

RECOMMENDATION

Pedestrian Advisory Council

Recommendation Number 20220103-06: Capital Metro McKalla Station Design

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Pedestrian Advisory Council (PAC) is to advise the City of Austin on pedestrian planning, policy, design, funding, education, and enforcement efforts regarding creating, maintaining, and operating pedestrian facilities;

WHEREAS, the planned Capital MetroRail Red Line McKalla Station is situated adjacent to the Q2 Stadium housing Austin FC games, and is projected to see hundreds of passengers on a typical day, and thousands of rail passengers on each major stadium event day;

WHEREAS, MetroRail Red Line passengers arrive and depart by walking, bicycling, wheelchair, personal mobility devices, strollers, scooters, and other travel modes;

WHEREAS, the planned Red Line Parkway and its trail generally follow the Red Line MetroRail corridor, and are projected to see thousands of daily users through this area, including people walking, running, bicycling, scooting, and rolling;

WHEREAS, the planned Red Line Parkway, also known as the Red Line Trail, is a joint project of the City of Austin (2014 Urban Trails Plan and 2019 Austin Strategic Mobility Plan), Capital Metro (2004 Red Line Election and All Systems Go Plan, and other Capital Metro Board resolutions), other local government agencies, and the Red Line Parkway Initiative;

WHEREAS, Capital Metro staff stated (e.g. at the October 29th, 2021 Joint Session) that they will be bringing a proposed design-build contractor and budget based on the 30% design for the new McKalla Station to the CapMetro Board for approval at the January 24th, 2022 meeting;

WHEREAS, Capital Metro staff first shared with the public its proposed 30% design for the new McKalla Station at its December 9th, 2021 McKalla Station Update Virtual Open House;

WHEREAS, Capital Metro staff's 30% design as shared on December 9th, 2021 shows a Red Line Parkway alignment that reroutes the trail a block out of the way via Aguilar St., across several active driveways, and along the primary promenade between McKalla Station and the Q2 Stadium entrances;

WHEREAS, Capital Metro staff stated on December 9th that "Sidewalks/bike connectivity [was] still in development";

WHEREAS, the stage of 30% design typically fixes in place major components of a station project, e.g major walkways and bikeways;

WHEREAS, once the contractor budget is set and approved by the CapMetro Board, this would close the opportunity for any City of Austin cost-sharing aspects of the project that were not already included, unless CapMetro staff requests a change order with the contractor and returns to the CapMetro Board with a new contract proposal;

WHEREAS, Capital Metro staff has not presented any proposed 30% design for the new McKalla Station to the PAC;

WHEREAS, Capital Metro staff stated that they did not include the Red Line Parkway through the McKalla Station area due to safety concerns arising from potential conflicts between people bicycling on the trail and other station users;

WHEREAS, all eight of the non-temporary Capital Metro Red Line Stations include the Red Line Parkway through the station area, and none of those eight stations have experienced a serious injury or fatality collision resulting from people bicycling on the trail in the last four years for which City of Austin Vision Zero posts such records;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the PAC recommends that Capital Metro staff work closely with the City of Austin staff (Urban Trails and the Active Transportation and Street Design Division) to create a design that includes the Red Line Parkway and bicycle access through the McKalla Station area;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends exploring possible cost-sharing and regulatory waivers with the City of Austin to meet goals that may be prioritized by the City;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends that that Capital Metro staff consult regularly with the Red Line Parkway Initiative on the McKalla Station design, including prior to bringing a contractor proposal or 30% design to the Capital Metro board for action;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends the following design concepts be considered for the McKalla Station design:

- Include the Red Line Parkway and bicycle access through the station area,
- Provide a 15' path or wider on the west side of the railway between Braker Lane and the station itself,
- Include components in the station design that anticipate a future additional 15' wide trail along the east side of the railway from Braker Lane, through the station area, and to points south of the station,
- Include a fence, wall, or other physical separation between the station platform and any adjacent trail,
- Create a design guided by Universal Access,
- Design station ramps to be sloped no steeper than 2% grade and avoid creating switchbacks;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends addressing any safety concerns related to stadium major events via temporary measures, such as special signage, temporary detours, or walk-your-bike zones;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the PAC recommends Capital Metro staff present at the PAC and share the proposed 30% design for the new McKalla Station once it has developed a revised design with City of Austin staff, and prior to bringing a contractor and 30% design proposal to the Capital Metro Board;

Date: January 3rd 2022

Vote: 7-0 with Cox absent

Attest: Chris Anderson, Vice- Chair

