



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

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

DATE: January 15, 2021

**SUBJECT: Efforts to Accelerate Timetables for Mobility Projects
Resolution No. 20190328-040**

City Council Resolution No. 20190328-040 directed the City Manager to accelerate timetables for planned bicycle, scooter, transit, sidewalk and tier one urban trail infrastructure projects approved in the 2016 and 2018 City of Austin bond propositions.

Progress to Date

With the investment of the 2016 Mobility Bond and the 2018 Transportation Bond, as well as transit priority funding from Capital Metro and matched by Austin Transportation, the number of active bikeway, transit priority, sidewalk and urban trail projects has significantly increased to meet the ongoing demand for these facilities. The successful ramping up of implementation capacity was only possible through a focused and coordinated effort by all departments and programs that make up the City's capital delivery system. This accelerated implementation process will continue to occur primarily through a combination of City-led crews as well as contracted field engineering and Unit Cost/Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity contracts, which saves time and can reduce costs over traditional design/bid/build delivery methods.

The coordinated effort to accelerate active transportation infrastructure has resulted in:

- A new online tracking tool for urban trails and bikeways, found at www.austintexas.gov/aaabikenetwork
- Internal analytical tools for more efficient coordination and comprehensive reporting of active work across two departments and four capital delivery divisions.
- Identification of additional necessary resources for allied processes such as permitting that are essential to meet the continued pace of infrastructure buildout.
- Improved review times and processes with Austin Fire Department for critical coordination on travel to and from incidents and operations

These efforts have resulted in the completion of more than 300 bikeway, urban trail, and pedestrian safety projects funded with 2016 Mobility Bond, 2018 Bond funding as well as full integration of transit, pedestrian crossing and signal priorities into the [Mobility Annual Planning process](#) to better leverage multiple funding sources toward more complete multimodal projects.

Specific projects and programs of note include:

- **All Ages and Abilities Bicycle Network**

The All Ages and Abilities Bicycle Network, as updated in 2019 in the ASMP as the Bicycle Priority Network, includes the goal of achieving a 50% buildout by 2020 and 80% by 2025. Despite significant disruption to internal crew capacity due to the COVID19 pandemic emergency response, ATD anticipates completion of 42% of the All Ages and Abilities Bikeway Network by the end of 2020 and 50% by Summer 2021. In addition to the increased mileage of high comfort bikeways citywide, other noteworthy accomplishments include the completion of over eight (8) protected intersections and the incorporation of natural elements such as rain gardens into the streetscape.

- **Transit Priority Network**

The Transit Enhancement Program under the Austin Transportation Department accelerated work citywide to improve the speed and reliability of transit operations, as well as integrate with the planning and design of multimodal projects to include transit supportive components. Among the notable transit priority project is the completion of the red transit priority lane along Guadalupe and Lavaca streets through downtown Austin as well as the joint investment by Austin Transportation Department and Capital Metro in the City's B-cycle bikeshare system to better serve transit accessibility. Traffic signal firmware has been upgraded citywide to better incorporate transit priority signal capabilities in the future.

- **Healthy Streets Initiative**

A new initiative developed in response to physical distancing recommendations under the City's COVID-19 risk-based guidelines reconfigured 11 locations comprising nearly 12 miles of city streets to foster more comfortable shared space for multi-modal use. Efforts are underway to apply lessons learned from the Healthy Streets Initiative towards the development of a new Slow Streets Pilot program that can offer similar benefits with permanent infrastructure.

- **Corridor Construction Program**

The Corridor Program Office in collaboration with Austin Transportation Department and Public Works Department has implemented several strategies for accelerated project delivery. The Corridor Construction Program includes delivery of improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along 50 miles of city roadway, several transit supportive improvements as well as many connections to the City's bike, sidewalk and trail systems. This work is planned for completion by 2024.

Project Reporting

The Austin Transportation Department in conjunction with the Public Works Department and the Corridor Program Office regularly report on the progress of these programs to the Mobility Committee (February 13, 2020, May 28, 2020 most recently) as well as via the [Capital Project](#)

[Explorer](#), found at capitalprojects.austintexas.gov/projects. This comprehensive reporting tool tracks the progress of individual projects and by Council district.

Next Steps

Current efforts are focused on resourcing allied divisions that support the accelerated timetables for these active transportation projects, including ATD signs, markings, permitting and signals divisions as well as strengthen the principal capital delivery groups within ATD and Public Works with project management, financial tracking, data analytics and contract management resources.

With the recent passage of the \$460 M Active Mobility Bond (Proposition B), work is well underway to identify the additional staff, contractual and equipment needs to scale the Bikeways,

Sidewalk, Urban Trails, Safe Routes to School, Substandard Streets, Vision Zero, and Local Transit Enhancement programs to keep pace with the expectations of Council and the public for timely delivery of capital projects made possible with this new funding.

Staff presented the 2021 annual workplan to Council members individually in December 2020. The public comment period remains open through February 7, 2021. Staff will brief the Mobility Committee on January 21, 2021. Additional information can be found at www.austintexas.gov/mobilityannualplan.

ATD will continue to coordinate with other divisions and departments on longer term processes and resourcing needs and report this progress to the Mobility Committee in early 2021. Staff believes this response completes our commitment to the Council resolution (CIUR 2145) and that we have demonstrated a cultural change necessary to achieve the Council direction.

If you should have any questions or need additional information, please contact Anna Martin, P.E., Assistant Director at anna.martin@austintexas.gov.

CC: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
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