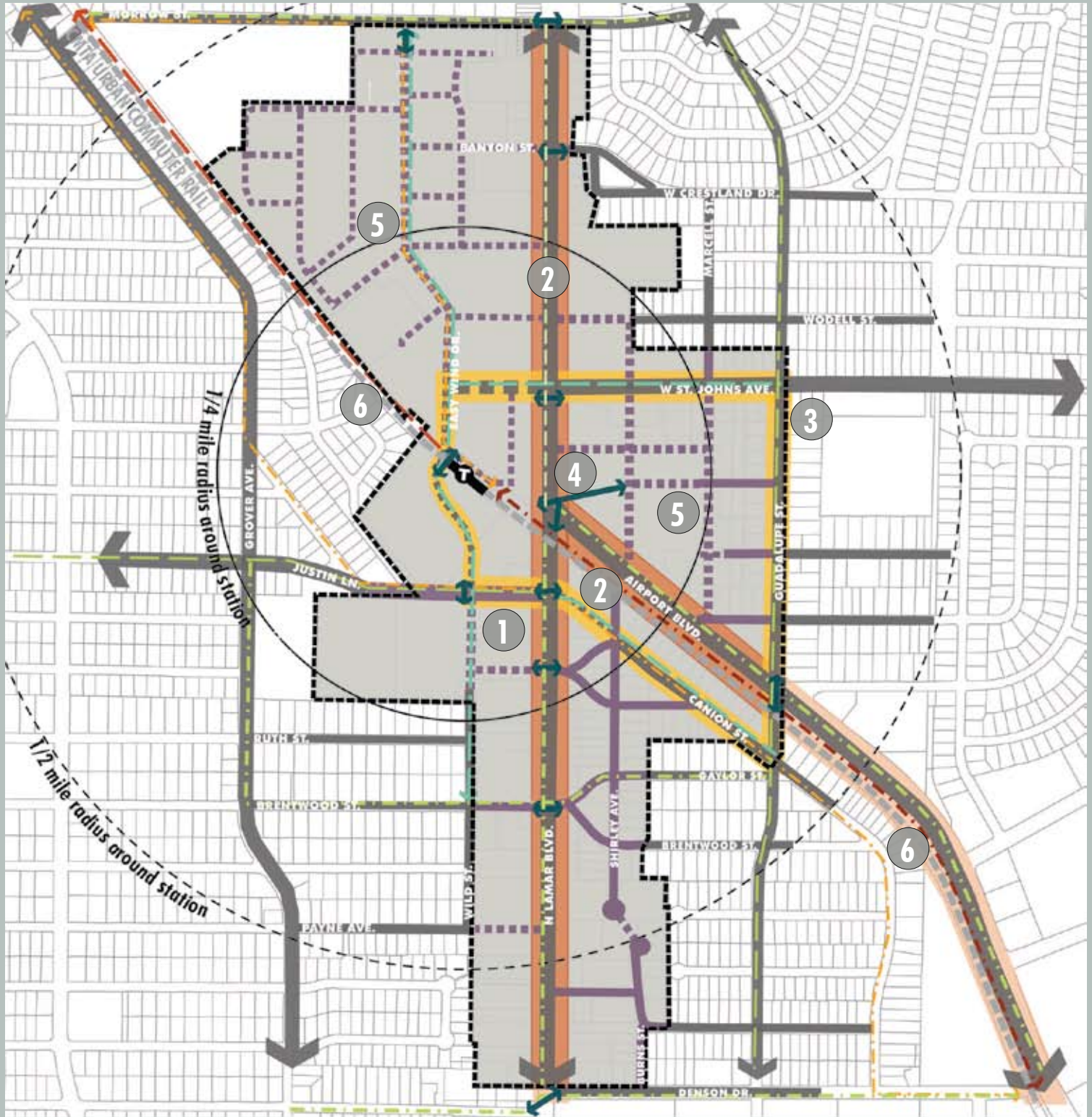


CIRCULATION CONCEPT PLAN

The Circulation Concept Plan for the Lamar/Justin Station Area Plan includes the following primary elements:

1. **An integrated street and pathway network** to provide efficient and safe travel for all modes of transportation and multiple travel options to help disperse traffic.
2. **TOD Core Transit Corridor** design standards for Airport and Lamar Blvds., 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. W. St. Johns Avenue, Easy Wind Drive, Justin Lane (between Easy Wind and Lamar), Canion Street, and Guadalupe Street are so designated. This pedestrian street network is intended to improve pedestrian circulation in and around the Station Area.
4. **Improved pedestrian connections** across Lamar and Airport Blvds. to improve pedestrian safety, convenience, and efficient access to all parts of the Station Area.
5. **New TOD Local Streets** to provide convenient circulation for all modes within the Station Area.
6. **Rails with Trails** pathway along the Capital Metro rail line as a key pedestrian and 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 Station Area.

CIRCULATION CONCEPT PLAN



LEGEND

- EXISTING STREETS
- TOD CORE TRANSIT STREETS
- TOD PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY STREETS
- TOD LOCAL STREETS
- POTENTIAL TOD LOCAL STREETS
- POTENTIAL NEW STREETS
- DESIGN STANDARDS CORE TRANSIT/FUTURE CORE TRANSIT STREETS
- PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS
- EXISTING BIKE LANES
- RECOMMENDED BIKE FACILITY IN AUSTIN BIKE PLAN
- RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL BIKE FACILITY
- PLANNED OFF-STREET BIKE FACILITY
- POTENTIAL 'RAILS WITH TRAILS' ROUTE
- (Easement Required)
- (Alternate on-street alignments)
- TOD DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- COMMUTER RAIL STOP

0 200 400 800 FEET

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PB PBPlaceMaking



OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS CONCEPT PLAN

The Open Space and Trails Concept Plan for the Lamar/Justin Station Area Plan includes the following primary elements:

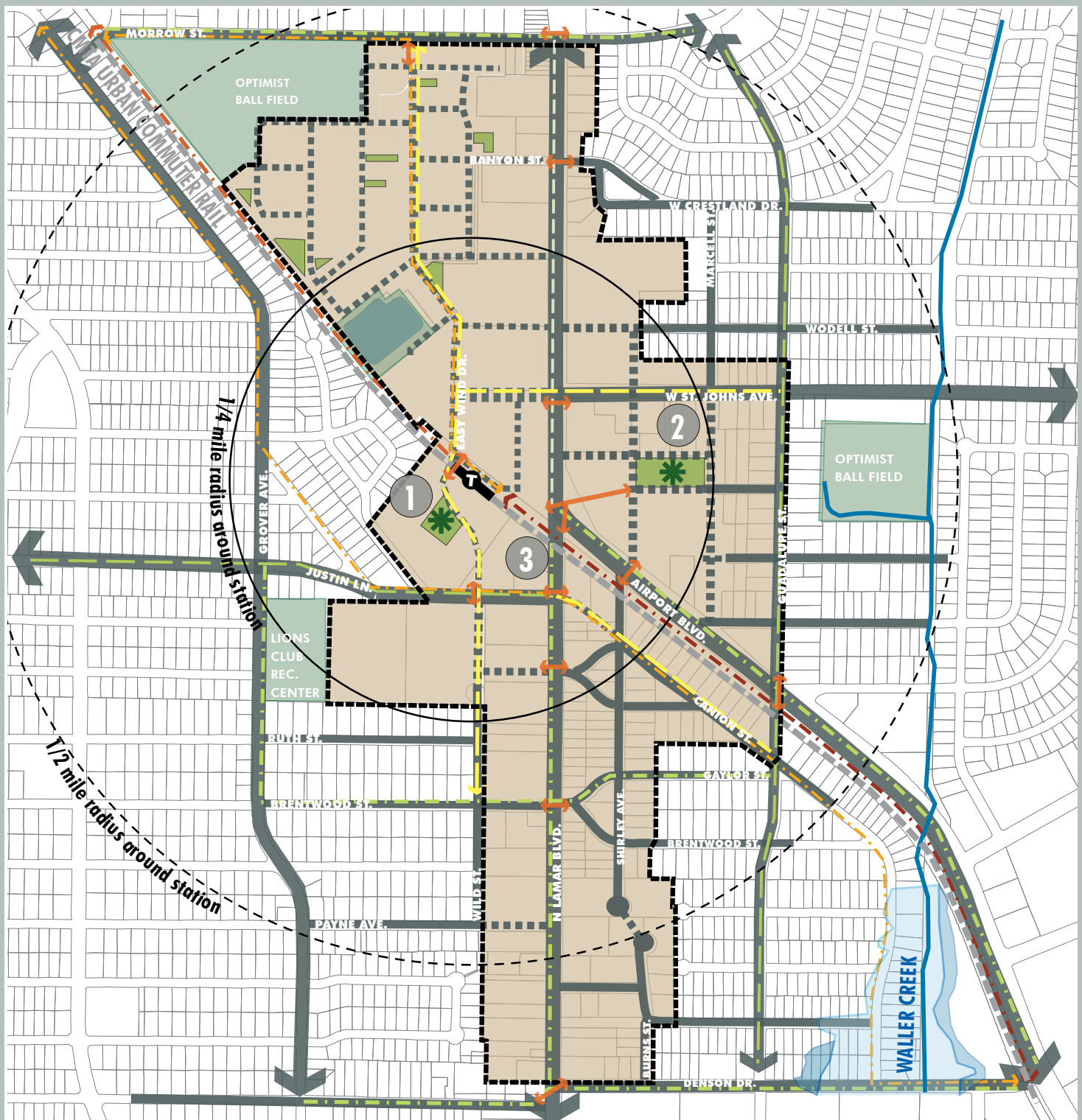
1. **Pocket park** recommended to the south of the rail station to provide convenient active recreation opportunities for local residents. The park is recommended to be a minimum of one-half acre.
2. **Pocket park** recommended when the Highland Village site (northeast of the Lamar/Airport intersection) redevelops. The park is recommended to be a minimum of one-half acre.
3. **A Rails with Trails pathway** is recommended along the Capital Metro rail line that could serve both recreational and functional transportation needs. Many residents that live in the area would prefer a continuous pathway along the rail line; because the rail right-of-way is currently insufficient to provide the trail, some on-street alignment options have been provided.

IMPLEMENTATION

Chapter 3 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 | | PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS |
| | POTENTIAL STREETS | | RECOMMENDED BIKE FACILITY IN AUSTIN BIKE PLAN |
| | PRIVATE OPEN SPACE | | ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED BIKE FACILITY |
| | POCKET PARK (MIN 0.5 ACRES) | | POTENTIAL 'RAILS WITH TRAILS' ROUTE |
| | 100 YEAR FLOODPLAIN | | Easement Required |
| | 500 YEAR FLOODPLAIN | | Alternate on-street alignments |
| | EXISTING BIKE LANES | | TOD DISTRICT BOUNDARY |
| | PLANNED OFF-STREET BIKE FACILITY | | COMMUTER RAIL STOP |

0 200 400 800 FEET

N



