

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Mayor and Council Members

CC: Elaine Hart, Interim City Manager
Robert Goode, P.E., Assistant City Manager
Joseph Pantalion, P.E., Interim Assistant City Manager
Annick Beaudet, AICP, CNUa, Assistant Director, Austin Transportation Department
Andrew Linseisen, P.E., CNUa, Assistant Director, Development Services Department
Jerry Rusthoven, AICP, Assistant Director, Planning and Zoning Department

FROM: Robert Spillar, P.E., Director,
Austin Transportation Department
J. Rodney Gonzales, Director,
Development Services Department
Gregory I. Guernsey, AICP, Director,
Planning and Zoning Department

DATE: December 13, 2017

SUBJECT: **Recommendations for City of Austin and CMTA coordination on public transit connectivity analysis during the development review process (CIUR 1908)**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide recommendations for City of Austin and Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (CMTA) coordination on public transit connectivity analysis during the development review process. It is in response to City Council Resolution No. 20170615-061, which directed the City Manager to work with the Austin Transportation Department (ATD), Development Services Department (DSD), Public Works Department (PWD), and CMTA to develop recommendations on how ATD and CMTA can “work together to include analysis of public transit connectivity in the development review process that includes zoning changes and site plan applications.” Council also requested that this analysis include “the impact or the lack thereof on public transit and connectivity in zoning change requests and site plan reviews.” Finally, Council requested recommendations on “how best to require the developer to include in zoning change or site plan requests improvements needed to address the need for public transit infrastructure such as shelters or benches.” Upon receipt of the Resolution, it was determined that the Planning and Zoning Department (PAZ) should be added to the list of affected departments, due to their responsibility over the zoning process.

All involved departments are in agreement over the review coordination practices outlined below related to zoning, subdivision, and site plan applications. The recommendations are based on information learned through extensive research performed by CMTA of other cities and their transit review processes. Staff believes that these practices would further the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan goal of increasing access to transit under the Compact and Connected Priority Program by

considering the effect of development on public transit connectivity early in the review process and in coordination with CMTA.

Coordinated review with CMTA would require an administrative Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Austin and CMTA. CMTA would be required to provide ATD, DSD and PAZ with updated maps of both existing and proposed transit routes and stops, as well as proposed service changes per CMTA's adopted short- and long-range transit plans. Review by CMTA would be triggered (in zoning and site plan cases) if the project location is within a half-mile of existing or proposed transit routes. This distance is consistent with Mitigation Ordinance No. 20170302-077, which requires both identification and mitigation of needed system improvements, including transit infrastructure. This Ordinance allows for transportation mitigation improvements for developments that do not trigger a Traffic Impact Analysis.

In regard to zoning change applications, staff recommends a "Public Transit Impact Statement" (PTIS) be included within the zoning case report. This statement would analyze the impact, or lack thereof, on both public transit and connectivity by the proposed zoning change, and would provide a qualitative analysis for existing and future transit needs. During the review process, the PAZ zoning case manager and the DSD transportation reviewer would be responsible for identifying whether the property is within a half-mile of existing or proposed transit routes, which would trigger a coordinated review with ATD and CMTA to develop a PTIS.

Subdivision applications would require the DSD subdivision case manager and the DSD transportation reviewer to be responsible for coordinating with ATD and CMTA in determining the impact on public transit. This coordination would be triggered when new roadways (both public and private) are proposed, and would identify any future transit needs and opportunities.

At the time of site plan review, both the DSD case manager and the DSD transportation reviewer would be responsible for coordinating review with ATD and CMTA when the proposed development is located within a half-mile of existing or proposed transit routes. In such cases, staff recommends that comments from CMTA be memorialized by being included within the comment review document in the City's AMANDA permit data management system. These comments would identify any improvements that are needed and would be consistent with CMTA's adopted short- and long-range transit plans. Appropriate mitigation and site plan design would be required to accommodate connectivity between the proposed project site and any existing or proposed transit infrastructure, as well as context-sensitive site design to incorporate appropriate transit infrastructure and any identified necessary infrastructure upgrades.

In conclusion, staff in the multiple affected departments are in agreement to work on developing this process and recommend creating an administrative MOU by October 2018 between the City of Austin and CMTA. This MOU would initiate coordination with CMTA to review transit impacts during specific steps in the development review process (zoning, subdivision, site plan). For proposed sites that would generate less than 2,000 daily trips, the Mitigation Ordinance would be utilized to require appropriate transit infrastructure improvements to mitigate the proposed project's impact on public transit and connectivity. For sites generating more than 2,000 daily trips, transit infrastructure improvements would be identified in coordination with the Traffic Impact Analysis process.

Please also see the attached letter of support for Council Resolution No. 20170615-061 from Todd Hemingson, AICP, CMTA's Executive Vice President of Planning and Development.



Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority
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October 31, 2017

City of Austin City Council
P.O. Box 1088
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RE: Austin City Council Resolution No. 20170615-061

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

Capital Metro's vision is to transform the daily lives of Central Texans by providing a robust, sustainable transportation network, and our mission is to connect people, jobs and communities by providing quality transportation choices to Central Texas. As a transit provider, our ability to fulfill this vision and mission is greatly impacted by the built environment in which we operate our service. There is truth in the maxim that the best transportation plan is a good land use plan.

Many municipalities across the country have instituted a transit focus in the land development process by inviting their local transit provider to the table during development review, including Houston, St. Louis, Spokane, Los Angeles and San Francisco. This participation allows for more effective consideration of a development's impact on transit. Given Austin's tremendous growth that is expected to continue, and the strong potential for more transit-supportive land uses as identified in the Imagine Austin Plan, increasing coordination and establishing a formal process for Capital Metro's participation in development review is an important step that should be implemented. As a result, Capital Metro supports Austin City Council [Resolution No. 20170615-061](#), which directs the City Manager to develop recommendations addressing how the City and Capital Metro can better coordinate to ensure that the development review process includes information on transit impact.

While Capital Metro is ready to participate now, in order to fully participate in site plan, zoning and subdivision review, we will require additional staff resources. We plan to request budget for such staff augmentation during the FY2019 budget process. Until such staff augmentation is granted, our ability to participate in development review will be somewhat constrained. Finally, we look forward to the opportunity to fine-tune the coordination process over time as we learn how best to be involved.

Sincerely,

Todd Hemingson, AICP
Executive Vice-President Planning and Development