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PROPOSED CODE AMENDMENTS FOR MOBILITY PROJECTS IN THE ROW

*Boards &
Commissions*

Presenter: Susan Daniels

May 2022





HISTORIC INVESTMENT IN MOBILITY INFRASTRUCTURE



MOBILITY BONDS

- 2016 Bond
- 2018 Bond
- 2020 Bond

Contract With Voters:

Analyze capital project delivery systems to recommend potential changes to accelerate bond program completion.

PROJECT CONNECT

CORRIDOR PROGRAM SCALE

Corridor Program alone is implementing 50 miles of critical safety and mobility improvements



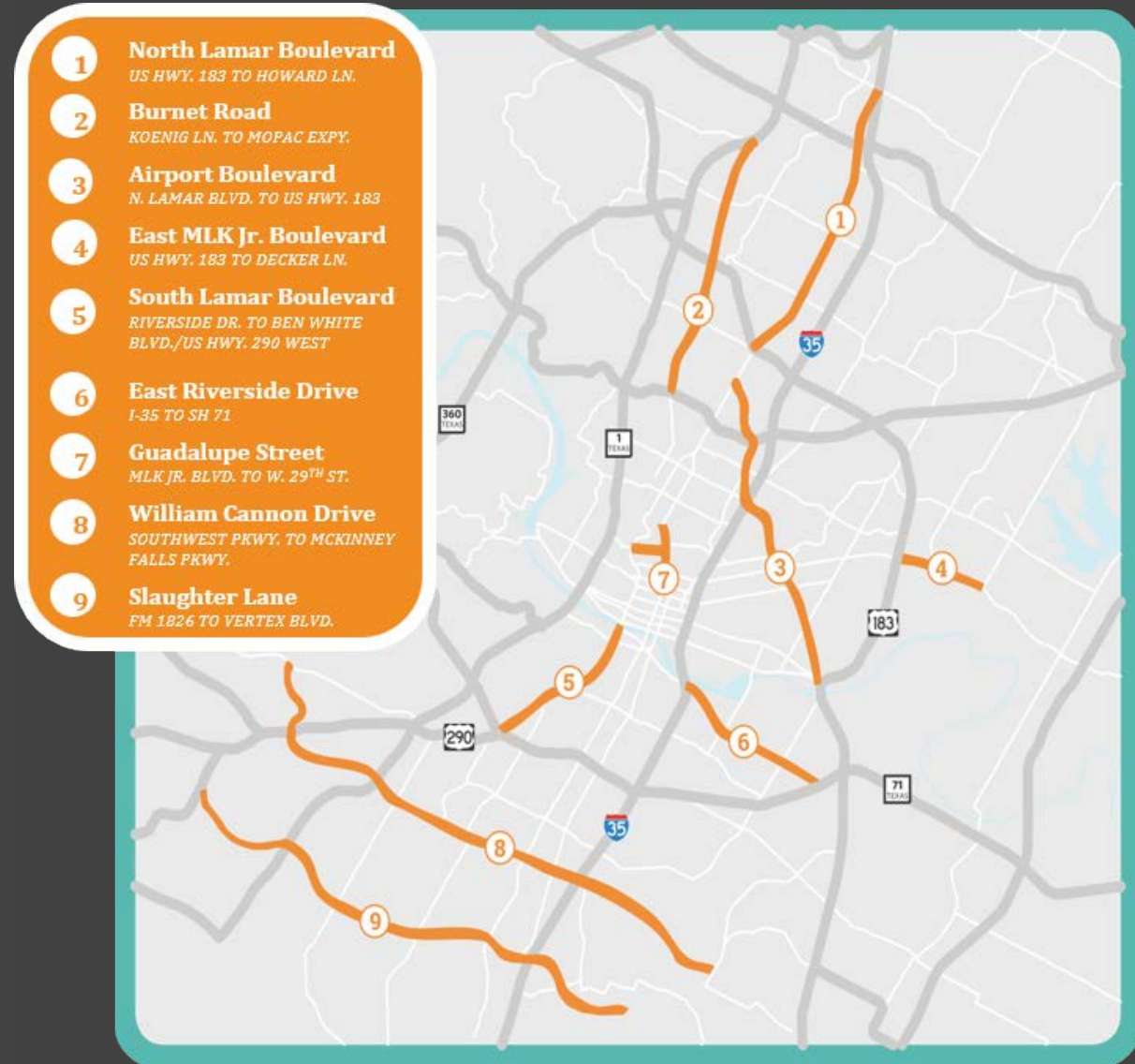
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CORRIDOR PROGRAM – FOCUSED ON OUTCOMES

- 10-15% Mode Shift
- Average 25% Reduction in Vehicular Delay
- 15%+ Reduction in Crashes
- Complete Streets/
Complete Communities
- 100 bike route connections
- 75 miles of sidewalks or
shared-use paths
- 120 signal improvements
- 13 of Austin's Top Crash
Intersections improved

Corridor Construction Program Map

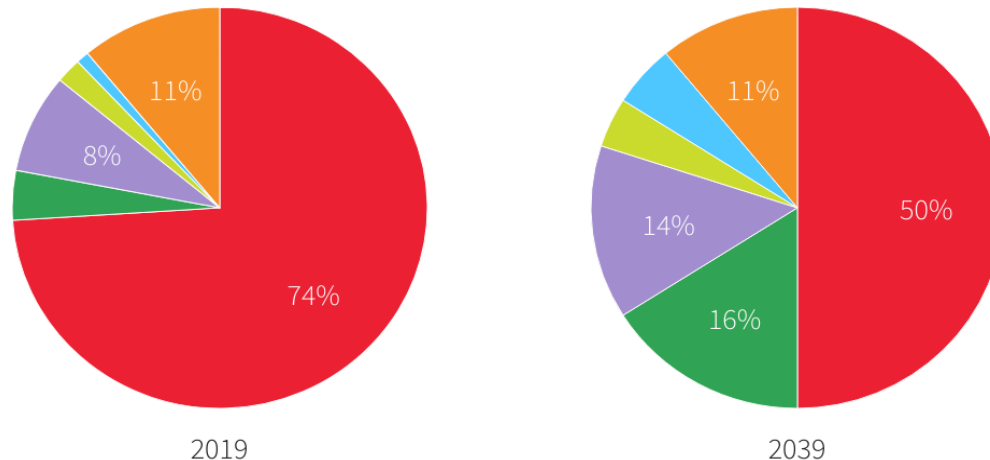


CORRIDOR PROGRAM - MODE SHIFT



The **Austin Strategic Mobility Plan's** goal for managing traffic congestion is a 50/50 mode share.

This means that we could maintain approximately the same number of cars as we have on the road today, while almost doubling in population by 2039.



The Corridor Construction Program will achieve an estimated 10-15% mode shift with a reduction of 4.36 million vehicular trips annually.

CORRIDOR PROGRAM - CRASH REDUCTION



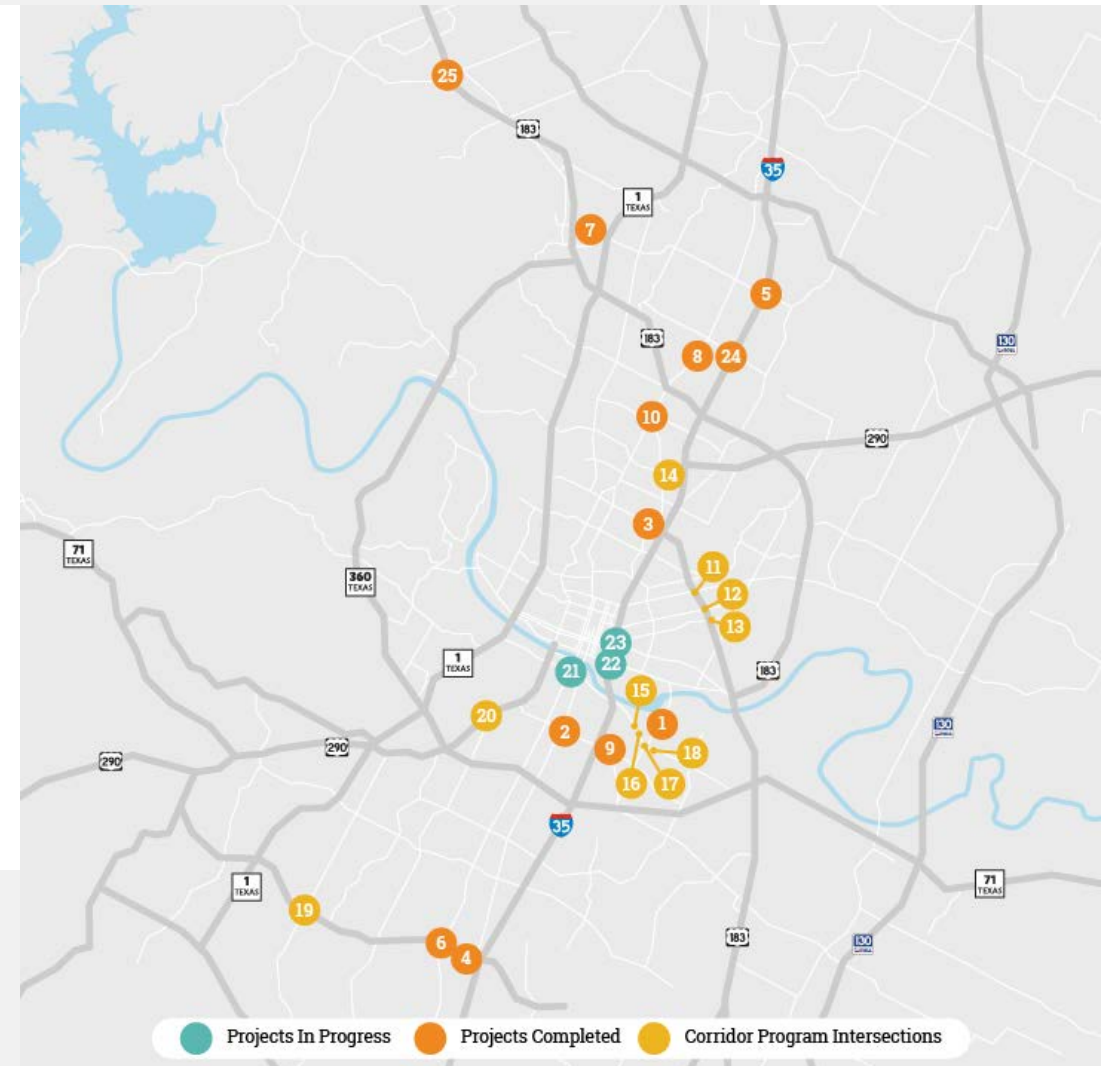
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Corridor Construction Program infrastructure is improving safety by an estimated reduction of 200 crashes annually.

The Corridor Construction Program is improving 13 of Austin's Top Crash Intersections across six Council Districts.



Zero deaths. Zero serious injuries. Zero excuses.





Austin's average summer temperatures are expected to increase by at least two degrees by 2040.

COMPLETE COMMUNITIES INFRASTRUCTURE

Corridor Program improvements include rain gardens, landscape buffers, grass, and trees which all help to improve Austin's quality of life by lessening exposure to heat.

- Installing 2000 trees across multiple roadways
- Constructing 22+ rain gardens

CORRIDOR PROGRAM – REDUCED EMISSIONS



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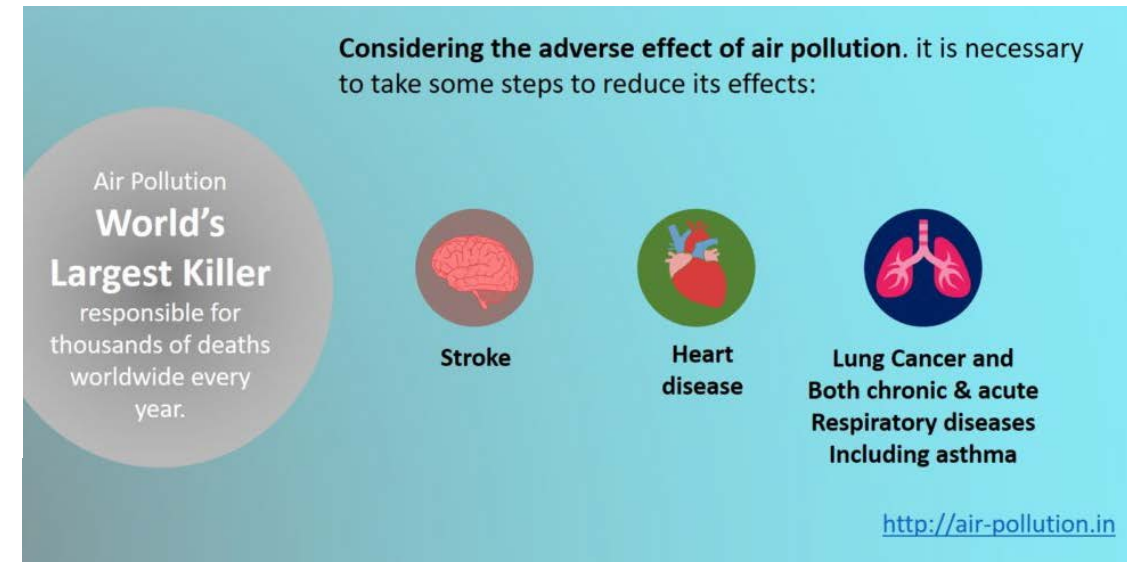
Transportation produces about 36% of all greenhouse gas emissions in the Austin metro area, with a 178% increase since 1990.

The Corridor Construction Program is reducing emissions annually along 9 corridors by an estimated 20% or 13,900 tons annually.

- Reduced vehicular congestions
- Reduced idling at intersections
- Multimodal infrastructure and travel choices

“Every transportation decision is a climate decision.”

- US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, SXSW 2022



PROJECT CONNECT

By expanding transportation options, Project Connect will avert 109 million vehicle miles of travel annually, keeping an estimated 30 tons of NOX and 43,000 tons of CO2 out of Austin's air every year.



PUBLIC MOBILITY PROJECTS



Perspective View of W Slaughter Ln, Looking South
Corridors for Complete Communities
Draft Aug 10, 2020 by McCann Adams Studio for CPO

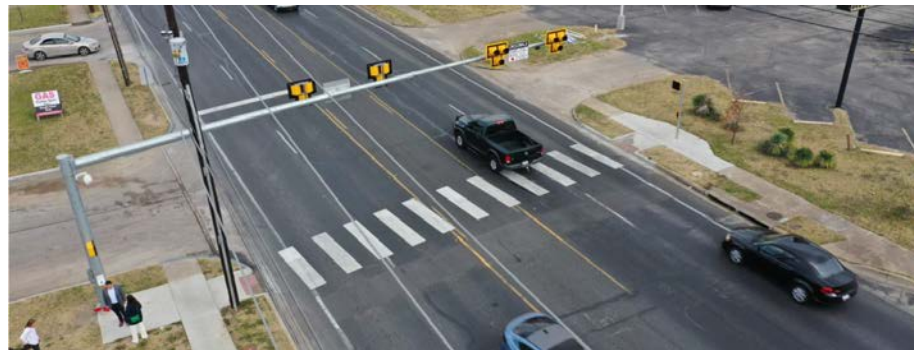
TYPES OF ROW IMPROVEMENTS

- Signal Technology Upgrades
- Intersection Improvements
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure
- Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons
- Safe Crossings
- Multimodal Improvements
- Placemaking
- Complete Streets
- Transit Improvements
- Light & Commuter Rail Infrastructure





CONSTRUCTION IN-PROGRESS







PROPOSED CODE AMENDMENTS

LDC ANALYSIS KEY FINDINGS



Current Code does not directly address public mobility projects; treated as commercial development

- Department agreements to “translate” code to right-of-way (ROW)
- Variances and waivers from Code and Criteria are common for mobility projects in the ROW
- Repeated misinterpretation of Code and Criteria causes confusion
- Findings cost time and money to resolve



COLLABORATION

Recommendations have been developed through unprecedented interdepartmental collaboration with CPO, ATD, PWD, DSD, WPD, HPD, PCO and more.

- Recommendations are consistent with Resolution on Oct. 29, 2021, to create a more efficient and unified framework for all mobility projects. (Project Connect Office)
- Recommendations informed by design phase challenges for Bond program projects.



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AUSTIN TRANSPORTATION



CITY OF AUSTIN
Development
SERVICES DEPARTMENT



HOUSING &
PLANNING



COLLABORATION

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:


Council initiates amendments to City Code Title 25 (Land Development Code) to address the staff-identified challenges to successful design and construction of public mobility and transit projects and associated utility projects in the right-of-way, including, but not limited to, amendments to:

- (1) Allow roadways sufficient maximum impervious cover limits for street cross-sections;
- (2) Clarify that zoning regulations (Chapter 25-2, Subchapter E) do not apply to linear mobility and transit projects located in the right of way;
- (3) Provide a definition of a site area for projects in the right-of-way;
- (4) Establish consistency in determining what construction in the right-of-way is considered maintenance versus redevelopment, and clarify that maintenance of existing roadways does not trigger water quality requirements;
- (5) Develop water quality calculations specific to projects in the right-of-way that cannot provide on-site water quality. Provide water quality credit for the removal of existing impervious cover, and allow payment-in-lieu of water quality treatment if other feasible solutions have been exhausted in all watershed regulation areas except the Barton Springs Zone; and,
- (6) Clarify that railways should have the same applicable environmental requirements as roadways.

The amendments shall be collaboratively developed by the relevant departments and offices, heard by the appropriate Boards and Commissions, and brought back to Council for consideration by May 19, 2022. To the extent any of these challenges can be addressed administratively, such as via Criteria Manual updates, the City Manager is directed to do so and to report back to Council by May 19, 2022.

ADOPTED: March 3, 2022

ATTEST:


Myrna Rios
City Clerk

**RESOLUTION NO.
20220303-028**

PURPOSE



- Remove barriers to the delivery of critical safety and mobility improvements
- Reduce reliance on waivers and variances
- Provide additional project delivery tools while still meeting our environmental stewardship responsibilities
- Provide consistency of Code application across transportation network and public mobility projects
- Provide clarity for project sponsors, design teams, and Code reviewers
- Reduce lengthy project delivery timelines

Supports the **Austin Strategic Mobility Plan** and the **Climate Equity Plan** which call for significant reductions in single-occupancy vehicle trips and an increase in active transportation and mass transit use.



LDC § 25-1-112: FISCAL SECURITY

The City has other existing mechanisms in place to accomplish the intent of this section for public projects. Provide clarification.

- *Add: (F) A public project is not required to post fiscal security under this title.*

LDC § 25-2-1: USE CLASSIFICATIONS

Public ROW is un-zoned; Not subject to landuse and zoning regulations.

- Add exemption to Subchapter E: *Add: 11. A public mobility project in the right-of-way;*



DEVELOP WATER QUALITY IMPERVIOUS COVER CALCULATIONS FOR MOBILITY PROJECTS



Water Quality Impervious Cover (IC) calculations should be derived separately for each watershed within a public mobility project

- Change in IC within one watershed doesn't affect other watersheds
- Current requirements for calculating impervious cover do not allow a credit for removal of existing IC

Add: (F) For public roadway projects, the calculation of new impervious cover for compliance with Subsection (B)(3) or Subsection (E) in any watershed shall:

- (1) be determined on a watershed basis rather than for the total project area; and
- (2) deduct existing impervious cover that is removed by the same project if the area with removed impervious cover is:
 - (i) decompacted and revegetated as prescribed in the Environmental Criteria Manual and the Standard Specifications Manual; and
 - (ii) located within the same watershed.

DEVELOP WATER QUALITY IMPERVIOUS COVER CALCULATIONS FOR MOBILITY PROJECTS; ALLOW PAYMENT-IN-LIEU OF TREATMENT



Mobility projects have limited land area available to provide space for water quality controls within the right-of-way.

N. Lamar Blvd. near Kramer Ln. traverses both Urban and Suburban Watersheds with differing Water Quality Impervious Cover requirements

- No change to the nature of the roadway
- No change to the nature of mobility infrastructure
- No visible difference in development intensity
- No available land for purchase



LDC § 25-8-214 OPTIONAL PAYMENT INSTEAD OF STRUCTURAL CONTROLS



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Create a Public Mobility Projects Structural Control Fund for payment-in-lieu of built improvements in all watersheds of the City except the Barton Springs Zone.

- As funds accumulate, they City can best direct the use of funds for the design and construction of water quality control facilities.

Add: (A) The director of the Watershed Protection Department shall identify and prioritize water quality control facilities for the urban, suburban, water supply suburban, and water supply rural watersheds in a [an Urban] Watersheds Structural Control Plan. The Environmental Board shall review the plan in January of each year.

(D) The director shall deposit a payment made under Subsection (C) [~~this section~~] in the Urban Watersheds Structural Control Fund.

(E) A Public Mobility Projects Structural Control Fund is established for use in the design and construction of water quality control facilities.

(F) For a public mobility project in the right-of-way that is located in an urban, suburban, water supply suburban, or water supply rural watershed, an applicant may request approval to deposit a nonrefundable cash payment with the City instead of providing the water quality controls required under Section 25-8-211 (Water Quality Control Requirement). The payment shall be based on a formula established by the council. The director shall review the request and accept or deny the request based on the standards in the Environmental Criteria Manual.

(G) The director shall deposit a payment made under Subsection (F) in the Public Mobility Projects Structural Control Fund.

LDC § 25-8-262 CRITICAL WATER QUALITY ZONE STREET AND MOBILITY CROSSINGS



Clarify that streets, rail lines, and public mobility projects have the same exceptions to develop in all water quality transition zones.

Add:

- (A) In an urban watershed, an arterial street, collector street, [~~or~~] residential street, rail line, or public mobility project may cross a critical water quality zone of any waterway.
- (B) This subsection applies in a watershed other than an urban watershed.
 - (1) A major waterway critical water quality zone may be crossed by an arterial street, rail line, or public mobility project identified in the Transportation Plan.
 - (2) An intermediate waterway critical water quality zone may be crossed by an arterial street, [~~or~~] collector street, rail line, or public mobility project, except: ...
 - (3) A minor waterway critical water quality zone may be crossed by an arterial street, [~~or~~] collector street, or rail line, except: ...

LDC § 25-8-341 CUT REQUIREMENTS



Clarify that rail lines are allowed the same Cut requirement exceptions as roadways.

Add: (A) Cuts on a tract of land may not exceed four feet of depth, except:

- (1) in an urban watershed;
- (2) in a roadway or rail line right-of-way;

LDC § 25-8-342 FILL REQUIREMENTS

Clarify that rail lines are allowed the same Fill requirement exceptions as roadways.

Add: (A) Cuts on a tract of land may not exceed four feet of depth, except:

- (1) in an urban watershed;
- (2) in a roadway or rail line right-of-way;

WATER QUALITY TRANSITION ZONE



Clarify that streets, rail lines, and public mobility projects have the same exceptions to develop in all water quality transition zones.

LDC § 25-8-422 (WATER QUALITY TRANSITION ZONE)

Water Supply Suburban Watershed: *Add:* (B) In a water quality transition zone that does not lie over the South Edwards Aquifer recharge zone, the impervious cover of the land area of a site may not exceed 18 percent. This limit on impervious cover does not apply to a street, rail line, or public mobility project allowed to cross a critical water quality zone under Section 25-8-262 (*Critical Water Quality Zone Street Crossings*). In determining land area, land in the 100 year floodplain is excluded.

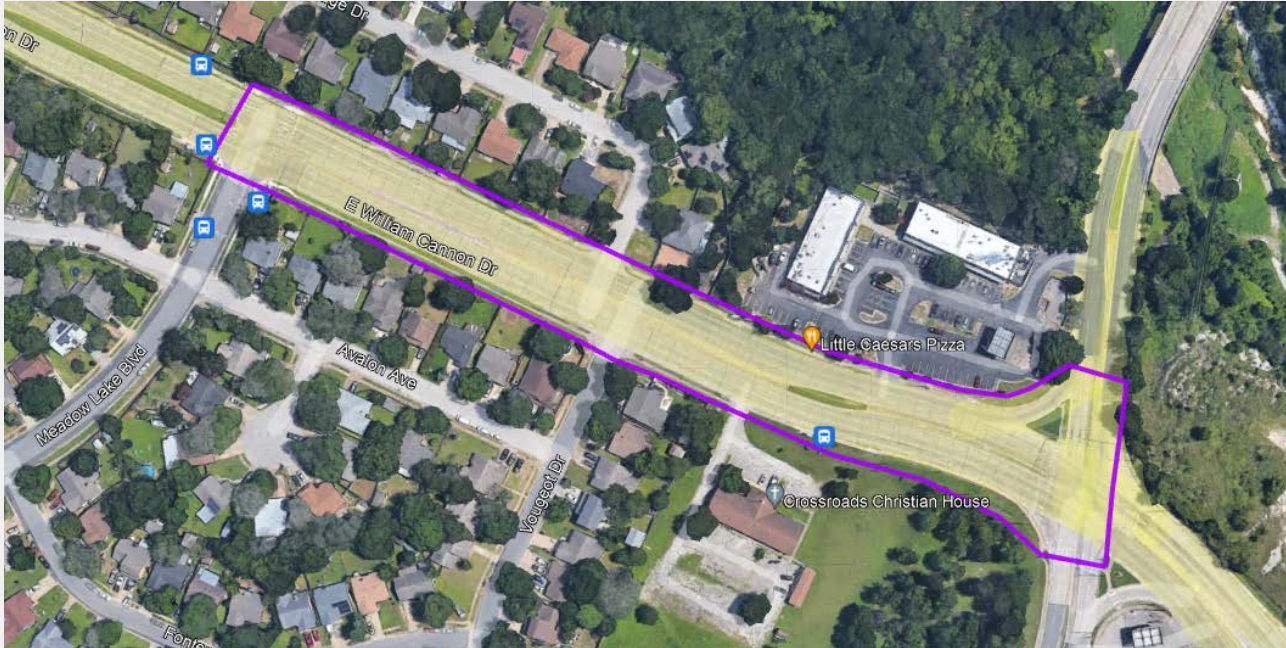
LDC § 25-8-452 (WATER QUALITY TRANSITION ZONE)

Water Supply Rural Watershed: *Add:* (B) Development is prohibited in a water quality transition zone that lies outside the South Edwards Aquifer recharge zone, except for:
(2) streets, rail lines, or public mobility projects;

ALLOW ROADWAYS SUFFICIENT MAXIMUM IMPERVIOUS COVER (IC)



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William Cannon – Meadow Lake Blvd to S Pleasant Valley

Existing Impervious Cover – 85%

Current Code – 80% Suburban Watershed

Mobility infrastructure by its nature must be impervious and should be allowed sufficient maximum impervious cover to perform its intended purpose.

- Roadways have highest IC within transect of watershed
- Existing conditions in several corridors already exceed current code
- Planned mobility infrastructure often exceed current code Max IC limits

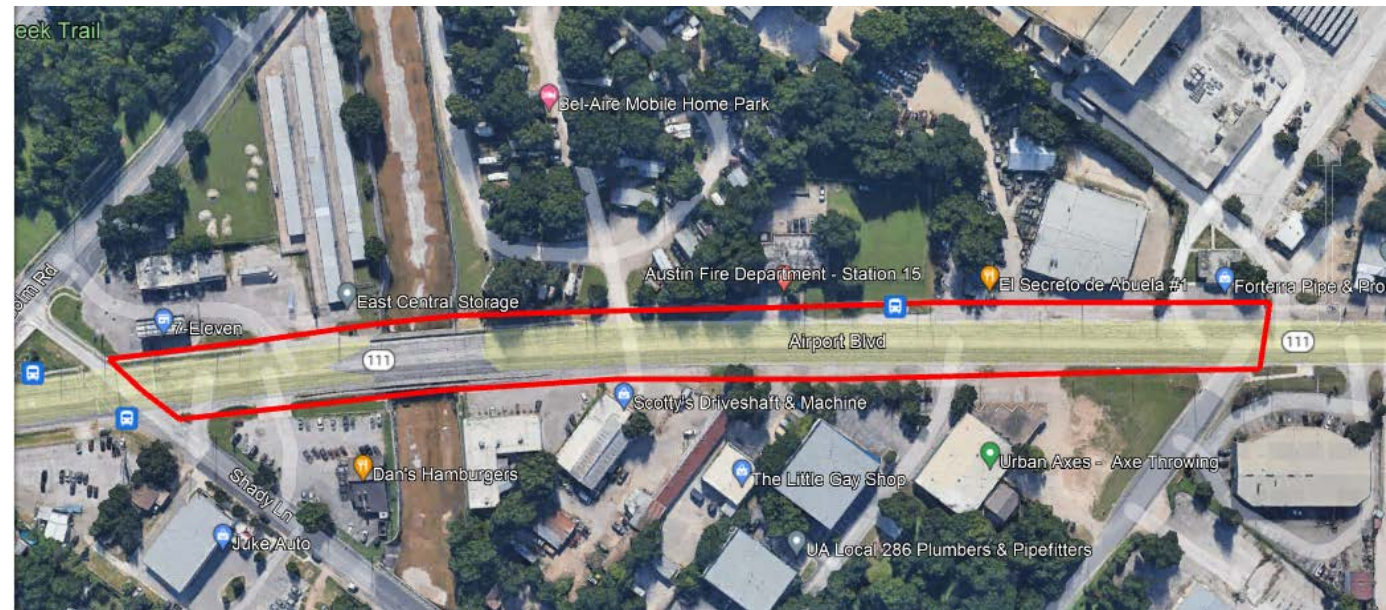
MAXIMUM IC ANALYSIS



Mobility infrastructure contributing to maximum impervious cover calculations include roadways, driveways, intersections and misc. concrete pads for transit, traffic controls boxes, bike racks, etc.

Staff reviewed need for higher Max. Impervious Cover across multiple roadways and watersheds:

- Regulatory zone
- Block length
- Curb-to-curb distance
- Driveway widths and spacing
- Intersection size and spacing
- Turn lanes
- Misc pads, etc.



MAXIMUM IC ANALYSIS



Suburban Watershed:

Range of Max IC needed for Mobility Improvements:	84% - 100%
Average Max IC needed:	91%
Code Amendment Proposed:	90%

Water Supply Suburban Watershed:

Range of Max IC needed for Mobility Improvements:	53% - 92%
Average Max IC needed:	69%
Code Amendment Proposed:	65%

Water Supply Rural Watershed:

Range of Max IC needed for Mobility Improvements:	47% - 87%
Average Max IC needed:	63%
Code Amendment Proposed:	55%

Variance needed for locations that require additional Max IC

LDC § 25-8-42 ADMINISTRATIVE VARIANCES



Allow for Administrative Variances to Maximum Impervious Cover limits in Suburban, Water Supply Suburban, Water Supply Rural Watersheds

The director of the Watershed Protection Department may grant a variance from a requirement of:

Add: Subsection 25-8-392(B)(6) (Uplands Zone), Subsection 25-8-392(C)(6) (Uplands Zone)

Add: Subsection 25-8-423(D) (Uplands Zone)

Add: Subsection 25-8-453(E) (Uplands Zone)

only after determining that development in accordance with the variance meets the objective of the requirement for which the variance is requested and:

Add:

(a) is located outside the Barton Springs Zone;

(b) the minimum deviation needed to provide necessary improvements to a public mobility project; and

(c) does not create a significant probability of adverse environmental impacts.

ALLOW ROADWAYS SUFFICIENT MAXIMUM IMPERVIOUS COVER



LDC § 25-8-372 UPLANDS ZONE

Urban Watershed: Clarify that Code already allows 100% Maximum Impervious Cover

Add: (D) Maximum impervious cover for a public mobility project in the right-of-way is 100 percent.

LDC § 25-8-392 UPLANDS ZONE

Suburban Watershed: Allow 90% Maximum Impervious Cover

Add: (6) Impervious cover for a public mobility project in the right-of-way may not exceed 90 percent.

LDC § 25-8-423 UPLANDS ZONE

Water Supply Suburban Watershed: Allow 65% Maximum Impervious Cover

Add: (D) Impervious cover for a public mobility project in the right-of-way may not exceed 65 percent.

LDC § 25-8-453 UPLANDS ZONE

Water Supply Rural Watershed: Allow 55% Maximum Impervious Cover

Add: (E) Impervious cover for a public mobility project in the right-of-way may not exceed 55 percent



QUESTIONS



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[AustinTexas.gov/CorridorMobility](https://austintexas.gov/CorridorMobility)

THANK YOU

Contact Corridor Program Office



512.974.4276



Corridors@austintexas.gov

