



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and City Council  
**FROM:** Robert Hinojosa, PE, Interim Director, Public Works Department  
**SUBJECT:** Update to the Sidewalk Master Plan/ADA Transition Plan  
**DATE:** June 13, 2016  
**CC:** See Distribution

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**Purpose:** This memorandum provides an Executive Summary of the planned update to the City's 2009 Sidewalk Master Plan/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan (SWMP). The update is scheduled for review and possible adoption by Council on Thursday June 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Adoption Draft (June 9, 2016):** A revised and updated SWMP adoption draft (dated June 9, 2016) can be found at this link.

**2016 Sidewalk Master Plan/ADA Transition Plan Update (06-09-16 adoption draft)**

[http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Public\\_Works/Street\\_%26\\_Bridge/Sidewalk\\_Master\\_Plan\\_Update\\_Adoption\\_Draft\\_06-09-16\\_R.pdf](http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Public_Works/Street_%26_Bridge/Sidewalk_Master_Plan_Update_Adoption_Draft_06-09-16_R.pdf)

The update to the previously distributed April 18, 2016 Adoption Draft does not include any changes to key recommendations or performance targets; it provides updated acknowledgements, improved pictures and graphics, and minor editorial clarifications/corrections based on Boards and Commissions review.

### Council/Board Commission Review

**Mobility Committee:** On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, the Mobility Committee provided feedback on the SWMP update.

**Boards/Commissions:** The update has been reviewed and recommended for adoption by the following:

- Pedestrian Advisory Council on May 2, 2016
- Zoning and Platting Commission on May 3, 2016
- Urban Transportation Commission on May, 10, 2016
- Commission on Seniors on May 11, 2016
- Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities on May 13, 2016
- Bicycle Advisory Committee on May 17, 2016
- Bond Oversight Committee recommended on May 18, 2016, that City Council pursue a 2016 mobility bond that *"Funds all 'Very High' and 'High' priority sidewalks in the forthcoming 2016 Sidewalk Master Plan, currently estimated at \$251 million"*.

**BACKGROUND:** The current update builds on the 2009 goal and vision while incorporating policies from the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan and 2014 Complete Streets Policy, as well as input received through the public process. Key aspects of the update include:

- The ***Peer Cities Report, a benchmarking exercise undertaken to inform the update***, examined sidewalk best practices from seven Peer Cities; it has been used to improve Austin's Sidewalk Master Plan/ADA Transition Plan and related programs. Some key findings in the Peer Cities report, forwarded to Mayor and Council for review in October 2015 (a link to the report is included below), included:
  - Austin is missing sidewalks on almost half (49%) of its street frontages compared to Nashville at 77%, Charlotte at 50%, Houston at 42%, San Antonio at 34%, Seattle at 29%, and Minneapolis at only 6%.
  - Austin has spent an average of \$9.56 per capita per year on sidewalks (maintenance and new construction combined) over the past five years. This ranks third out of the seven Peer Cities behind Charlotte and Nashville.
- The ***Conditions Assessment*** develops a methodology for assessing and rating the condition of existing sidewalks using a Geographic Information System (GIS) based application. Assigning a letter grade of A through F allows an asset condition evaluation to be performed on existing sidewalks similar to the successful approach currently used on pavements and bridges, and will form the basis of the Annual Service Plan.
- The ***Sidewalk Prioritization Map Update*** builds on the success of the prioritization methodology developed for the 2009 plan by using current data and software to provide updated prioritization maps. The Sidewalk Prioritization Map forms the basis of the CIP project forecast. The scope of the update did not include revising the sidewalk prioritization matrix. However, the GIS model was updated and simplified to provide flexibility so that Council can choose to make adjustments to the weighting of individual prioritization criteria and those changes can be readily incorporated into updated maps by staff (See pages 10 and 11 of the SWMP).
- The ***Performance/Funding Goals*** section develops independent performance and funding goals for both the sidewalk repair and rehabilitation program and the new sidewalk program. This analysis will be used to establish both operating and capital improvement budget needs.
- The ***ADA Transition Plan*** addresses compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act which requires public entities establish and maintain a Transition Plan to achieve full accessibility. At minimum, the Transition Plan must include the following:
  - Identify physical obstacles in the public entity's facilities that limit the accessibility of its programs or activities to individuals with disabilities;
  - Describe in detail the methods that will be used to make the facilities accessible;
  - Specify the schedule for taking the steps necessary to achieve compliance and identify steps that will be taken during each year of the transition period; and
  - Indicate the official responsible for implementation of the plan.

**Prioritization Matrix:** The sidewalk prioritization methodology was developed as part of the 2009 plan by a diverse stakeholder group to provide consistent, objective prioritization results. The prioritization system has been successful in providing an equitable basis to allocate limited sidewalk resources. It has been used as a model for other municipalities ranging from San Antonio to Nashville.

Based on the overall effectiveness of the existing prioritization model and continuing support from the City’s ADA Task Force, staff recommended only minor technical revisions to the scoring system as part of the 2016 SWMP update. This allowed the update to focus on areas of significant need like developing a functional condition rating system for evaluation of existing sidewalks.

The sidewalk base score is divided into two parts: the Pedestrian Attractor Score (PAS) and the Pedestrian Safety Score (PSS). The scoring system and weighting is shown in the charts on the next page.

Table 3-2: Absent Sidewalk Prioritization Matrix Pedestrian Attractors Score (PAS) 0 - 100 Base Score Weight 56%			
Element	Criteria	Points	
Proximity to Attractors Weight 45% (max 100 pts)	Multiply Possible Points by number of attractors within specific radius of:	1/8 Mile	1/4 Mile
	State or Local Government Offices	10x	5x
	Commuter Rail Stations	10x	5x
	Transit Stop (Max of 50 pts)	9x	4.5x
	Major Grocery Stores	9x	4.5x
	Places of Public Accommodation (Includes parks, fire stations, police stations, hospitals, convention centers, health centers, libraries, museums, post offices, and recreation centers.)	8x	4x
	Public or Private Schools	8x	4x
	Employers with > 500 Employees	8x	4x
	Income Restricted Affordable House Secured through City and Federal Programs for every 25 units	7x	3.5x
	Public Parking Facilities	5x	2.5x
Religious Institutions	5x	2.5x	
Residential Population Weight 25% (2010 Census Blocks)	Total population residing within 1/2-mile radius of proposed project?		
	a) Population >= 8,000	100	
	b) Population >= 4,000 and < 8,000	75	
	c) Population >= 1,000 and < 4,000	50	
	d) Population >= 500 and <1,000	25	
e) Population < 500	0		
Element	Criteria	Yes	No
Median Household Income Weight 5% (2010 U.S. Census data)	Within a census tract at or below Median Household Income	100	0
Existing Facilities on Street Weight 10%	For arterials and collector streets, are there complete sidewalks on <u>both</u> sides of the street?	0	100
	For local / residential streets, is there an existing complete sidewalk on either side of the street?	0	100
Requests Weight 10%	Was the project requested by ADA Task Force?	75	0
	Was the project requested by a citizen through 311?	25	0
Core Transit Corridors Weight 2.5%	Is the sidewalk within a 1/4 mile of a Core Transit Corridor?	100	0
Bicycle Lanes Weight 2.5%	Are there bike lanes on both sides of the street?	100	0
(nearby needs per zip code, based on factors such as crime statistics, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and respiratory disease)	a) Low Needs	25	
	e) Very Low Needs	0	
Pedestrian/Automobile Incidents Weight 20%	Number of incidents reported to APD involving pedestrians and motorized vehicles in previous 36 months multiplied by 10 (only applied to sidewalk on the street where the incident took place)	10x (max 100 pts)	

**Safe Routes to School:** During the public review process there have been some concerns expressed that flexibility in allocating resources is needed to ensure that safe routes to school are adequately addressed. **While the prioritization matrix includes schools, staff recommends that specific and separate funding be identified for this purpose.** This would allow flexibility to fund the necessary infrastructure supporting safe routes to school such as sidewalks, Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons (PHBs), enhanced traffic medians, urban trails, bicycle facilities, or a combination of any of these. This funding would not replace the prioritization matrix, but could provide an additional allocation to create context-specific solutions for areas that have needs that are not rated as “high” or “very-high” priority sidewalks. As we do now, staff would work closely with the school districts and each school-specific Campus Advisory Council to determine the appropriate locations for needed safe routes to school.

**Attached Link – June 9, 2016 SWMP ADOPTION DRAFT:** As noted above there have been no changes to key recommendations or performance targets from the April 18, 2016 Adoption Draft. There have been edits to clarify text, improve graphics, and update the acknowledgements and Appendix J – Public Comments Summary. These improvements to the adoption draft would not have been possible without the thoughtful and thorough review provided by members of the public and the volunteers that serve on City Boards and Commissions.

#### **DISTRIBUTION**

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#### **Links:**

##### **2016 Sidewalk Master Plan/ADA Transition Plan Update (06-09-16 adoption draft)**

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##### **2009 Sidewalk Master Plan:**

[https://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Public\\_Works/Street\\_%26\\_Bridge/Sidewalk\\_Master\\_Plan.pdf](https://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Public_Works/Street_%26_Bridge/Sidewalk_Master_Plan.pdf)

##### **Peer Cities report:**

[http://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Public\\_Works/Street\\_%26\\_Bridge/Sidewalk\\_Peer\\_Cities\\_Report\\_and\\_Appendix.pdf](http://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Public_Works/Street_%26_Bridge/Sidewalk_Peer_Cities_Report_and_Appendix.pdf)

##### **Provide Feedback on Sidewalk Master Plan/ADA Transition Plan update:**

<https://austintexas.gov/online-form/feedback-sidewalk-master-plan-and-ada-transition-plan>