




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Robert Spillar, P.E., Director,
Austin Transportation Department 

DATE: June 24, 2020

SUBJECT: First Report on the Healthy Streets Initiative (Resolution No. 20200507-062)

This memorandum provides an update on the progress of the Healthy Streets Initiative ([Resolution 20200507-062](#)) approved by Council to support the community's need for mental and physical wellness by creating street space to maintain social distancing, as recommended in Stage 2-5 of the Austin-Travis County [COVID-19 Risk-Based Guidelines](#).

At the direction of Council, the initial batch of Healthy Streets were implemented within 2 weeks along approximately 5 miles of roadway encompassing portions of Comal Street, Bouldin Avenue, Garden Villa Lane and an extension of the Country Club Creek trail. ATD also established several tools to gather feedback from the community [on the initial pilot streets](#), as well as ways to [suggest future streets](#) and a [survey](#), all of which are available on the Initiative's webpage, www.austintexas.gov/healthystreets.

Summary of Feedback

Upon announcement of the program, people immediately engaged through the website and directly with ATD staff. As of June 5, 2020, more than 1,000 comments have been received through the map tools and survey. Most survey respondents (77%) are supportive of the initiative and 20% are opposed. More than 100 people have expressed interest in serving as a Block Captain to assist with maintaining the traffic control set ups. A complete summary of all feedback is available on the initiative's [webpage](#).

Lessons Learned

Council directed staff to install an initial batch of Healthy Streets and seek feedback to inform improvements and modifications for future deployments. For example, ATD has made modifications based on community feedback to select blocks along Comal Street to support access to local businesses and cemeteries.

While generally the feedback has been very positive, it is important to note that demographic data from the survey suggests that these responses do not fully represent the opinion of all of Austin's population. ATD also fielded concerns about not having a broader notification process. ATD will implement additional outreach strategies prior to future deployments, including placing yard signs and sending targeted email and social media to seek feedback on proposed future Healthy Streets. ATD is also in dialogue with community-based organizations to deepen the outreach and engagement for this initiative in areas where feedback has been limited.

Next Steps

ATD has identified several new proposed Healthy Street segments based on community feedback, Council direction and lessons learned from the initial batch of streets. Routes are available on the Healthy Streets website for community feedback. ATD will make an announcement on the next set of streets on July 2, 2020, and approximately every month thereafter. ATD is in the process of reaching out via the Community Registry, social media platforms, and by placing signage along these routes to invite feedback from all street users prior to making a final selection. ATD will continue to evaluate suggestions to best meet the Council's goal of establishing geographic diversity of Healthy Street options citywide.

If there are further questions please feel free to contact me or Anna Martin, ATD's Assistant Director, at anna.martin@austintexas.gov.

CC: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
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Stephanie Hayden, Director, Austin Public Health Department