



## BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

### Parks and Recreation Board

#### Recommendation Number: 20200225-B3: Substitute Language to Replace Proposed Amendment to the Land Development Code Related to Parkland Dedication

WHEREAS, a Core Principle of Imagine Austin is: "As we grow into a more compact city, we will also have an increased need for parks and open spaces distributed across these new urban places."

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Board, in accordance with the direction of Imagine Austin, advocates for all Austinites to have access to quality parks, recreational opportunities and green space, as this leads to positive health impacts, increases community engagement and provides protection against the growing impacts of climate change such as urban heat island effects, and flooding; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Board in October 2019 passed a resolution affirming support of the current parkland dedication ordinance based on the knowledge that it has been an effective and important tool in parkland improvement and dedication since its inception, and has minimally impacted development as only 6% of cases have dedicated parkland; and

WHEREAS, the inclusion of the amendment (ADLER NZ1) to the Land Development Code (LDC) that Council approved on February 13th would adversely impact the efficiency and predictability of the ordinance by requiring staff to demonstrate administrative criteria to the Land Use Commission; presentation of criteria before the Land Use Commission could take up to 21 days, as well as increase valuable Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) staff time, thereby impeding the city's effort to streamline the development process with the new Land Development Code; and

WHEREAS, this amendment would allow land that is encumbered, such as floodplain, to receive full credit as parkland, even though it may not be suitable for parkland amenities, thereby encouraging the dedication of undevelopable parkland; and

WHEREAS, this amendment places the threshold at six acres for modified criteria, even though multifamily developments can meet their desired unit yields on three acres or less; historically developments over three acres have attained their desired unit yields and still dedicated parkland; and

WHEREAS, this amendment includes an appeals provision that already exists; applicants may currently appeal a requirement for parkland to the Land Use Commission in existing code; and

WHEREAS, this amendment deviates from the corridor criteria language for corridor and activity center sites smaller than 1.66 acres; higher priority creeks may not necessarily be in the floodplain, and planned trails exist not only in the Urban Trails Master Plan, but other planning documents, such as PARD's Long Range Plan; adjacency to parks is also an essential criterion to improving park access; and

WHEREAS, Imagine Austin and Council directive purports that all Austinites, regardless of income level, ethnicity, ability or age should have equal access to public parks, this amendment (ADLER NZ1) fails to equitably provide parks, as it would disproportionately impact East Austin, which is already park deficient and in need of park improvement; and

WHEREAS, a few key changes would achieve the intent of the February 13th amendment (ADLER NZ1) and would address a Core Principle of Imagine Austin that increased density requires more parkland. These changes would have much less impact on the proven success of the ordinance, would not slow down the development approval process, and would not promote inequities;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Parks and Recreation Board recommends that the City Council adopt the following substitute language to replace the proposed amendment language in the Land Development Code.

(A) Fee In-Lieu Authorized.

(2) Payment of a fee-in-lieu of parkland dedication shall be authorized if the site proposed for development has frontage on a corridor designated by Section 23-3A- 5010 (Corridors & Centers), and meets the following criteria:

(b) gross site area is greater than 1.66 acres, but smaller than or equal to 3 acres, and the site is not:

- (i) adjacent to a creek or waterbody
- (ii) adjacent to an existing or planned park
- (iii) adjacent to an existing or planned trail; or
- (iv) located in a park-deficient area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Parks and Recreation Board recommends that commercial properties be included in the parkland dedication ordinance.

Date of Approval: February 25, 2020

Record of the vote: 10-0 with Board Member Rinaldi off the dais.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_



Dawn Lewis, Parks and Recreation Board Chair





Soroptimist Park. Bozeman, MT  
.25-acre Downtown Park

# Parkland Dedication

Need, Facts, and Strategic Direction

Rich DePalma  
2.25.2020





West Thames  
Playground  
New York City



Valmont Dog Park  
Boulder, CO



Liberty Community  
Garden  
New York City



Sister Cities Park  
Philadelphia



# Parkland Dedication Purpose

## 23-4B-1010 Purpose and Applicability

### (A) Purpose.

- (1) The City of Austin has determined that recreational areas in the form of public parks are necessary for the well-being of the City's residents.
- (2) The City has further determined that the approval of new residential development creates a need for additional parkland and park amenities to serve new residents and maintain existing levels of service.
- (3) To address the impacts of new development on the City's park system, this article:
  - (a) Requires residential development to dedicate parkland or pay a fee in-lieu of land dedication as a condition to development approval; and
  - (b) Establishes a fair method for determining the amount that new development may reasonably be required to contribute, based on its direct impacts to the City's park system and the need for high quality parkland to serve the City's residents.

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To date, the City has received 1,743 acres of dedicated parkland and 38 acres of easements.

# Parkland Dedication Application

## 23-4B-1010 Purpose and Applicability

### (B) Applicability.

- (1) The requirements of this article apply to:
  - (a) A residential subdivision in the planning jurisdiction;
  - (b) A site plan in the zoning jurisdiction that includes residential units or a hotel-motel use; and
  - (c) A residential building permit, as provided under Section 23-4B-2040 (Parkland Dedication or Fee In-Lieu at Building Permit).

# Additional Proposed Change in the Land Development Code

## [ADLER NZ1] PARKAND DEDICATION FOR CORRIDOR AND CENTER SITES

*Substantive Revision*

Payment of a fee-in-lieu of parkland dedication shall be authorized for development on parcels within activity centers and fronting activity corridors that are greater than 1.66 acres in size and less than 6 acres in size (any applicable fees in lieu of dedication will still be required).

1. The foregoing notwithstanding, dedication of parkland may be required if one or more of the following conditions are met:
  - a. Required dedication of parkland would occur:
    - i. on land necessary to accommodate a named project in the Urban Trails Master Plan or to otherwise provide for pedestrian connectivity that does not currently exist, or
    - ii. in a flood plain, or
    - iii. on land with drainage facilities or environmental buffers with amenities suitable for park use, and
    - iv. required dedication of land will be credited at 100% toward fulfillment of parkland dedication requirements (with any remaining applicable fees in lieu of dedication still being required).
  - b. Other specific conditions to be defined by staff and approved by Council that are clear, predictable, and are relevant to a critical need for parkland.
2. An applicant may appeal a requirement for land dedication to the Land Use Commission.
3. The director may request that the Land Use Commission approve dedication of parkland when none of the above conditions are met if doing so is necessary to address a critical shortage of parkland for an area identified in the Deficient Parkland Area Map or provide connectivity with existing or planned parks or recreational amenities.

# Housing Credit Already Received

## 23-4B-2050 Parkland Dedication Bonus

### (A) Purpose and Applicability.

- (1) This section modifies site development regulations to reduce potential impacts of parkland dedication on the capacity of development to provide residential housing units.
- (2) This section applies to development for which parkland dedication is required under this article, except for dedications made within a Planned Unit Development zone.

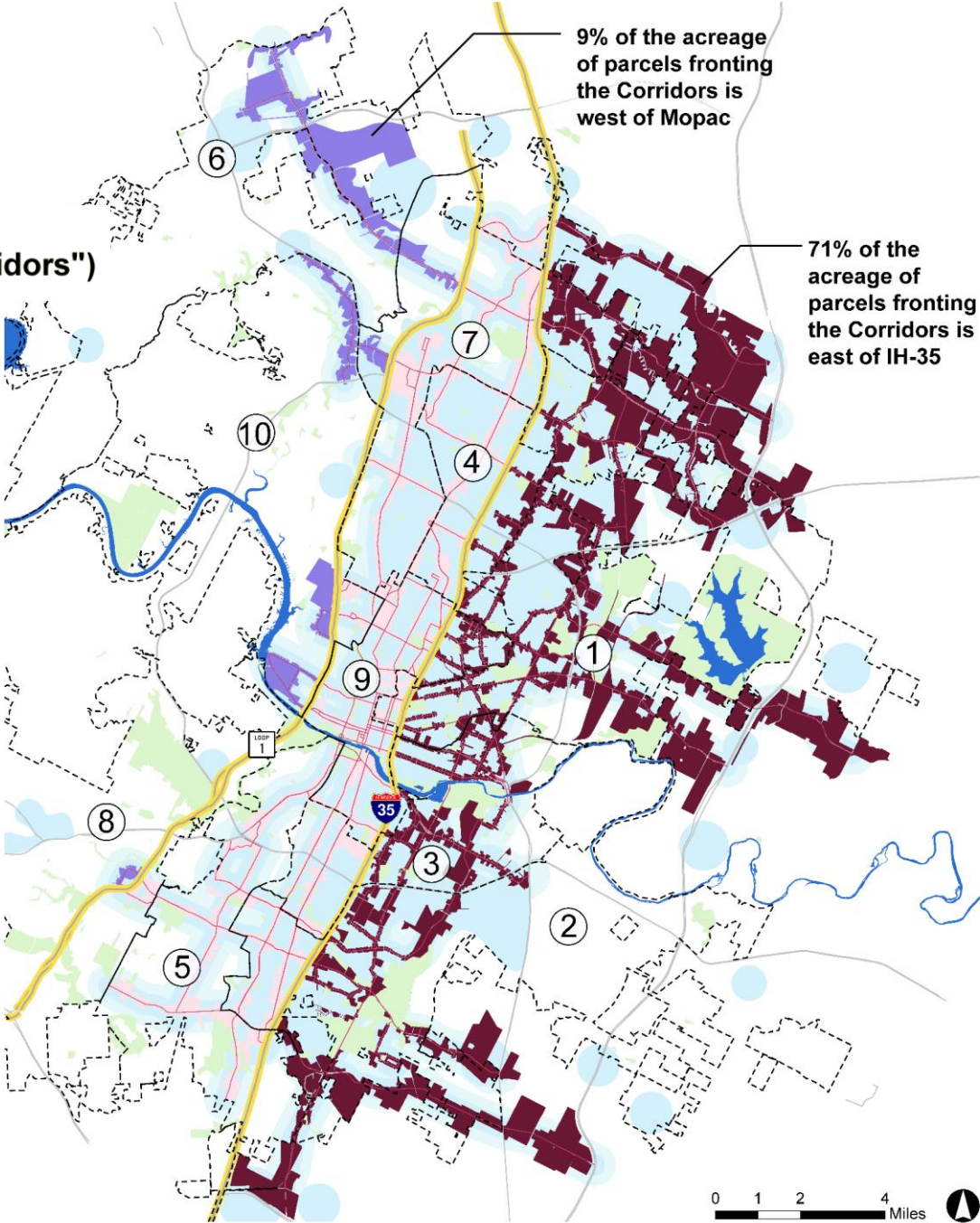
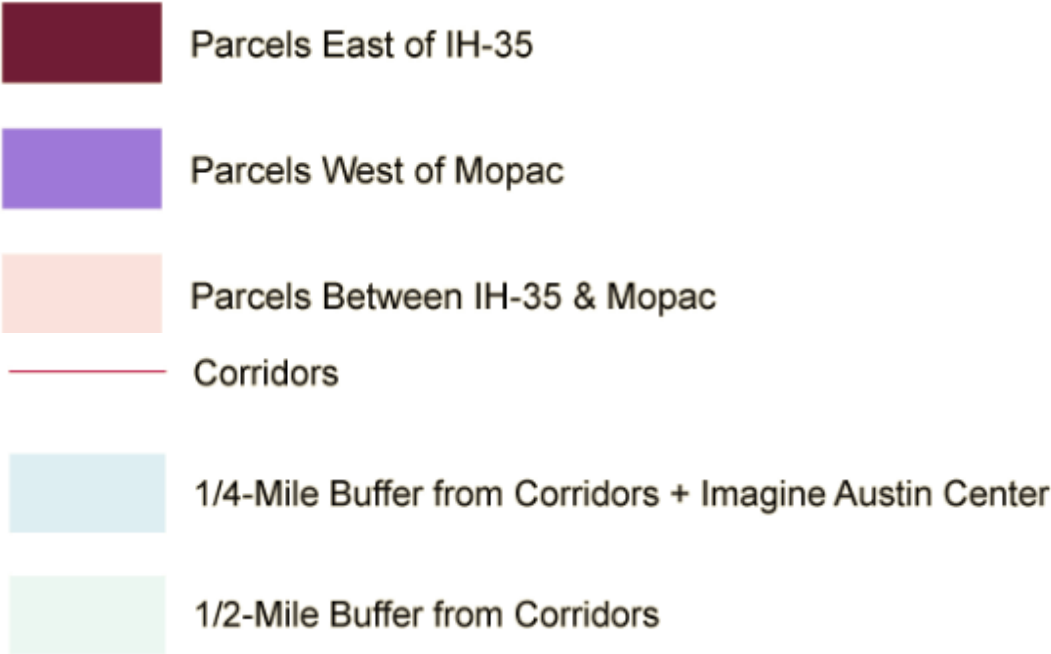
### (B) **Density and Floor-to-Area Ratio (FAR) Calculations.** If parkland is dedicated to the City as a condition to approval of a site plan, the following requirements of Article 23-3C (Zones) shall be calculated based on gross site area and shall include the portion of the site dedicated as parkland:

- (1) The maximum floor-to-area ratio; and
- (2) The maximum number of units per acre.



# Equity and Planning Challenges

## PARCELS ALONG CORRIDORS STUDY Distribution of Imagine Austin Corridors + Transit Priority Network ("Corridors")



# PLD Dedication

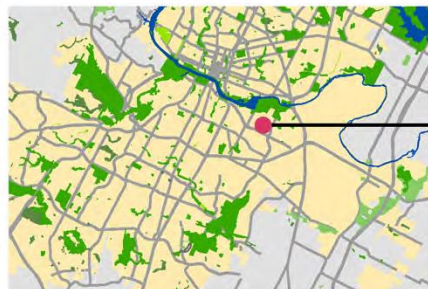
## PARKLAND DEDICATION Ongoing/Complete Land Dedication





Examples of Why Parkland Dedication  
#FlexibilityWorks

- Park Deficient Area
- New Park Service Walkshed
- New Park
- Development Boundary
- Creek Corridors



The new development will provide a 2.5 acre park directly adjacent to a library, linking multiple civic uses. The dedicated lot was constrained by a creek corridor, and as such undevelopable. The development attained an open space development bonus while protecting an environmental asset.

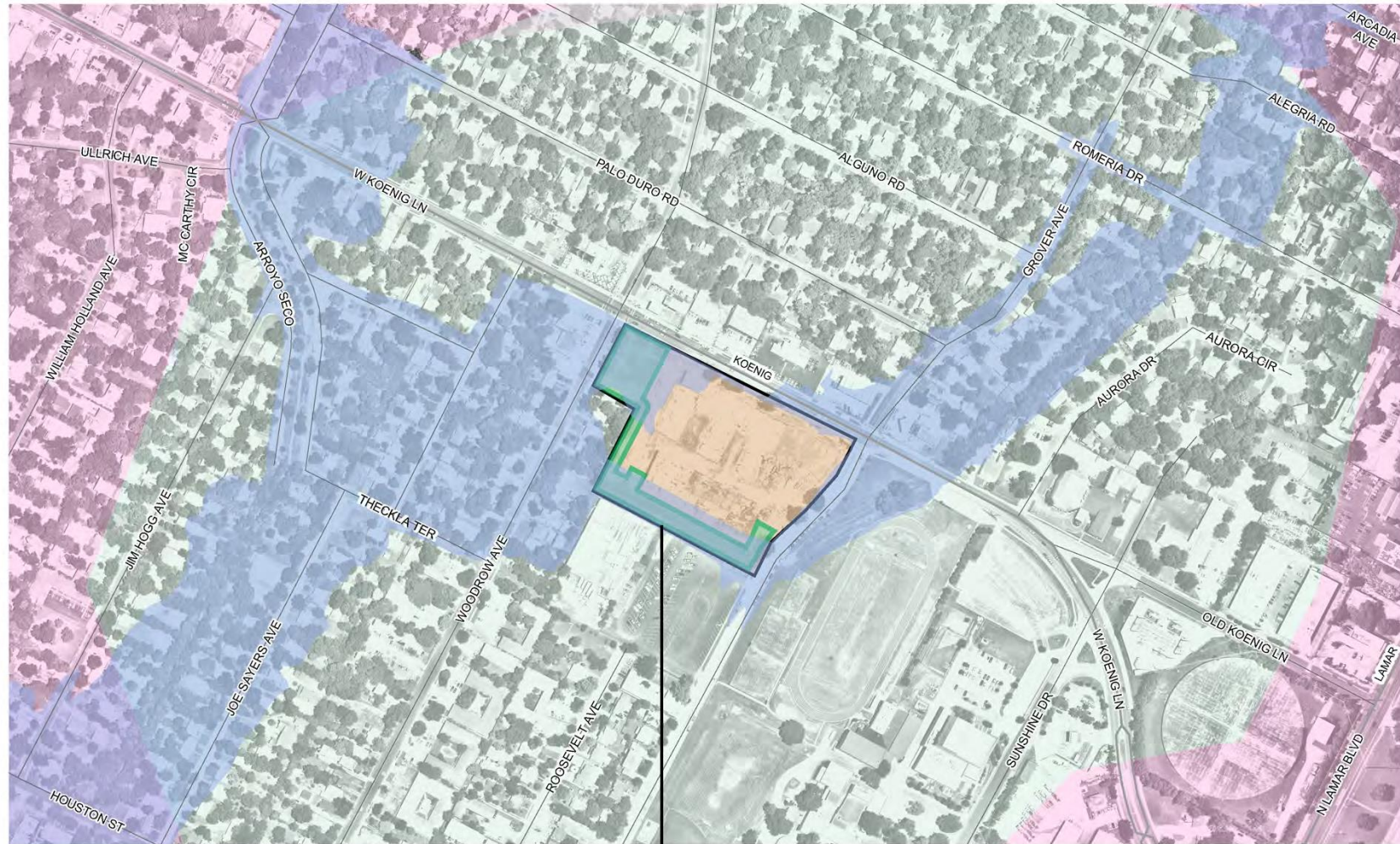


23 October 2019 rowlinsont

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- Park Deficient Area
- New Park Service Walkshed
- New Park
- Development Boundary
- Floodplain



The new development will provide a 1/2-acre park, along with trails around the site. The result will improve park access for a highly park deficient neighborhood, without any loss of units. The designs incorporate some large-canopy existing trees, as well as floodplain that was otherwise undevelopable.



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- Park Deficient Area
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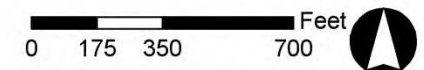
## PARKLAND DEDICATION CASES Georgian Acres (Multiple Cases)

Parkland dedication required that developments in the neighborhood surrounding Georgian Acres Park provide additional connectivity, improving the walking distances for nearby multifamily apartments to the south and single family residences to the north. Georgian Acres Park was purchased through parkland dedication fees.



23 October 2019 rowlinsont

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Density, Parkland and Walkability  
Are They Compatible?  
How Do We Compare?

## 2019 Largest US Cities + Density, Parkland & Walkability

2019 TPL Rank	2019 Rank of Largest Cities	City	Density (people per acre, adjusted area)	Parkland as percent of city area	Percent of Residents within Half-Mile Walk of Park	Playgrounds Score
9	1	New York, NY	46.18	21.7%	99%	13
55	2	Los Angeles, CA	13.57	12.5%	61%	4
10	3	Chicago, IL	20.24	9.5%	98%	27
85	4	Houston, TX	6.37	8.9%	58%	10
56	5	Phoenix, AZ	4.93	15.2%	49%	9
19	6	Philadelphia, PA	19.20	13.3%	95%	9
72	7	San Antonio, TX	4.99	10.4%	42%	10
16	8	San Diego, CA	6.83	19.1%	79%	14
52	9	Dallas, TX	6.29	9.4%	69%	10
33	10	San Jose, CA	9.30	14.1%	78%	22
43	11	Austin, TX	5.19	9.4%	59%	8

Data Source: Trust for Public Lands, 2019 City Park Facts Data Tables



## 2019 Trust for Public Lands Ranking + Density, Parkland Percent, & Walkability

2019 TPL Rank	2019 Rank of Largest Cities	City	Density (people per acre, adjusted area)	Parkland as percent of city area	Percent of Residents within Half-Mile Walk of Park	Playgrounds Score
1	20	Washington, DC	17.68	21.1%	98%	10
2	64	St. Paul, MN	9.45	15.3%	98%	31
3	45	Minneapolis, MN	12.37	14.9%	96%	31
4	98	Arlington, VA	14.33	11.1%	98%	35
5	25	Portland, OR	7.99	18.0%	89%	13
6	77	Irvine, CA	6.40	27.4%	80%	31
7	14	San Francisco, CA	29.30	19.6%	100%	17
8	63	Cincinnati, OH	6.34	14.1%	77%	40
9	1	New York, NY	46.18	21.7%	99%	13
10	3	Chicago, IL	20.24	9.5%	98%	27
11	18	Seattle, WA	13.46	12.5%	96%	13
12	84	Madison, WI	5.44	14.0%	94%	40
13	22	Boston, MA	23.13	17.4%	100%	30
14	60	St. Louis, MO	8.07	9.5%	95%	19
15	67	Plano, TX	6.44	9.5%	75%	36
16	8	San Diego, CA	6.83	19.1%	79%	14
17	83	St. Petersburg, FL	6.61	15.6%	75%	26
18	37	Long Beach, CA	15.48	10.1%	83%	7
19	6	Philadelphia, PA	19.20	13.3%	95%	9
20	48	New Orleans, LA	3.65	25.9%	80%	17
<b>43</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Austin, TX</b>	<b>5.19</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>8</b>

Data Source: Trust for Public Lands, 2019 City Park Facts Data Tables

How Does Parkland Align w/ Other Goals?



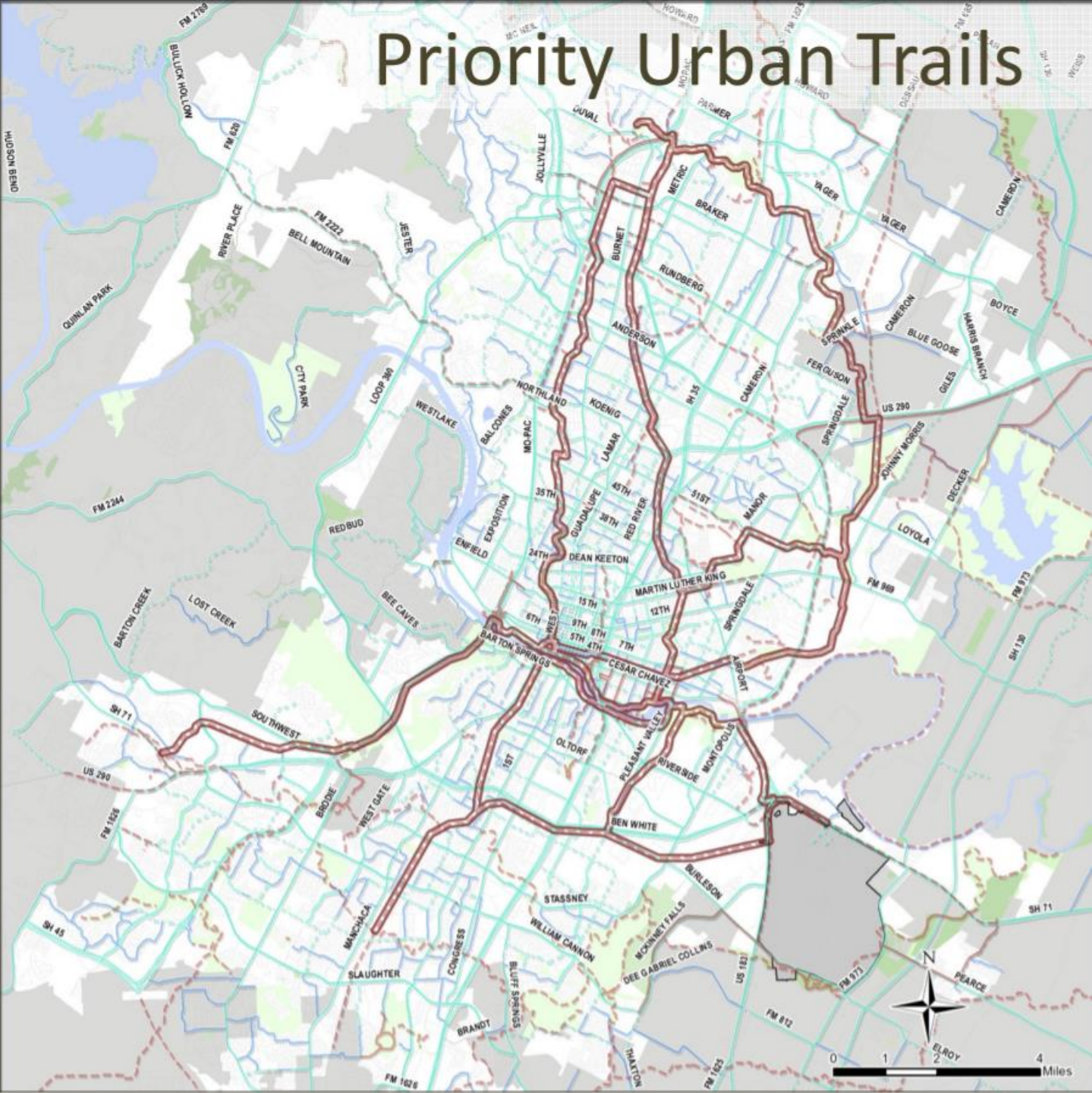
# Urban Trails Master Plan

September 2014

## City of Austin Urban Trails Master Plan



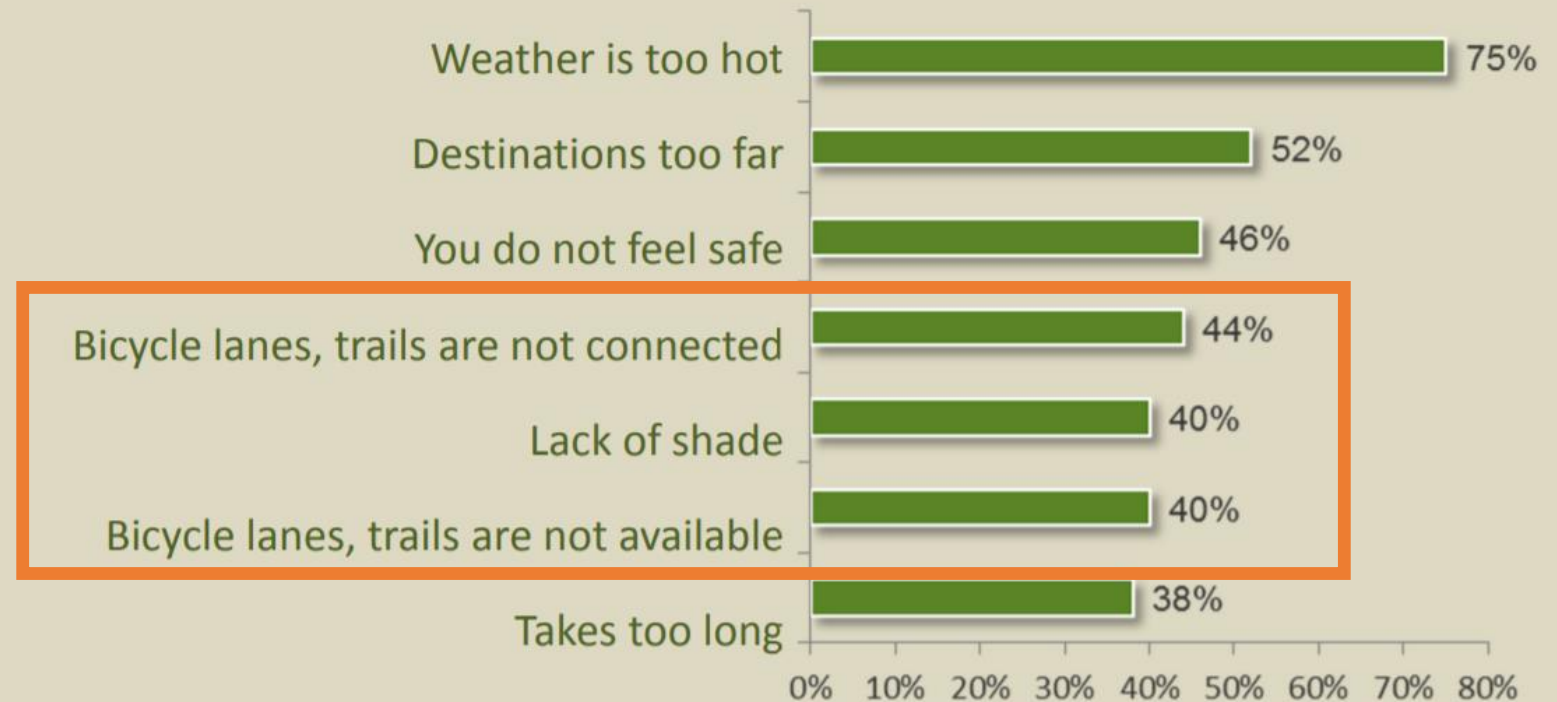
# Priority Urban Trails



## Urban Trails Master Plan

### Public Input on Urban Trails

Top 7 barriers preventing people from riding a bike





## Urban Trails Master Plan

### Urban Trail Corridors – Prioritization Criteria

Criteria	Level of Importance (Weighting)
▪ Environmental considerations	3x
▪ Citizen support	2x
▪ Constructability	2x
▪ Corridor availability	2x
▪ Connectivity to Active Transportation Network	2x
▪ Connectivity to transit	2x
▪ Connectivity to local destinations/neighborhoods	2x
▪ Scenic qualities	1x
▪ Area population density	1x
▪ Helps overcome gap or barrier	1x
▪ First in its area of the City	1x

# Age-Friendly Austin Plan



## Building an Age-friendly Austin

Prepared by AustinUP, in partnership with the  
City of Austin Commission on Seniors  
and AARP Texas  
November, 2017



## Eight Domains of Livability

### Domain 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Goal 1.1 – Increase access to and utilization of parks, open spaces and public buildings

### Domain 2: Transportation

Goal 2.1 – Ensure all modes of transportation are safe affordable and accessible

Goal 2.3 – Create an ongoing dialogue and innovative transportation options and expand models for the future

### Domain 3: Housing

Goal 3.1 – Expand and promote the development of diverse housing options that are affordable for seniors of different income levels

Goal 3.2 – Support and expand affordable housing options for seniors

### Domain 4: Social Participation

Goal 4.1 – Strengthen and develop recreation, leisure and education activities involving and targeting older adults

### Domain 5: Respect and Social Inclusion

### Domain 6: Civic Participation and Employment

### Domain 7: Communication and Information

### Domain 8: Community Support and Health Services



## Age-Friendly Austin Plan

In May 2018, the Austin City Council received a certificate of approval from the World Health Organization of the Austin Age-Friendly Action Plan, the first city in Texas.

Community leaders were recognized for this achievement and presented City Council with a certificate from AARP and the World Health Organization.



(From left to right) Commission on Seniors Chair Janee Briesemeister, AARP Texas Associate State Director Jessica Lemann, Austin Council Member Ann Kitchen, Austin Mayor Steve Adler

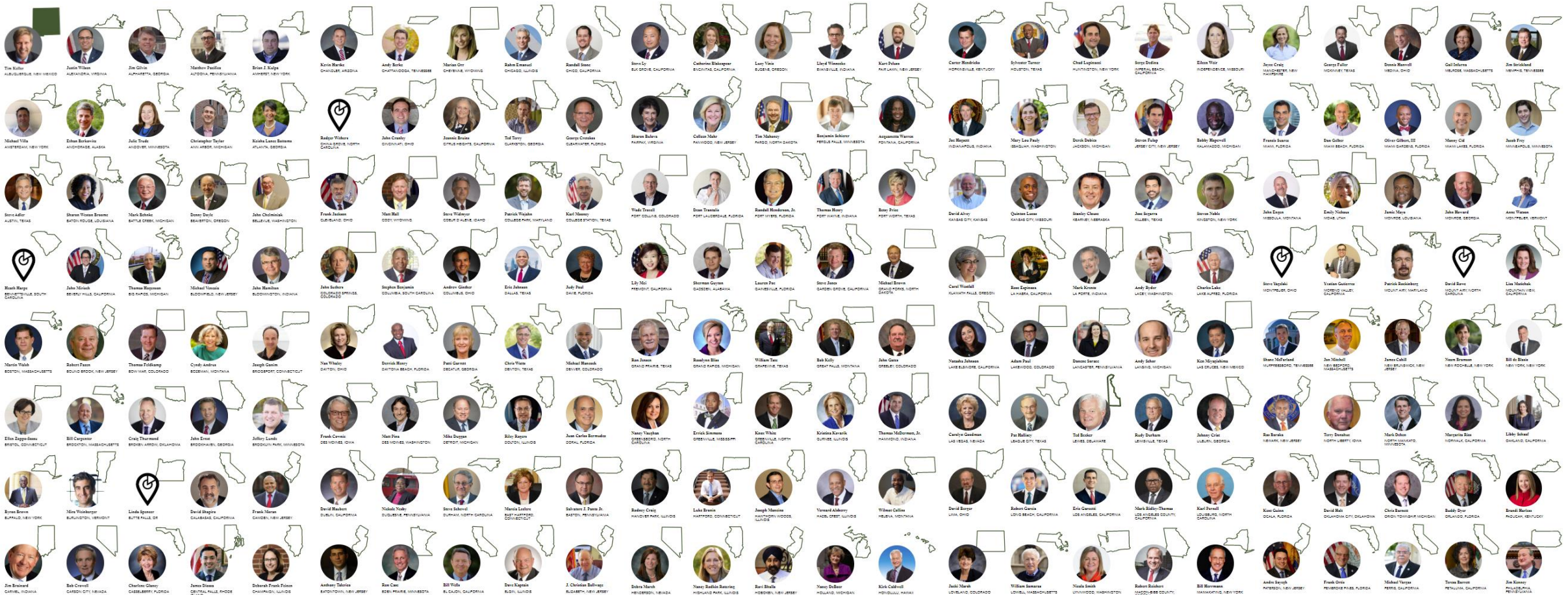
Photo credit: AustinUp



# 10 MINUTE WALK

Make the 100% Promise to ensure that everyone in your city has safe, easy access to a quality park within a 10-minute walk of home by 2050.

We're building a nationwide movement to improve access to parks & green spaces, while transforming communities, and getting people to places where they live some of their best moments.





Want More Improvements?

# Parkland Dedication Application

## 23-4B-1010 Purpose and Applicability

### (B) Applicability.

- (1) The requirements of this article apply to:
  - (a) A residential subdivision in the planning jurisdiction;
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  - (c) A residential building permit, as provided under Section 23-4B-2040 (Parkland Dedication or Fee In-Lieu at Building Permit).

Add this ↴

(d) A commercial development



# Parkland Dedication Application

(2) Densities.

(a) In calculating the amount of parkland to be dedicated under this section, the number of residents in each dwelling unit is based on the following densities:

**Table 23-4B-2010(A): Calculation of Parkland**

Density Classification	Residents in Each Dwelling Unit
Low Density: Not more than 8 units per acre	2.8
Medium Density: More than 8 and not more than 15 units per acre	2.2
High Density: More than 15 units per acre	1.7
Hotel-Motel Density: Total number of rooms	$1.7 \times \text{Annual Occupancy Rate}$

**Commercial Density: One hundred (100) square feet of land for each commercial employee, up to a maximum of ten (10) percent of the area being developed.**

End