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# Mobility Directive MD—03

## CLOSURES & DETOURS (CAPACITY REDUCTION)

<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/right-of-way-management>

Traffic congestion results when vehicle usage exceeds the physical capacity of a roadway, causing excessive delays. Travel lane closures and detours create pinch points that further restrict roadways and exacerbate congestion. This is what is known as **Capacity Reduction**. Capacity reduction leads to commuter stress and frustration, loss of time, increased vehicle maintenance costs, elevated risk of crashes and additional carbon emissions generated by idling vehicles.

### PROJECT REVIEW

Given the considerable impacts, projects that have the potential for significant capacity reduction must be closely evaluated and actively monitored by City staff. Closures that are not critical to other economic activities or not intended to immediately benefit mobility or safety may be delayed or halted.

Right of way engineers review projects that involve any of the following automatic qualifiers:

- Reducing an Arterial or Collector roadway by more than 50% in any direction.
- Blocking intersection turn movements for more than 7 hours.
- Working within more than one intersection at a time.
- Working during peak travel times. **See Figure-1.**

Staff may also request that area traffic engineers review projects involving:

- Long-term closures
- Critical Arterials
- Arterial and Collector roadways
- Pedestrian facilities (See Mobility Directive—09, Pedestrian Considerations.)

**LONG-TERM CLOSURES** – Long-term closures are defined as those 72 hours or greater. Though generally discouraged, sometimes these closures are unavoidable. Contributing factors include:

- Depth or location of work
- Specialized equipment needs
- Overhead work
- Poor soil or structural conditions

Permitted long-term closures will require:

- A two week advance notice for all roadways and detours. See Mobility Directive—04, Providing Notification.
- Larger channelizing devices.
- Devices that are retroreflective and/or illuminated.
- Covered or removed existing conflicting signage and markings.
- Supplemental temporary traffic controls.

**CRITICAL ARTERIAL ROADWAYS** – Critical Arterials, **see Figure-2**, carry the most commuter and vehicular traffic and provide essential connections to the transportation network. Therefore, limitations are placed on both partial and full closures of critical arterials. These limitations include:

- No full road closures Monday through Friday.
- No double lane closures in the [Downtown Austin Project Coordination Zone \(DAPCZ\)](#) Monday through Friday.
- No lane restrictions Monday through Friday, from 7 – 10 a.m. and 3 – 7 p.m.
- No bus lane operation restrictions without prior approval.
- No work within 5 blocks along the same block face of an established long-term closure.

Permitted Critical Arterial closures will also need to provide a two week advance notice for all roadways and detours. See Mobility Directive–04.

### ARTERIAL AND COLLECTOR ROADWAYS –

Arterial and Collector roadways also generate a lot of traffic and restrictions can greatly affect citizens’ ability to navigate the city. Limitations placed on partial and full closures of arterial and collector roadways include:

- No full road closures Monday through Friday.
- No double lane closures in the DAPCZ area Monday through Friday.
- No lane restrictions Monday through Friday, from 6 – 9 a.m. and 4 – 6 p.m.
- No bus lane operation restrictions without prior approval.

As defined in [Section 8](#) of the Transportation Criteria Manual, **arterial streets** are striped to provide two or more lanes of travel in one direction OR are streets located in the Central Business District ([see Figure-3](#)). **Collector streets** connect two or more arterial streets.

**PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES –** Pedestrian facilities should be closed as a last resort, as pedestrians are reluctant to add distance or out-of-the-way travel to a destination. See Mobility Directive-02.

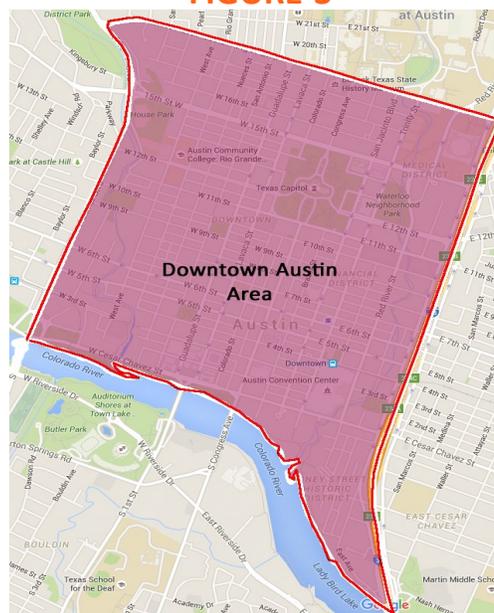
### RESOURCES

**Related Mobility Directives (MD):**  
 MD–02, Pedestrian Considerations  
 MD–04, Providing Notification

**FIGURE-2**

| Critical Arterial                                                | Limits                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 5 <sup>th</sup> St.                                              | MoPac to I-35                           |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> St.                                              | MoPac to I-35                           |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> St.                                              | I-35 to Airport Blvd.                   |
| 15 <sup>th</sup> St.                                             | MoPac to I-35                           |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> St.                                             | Guadalupe St. to I-35                   |
| 35 <sup>th</sup> St./38 <sup>th</sup> St./38 <sup>th</sup> ½ St. | MoPac to I-35                           |
| 45 <sup>th</sup> St.                                             | Burnet Rd. to Lamar Blvd.               |
| Airport Blvd.                                                    | Lamar Blvd. to FM 969/MLK               |
| Anderson Mill Rd.                                                | FM 620 to Parmer Ln.                    |
| Barton Springs Rd.                                               | MoPac to Congress Ave.                  |
| Braker Ln.                                                       | US 183 to Dessau Rd.                    |
| Brodie Ln.                                                       | US 290 to Slaughter Ln.                 |
| Burnet Rd./FM 1325                                               | US 183 to 45 <sup>th</sup> St.          |
| Cameron Rd./Dessau Rd.                                           | Parmer Ln. to 51 <sup>st</sup> St.      |
| Cesar Chavez St.                                                 | MoPac to I-35                           |
| Congress Ave.                                                    | 11 <sup>th</sup> St. to Wasson Rd.      |
| Guadalupe St./Lavaca St./S 1 <sup>st</sup> St.                   | Lamar Blvd. to Slaughter Ln.            |
| Howard Ln./McNeil Dr./Wells Branch Pkwy.                         | US 183 to Dessau Rd.                    |
| Lake Austin Blvd.                                                | Exposition Blvd. to MoPac               |
| Lamar Blvd.                                                      | US 183 to Panther Trl.                  |
| Manchaca Rd./FM 2304                                             | Lamar Blvd. to Matthews Ln.             |
| MLK/FM 969                                                       | Lamar Blvd. to Airport Blvd.            |
| Pleasant Valley Rd.                                              | 7 <sup>th</sup> St. to Oltorf St.       |
| Pleasant Valley Rd./Todd Ln.                                     | Ben White Blvd. to William Cannon Dr.   |
| Riverside Dr.                                                    | Lamar Blvd. to Ben White Blvd.          |
| Rundberg Ln.                                                     | Metric Blvd. to Cameron Rd./Dessau Rd.  |
| Slaughter Ln.                                                    | MoPac to I-35                           |
| Southwest Pkwy.                                                  | William Cannon Blvd. to MoPac           |
| Springdale Rd.                                                   | US 290 to Cesar Chavez St.              |
| William Cannon Dr.                                               | Southwest Pkwy. to McKinney Falls Pkwy. |

**FIGURE-3**



**Central Business District** = the zoning designation for an office, commercial, residential, or civic use located in the Downtown Austin Area.

**Downtown Austin Area** = area bounded by Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to the north, Interstate Highway 35 to the east, Lady Bird Lake to the south, and Lamar Boulevard to the west.

**FIGURE-1**

| PEAK TRAVEL TIMES            |                    |                   |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
|                              | WEEKDAYS AM-PEAK   | WEEKDAYS PM-PEAK  |
| <b>CRITICAL ARTERIALS</b>    | 7:00 AM – 10:00 AM | 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM |
| <b>ARTERIALS/ COLLECTORS</b> | 6:00 AM – 9:00 AM  | 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM |

LEGAL DISCLAIMER: This document should not be used as a substitute for codes and regulations. The applicant/permittee is responsible for compliance with all code and rule requirements, whether or not described in this document.