

NORTH UNIVERSITY-HERITAGE-ROSEDALE NEIGHBORHOOD BIKEWAYS

BACKGROUND

Neighborhood bikeways are local streets with a combination of speed management, signage, and pavement markings that allow people walking, bicycling, driving, and playing to share street space more safely and comfortably. ATD is seeking your feedback on a proposed neighborhood bikeway project designed to provide bikeway connections in Central Austin neighborhoods for people of all ages and abilities.

FUNDING

The 2016 Mobility Bond dedicates \$137 million to local mobility projects. The Local Mobility Program is enhancing mobility, safety, and connectivity by funding construction of new infrastructure like bikeways, sidewalks, and urban trails as well as improvements to existing infrastructure. Funding for these proposed changes is available from the Bikeways program.

COMMENT PERIOD

The comment period for this project will be open through Sunday, March 1, 2020. Please submit feedback through the project survey. For questions, please contact:

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Example of a shared lane marking, aka “sharrow,” on a neighborhood bikeway in Portland, Oregon.

LEARN MORE

For more information about this project, neighborhood bikeways, the progress of the All Ages and Abilities Bicycle Network, or the 2016 Mobility Bond, visit the following AustinTexas.gov webpages:

[/NUHR-BIKEWAYS](#)

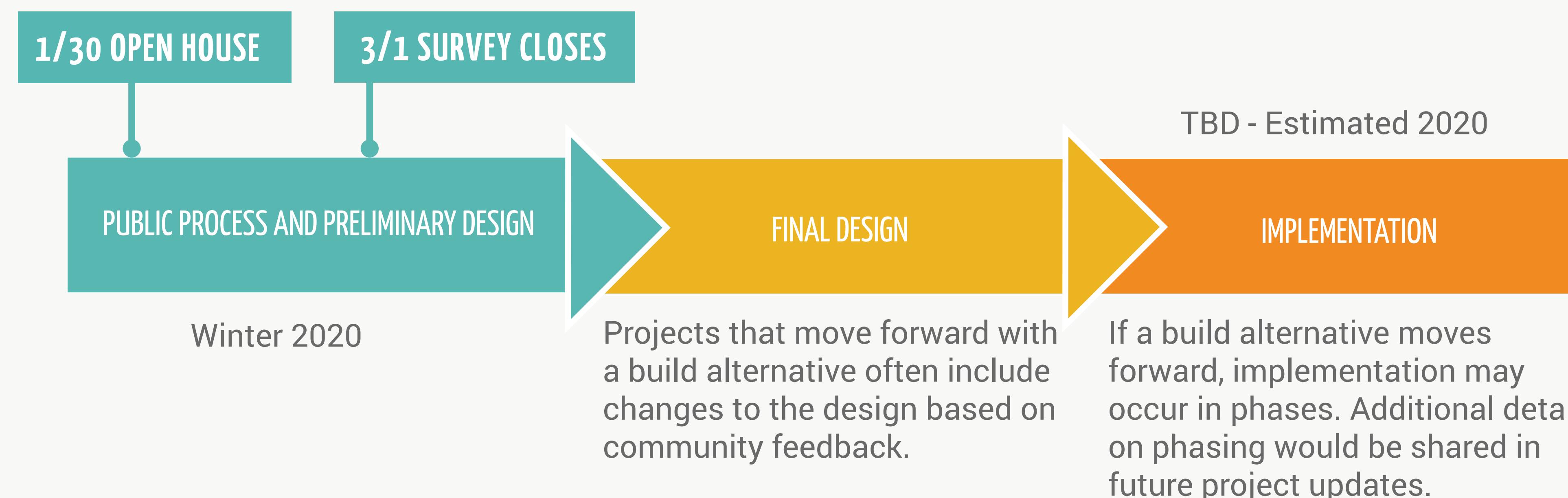
[/NEIGHBORHOODBIKEWAYS](#)

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TIMELINE

The project timeline is subject to change pending the outcome of the public process and coordination with other projects. Sign-up for the project email updates to stay informed of the project status.

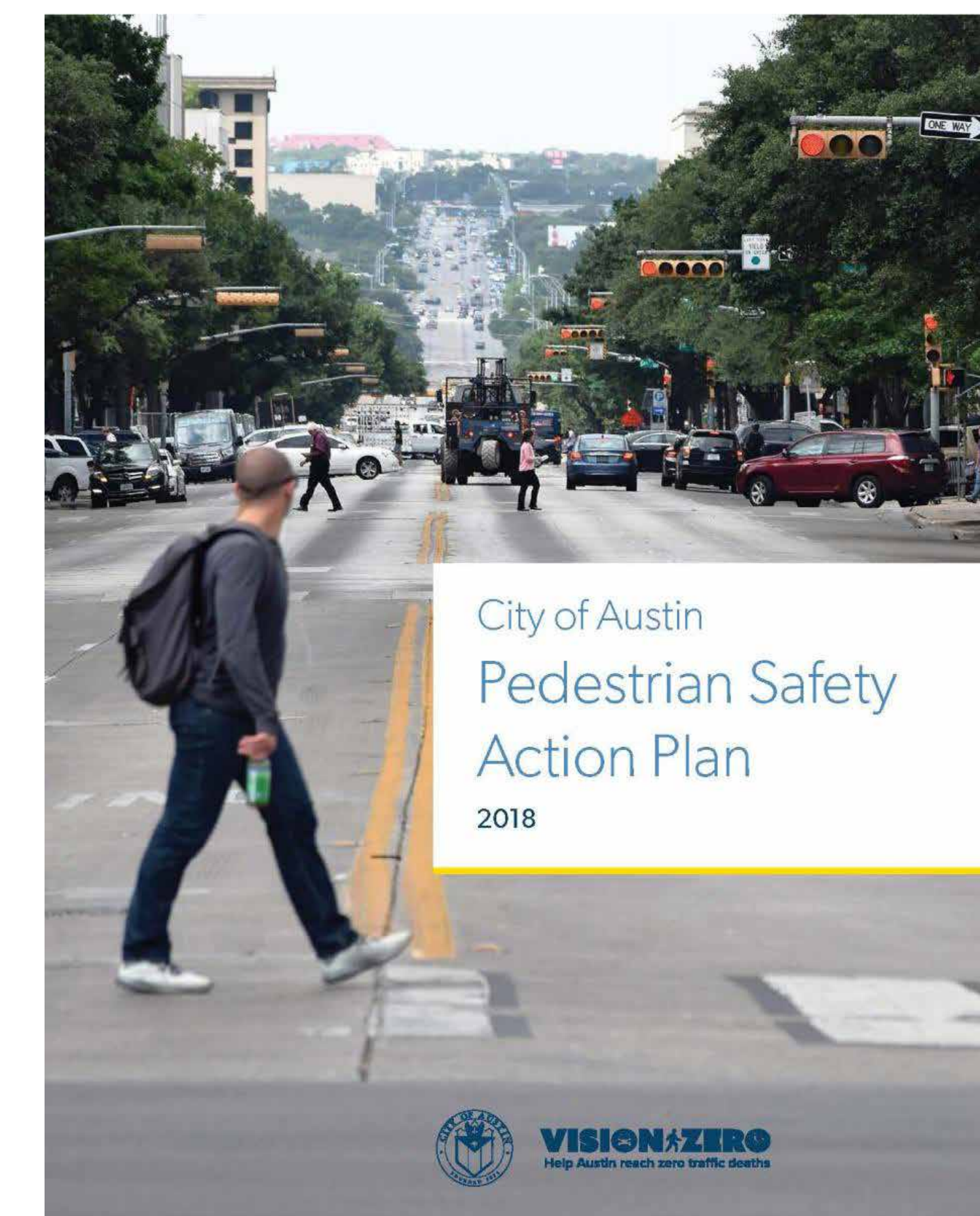


CITYWIDE POLICY DIRECTION

This project is informed by citywide plans and policies including Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan (2012), Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP, 2019), Austin Complete Streets Policy (2014), Vision Zero Action Plan (2016), Austin Bicycle Plan (2014), and Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (2018).



AUSTIN
complete
streets



WHAT ARE NEIGHBORHOOD BIKEWAYS?

Neighborhood bikeways are local streets where motor vehicle traffic speeds and volumes are kept low to make it safer and more comfortable to bicycle, walk, and play.

Neighborhood bikeways were formerly called “quiet streets” in the 2014 [Austin Bicycle Plan](#) and were recently renamed “neighborhood bikeways” in the [Austin Strategic Mobility Plan](#). They are sometimes called “bicycle boulevards” in other cities.



Concept for a neighborhood bikeway

HOW ARE NEIGHBORHOOD BIKEWAY ROUTES SELECTED?

Several factors are used in selecting local streets to form neighborhood bikeway routes:

- Naturally lower motor vehicle volumes and speeds are preferred
- Connectivity to other high-comfort bicycle facilities, such as protected bikeways and urban trails, to form an “all ages and abilities” network
- Elevation changes
- Directness of the route

ALL AGES AND ABILITIES CONNECTIONS

Neighborhood bikeways are designed to be low-stress and are intended to serve people of all ages and abilities.

Austin’s [All Ages and Abilities Bicycle Network](#) was adopted by City Council through the Austin Bicycle Plan and Urban Trails Plan in 2014, and recently updated in the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP).



NEIGHBORHOOD BIKEWAY DESIGN TOOLBOX

ROUTING

Pavement markings called “sharrows” encourage users to share the road without the presence of bicycle lanes.



LOWER SPEEDS AND VOLUMES

Speed humps are constructed to have a gentle, rolling profile and are placed from gutter-to-gutter across a roadway.



CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS

Signage, crosswalks, crossing islands, rapid flashing beacons, or pedestrian hybrid beacons can be used to bring attention to people walking and bicycling at crossings and encourage better yielding behavior by drivers.



Stop sign changes are used to prioritize through bicycle movements.



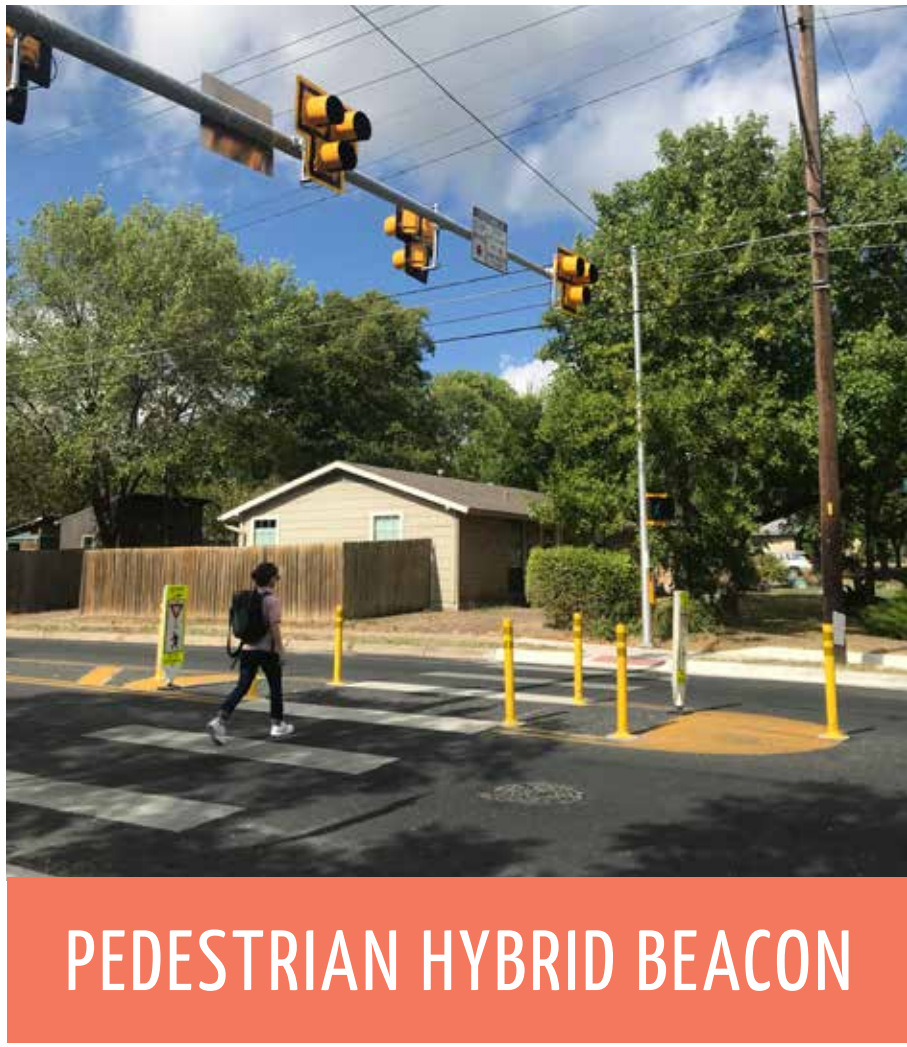
Wayfinding signs help to guide people along the bikeway route to local and regional destinations. Wayfinding signs can include information on the distance and approximate time it takes to bicycle to a destination.



The use of speed cushions on some streets is determined by coordination with Austin Fire Department to reduce possible impacts on response times. Speed cushions maybe less effective at reducing egregious speeding as larger trucks and SUVs may also be able to straddle the devices.



Curb extensions are used to shorten crossing distances and slow motor vehicle speeds during turning movements.



Asphalt speed humps may reduce speeds by 6-13 mph and speed cushions by 5-7 mph (Source: [FHWA ePrimer](#)). Using local data, ATD has found rubber speed cushions can achieve comparable speed reductions as speed humps. Given that asphalt speed humps and rubber speed cushions are more effective at reducing speeds, these devices are preferred for use on neighborhood bikeways. For streets without sidewalks, ATD would install speed devices leaving a 3-foot clear space between the gutter and the edge of the speed device.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

ROUTING

- New shared lane markings (“sharrows”)
- New wayfinding signs
- Study feasibility of switching stop signs at 4 intersections to prioritize the bicycling route

LOWER SPEEDS AND VOLUMES

- New speed reduction devices (e.g., speed humps or speed cushions) to achieve closer to 20 mph speeds
- No volume reduction is proposed for this project

CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS

- Intersection improvements (e.g., signal timing changes, ADA upgrades, curb extensions, detection)
- New bicycle lanes for connecting across major streets:
 - W 29th Street between W Guadalupe Street and Hemphill Park with proposed localized parking restrictions
 - W 34th Street between West Avenue and W Guadalupe Street with proposed parking restrictions on the north and south curbs
 - W 40th Street between N Lamar Boulevard and Marathon Boulevard with proposed localized parking restrictions

SHOAL CREEK TRAIL CONNECTION

- Alternatives are being considered for W 31st Street/Shoal Creek Boulevard between N Lamar Boulevard and W 34th Street to provide a more clear Shoal Creek Trail connection (see corresponding boards for additional details)



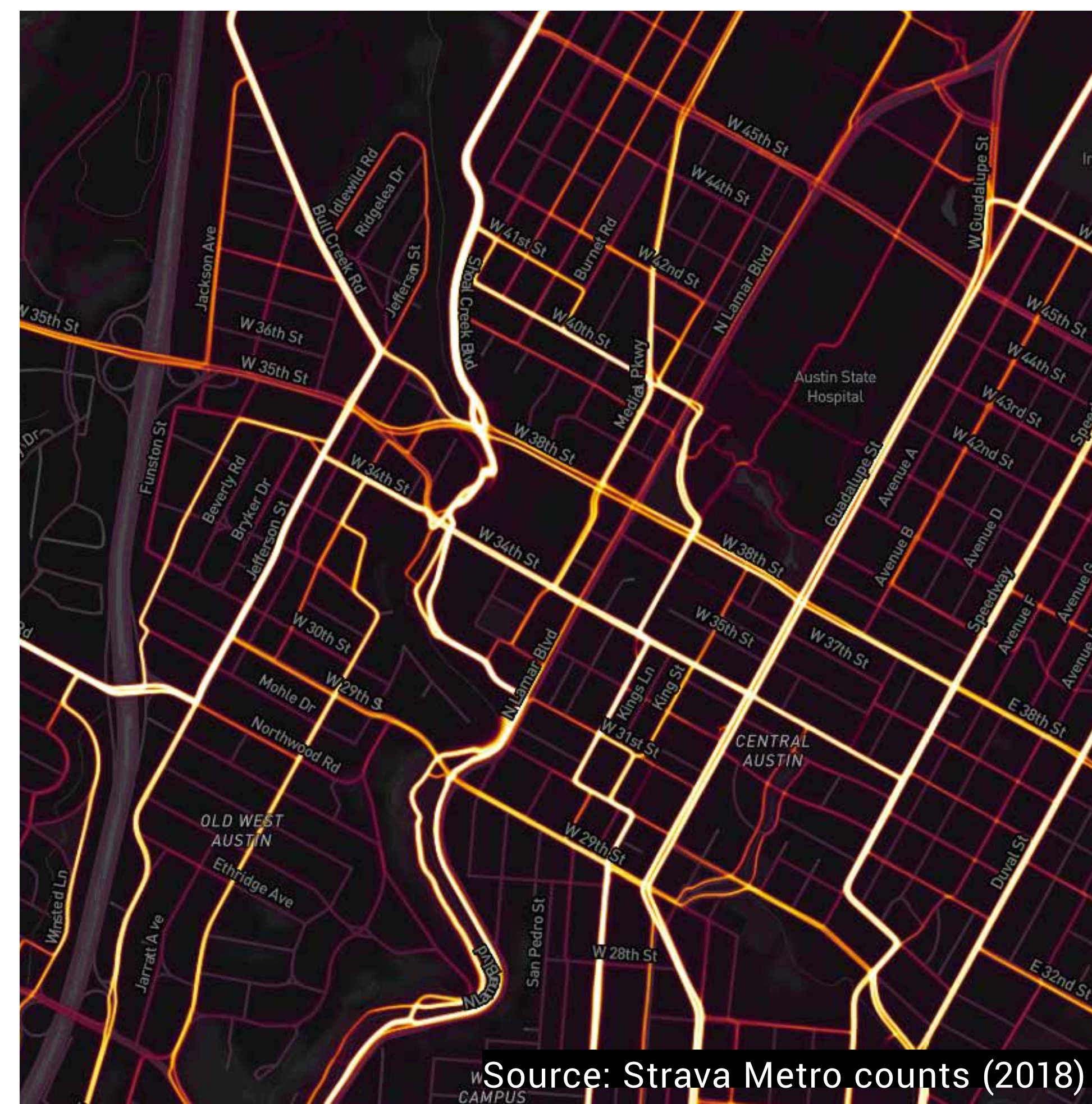
Not-to-scale, updated 2020-01-30

ROUTING

MAKING CONNECTIONS

The proposed neighborhood bikeway routes connect to other high-comfort bicycle facilities, such as protected bikeways and urban trails, to form an [All Ages and Abilities Bicycle Network](#). This project connects to the Shoal Creek Trail, Speedway, Shoal Creek Boulevard, and Rio Grande Street.

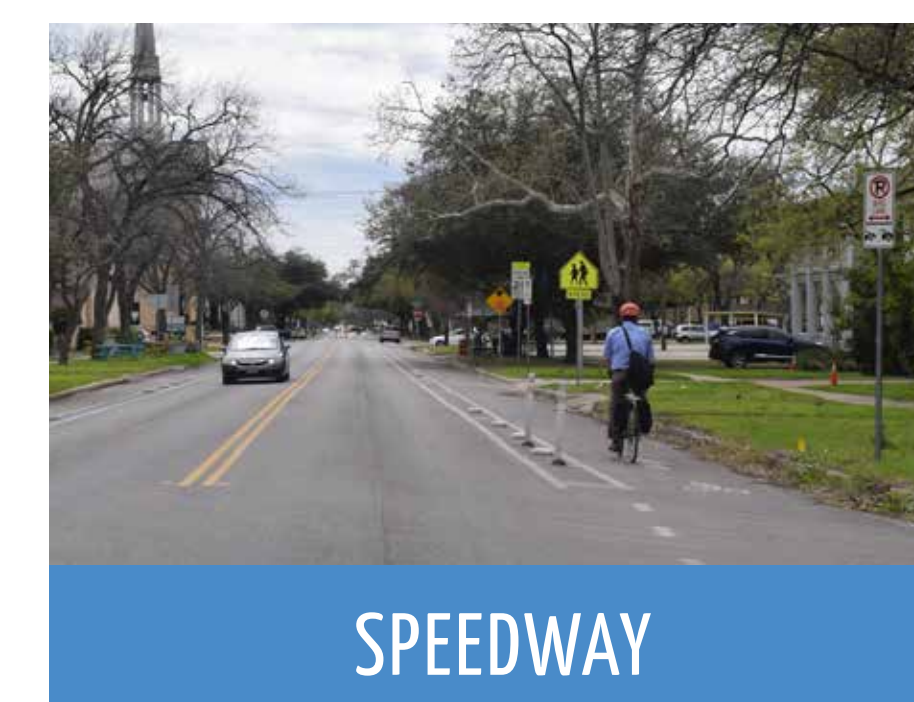
Data from Strava, a mobile phone app commonly used by more confident bicyclists, confirms that these streets are popular bicycling routes already. With a few changes, these routes can be improved to be more comfortable for all ages and abilities.



STOP SIGN CHANGES

This project proposes to study the feasibility of switching stop signs at 4 intersections to prioritize the bicycling route:

- Hemphill Park (east side) and W 32nd Street - Switch from north-south to either east-west or all-way stop
- Hemphill Park (west side) and W 33rd Street - Switch from east-west to north-south
- W 41st Street and Sinclair Avenue - Switch from east-west to north-south
- W 41st Street and Rosedale Avenue - Switch from east-west to north-south



LOWER SPEEDS AND VOLUMES

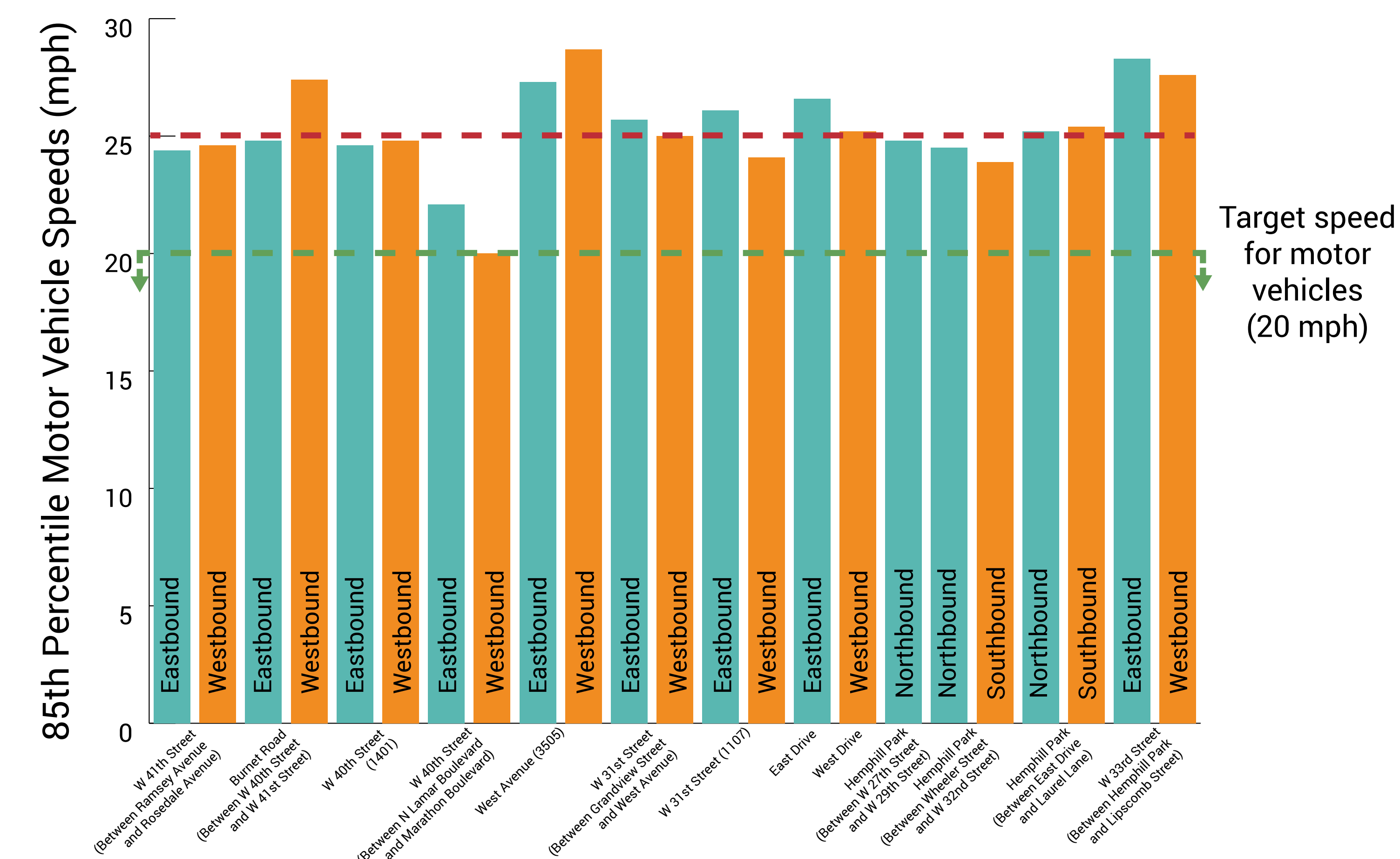
Neighborhood bikeways are critical pieces of Austin's [All Ages and Abilities Bicycle Network](#). It is important that these streets are comfortable places for people walking, bicycling, and driving to share, including young children and older adults. To do this, lower motor vehicle speeds and volumes are necessary.

Data show us that when speeds increase, so do the risk of crashes, the severity of crashes and injuries, and related “traffic stress.” When motor vehicle volumes increase, the likelihood of a motor vehicle passing a person bicycling in the same direction also increases—the more often this happens, the more stressful it can be for a less confident bicyclist.

For neighborhood bikeways to be low-stress and more welcoming to less confident bicyclists, [national best practices](#) recommend a target goal of 20 mph (up to 25 mph in some contexts) for motor vehicles speeds and ≤ 500 –1,500 vehicles per day for motor vehicle volumes. Austin Transportation collected speed and volume data for this project to evaluate if improvements would be needed to meet neighborhood bikeway design guidelines.

SPEEDS

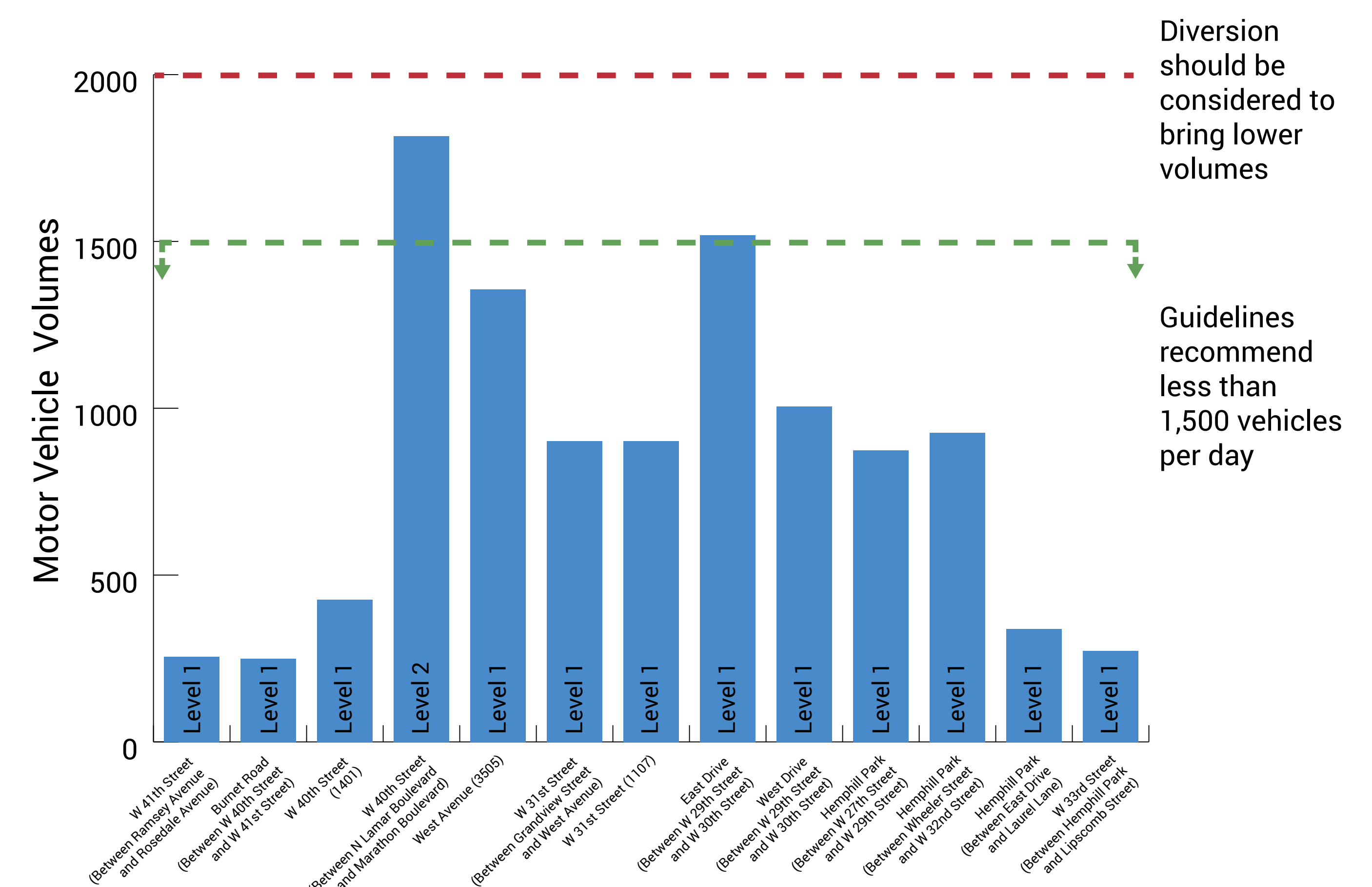
Most of the streets studied are within speeds of 20-25 mph. Speed reduction devices are recommended to bring target speeds closer to 20 mph (see the preliminary design for proposed locations of devices).



The 85th percentile speed is a commonly used traffic engineering measure of speed conditions. It is the speed at which 85% of all motor vehicle traffic is traveling at or below. It means that 15% of motor vehicle traffic is traveling faster than that speed.

VOLUMES

Motor vehicle volumes on all the streets studied are within an appropriate range given neighborhood bikeway design guidelines. No motor vehicle diversion is proposed at this time.



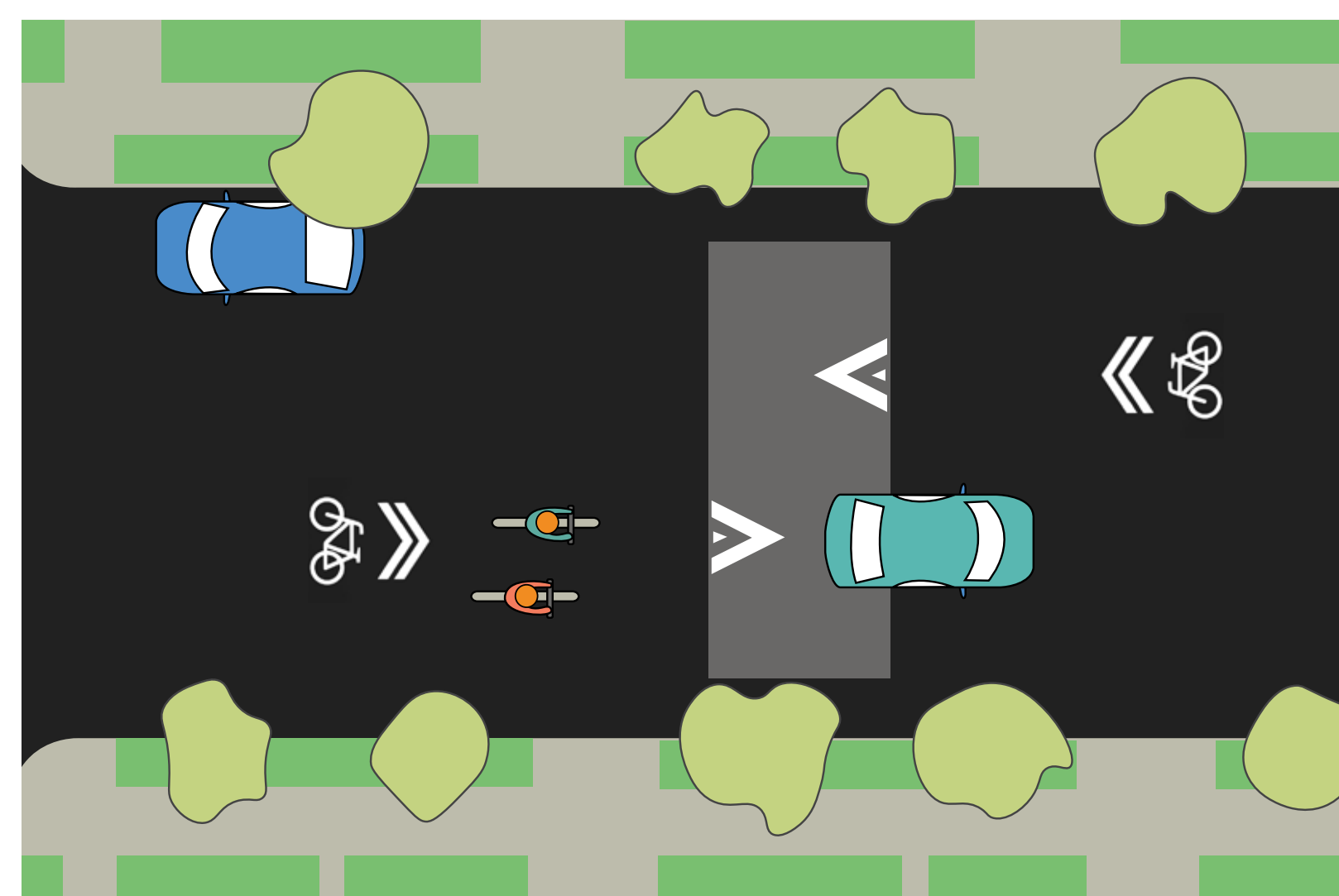
SPEED REDUCTION DEVICES

Asphalt speed humps may reduce speeds by 6-13 mph and speed cushions by 5-7 mph (Source: [FHWA ePrimer](#)). Using local data, ATD has found rubber speed cushions can achieve comparable speed reductions as speed humps. Given that asphalt speed humps and rubber speed cushions are more effective at reducing speeds, these devices are preferred for use on neighborhood bikeways. For streets without sidewalks, ATD would install speed devices leaving a 3-foot clear space between the gutter and the edge of the speed device.



Speed humps are constructed to have a gentle, rolling profile and are placed from gutter-to-gutter across a roadway. They are constructed using asphalt.

The spacing and gentle profile of speed humps helps to prevent hard braking and accelerating patterns, which reduces traffic noise and lowers speeds to be more compatible with a neighborhood context.



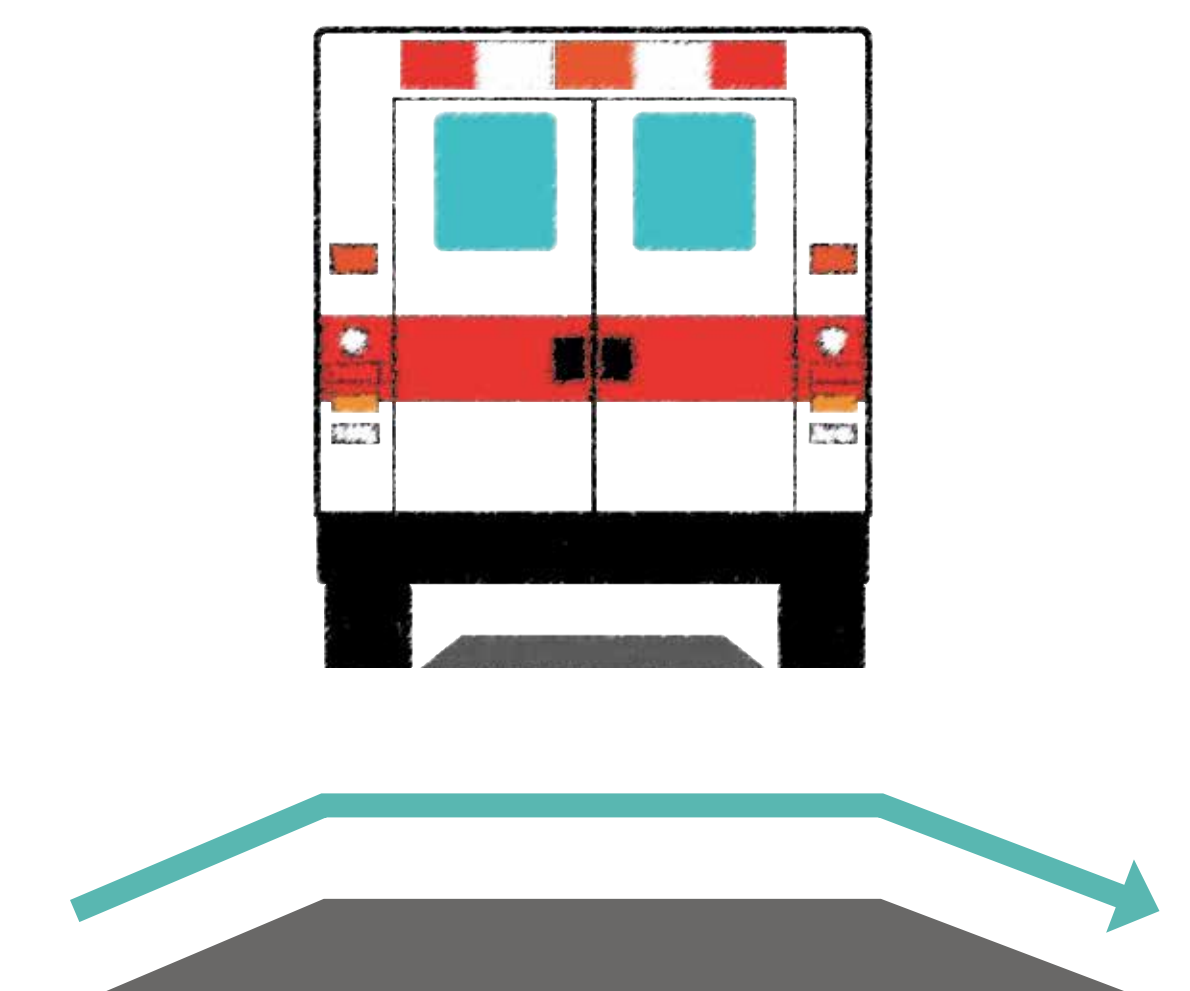
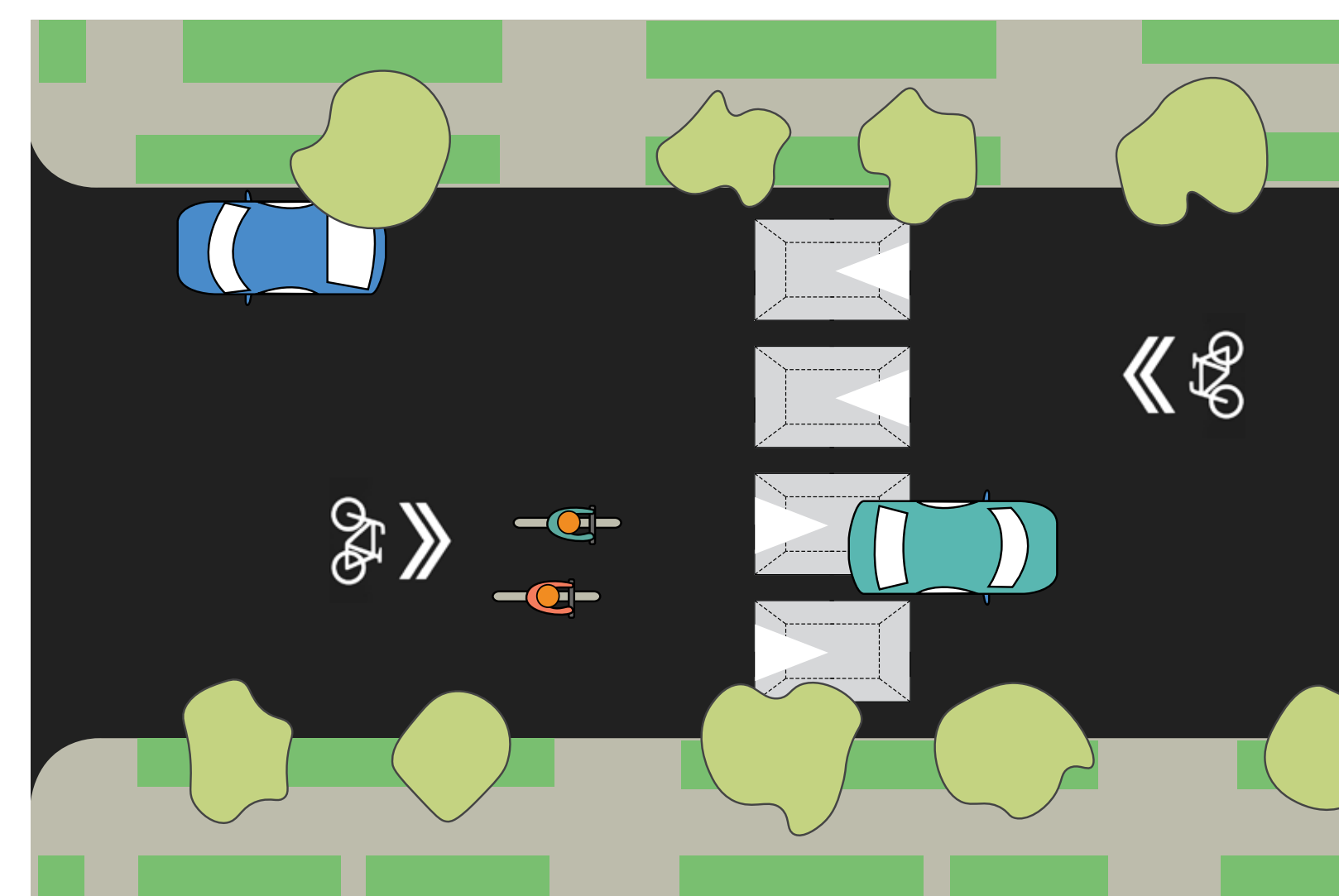
Speed humps are constructed to be comfortable for people bicycling and other users traveling 20 mph or less.



Speed cushions are constructed with a trapezoidal profile and are placed in groups of 2+ cushions. Speed cushions may be constructed using asphalt or rubber.

The use of speed cushions on some streets is determined by coordination with Austin Fire Department to reduce possible impacts on response times.

Speed cushions maybe less effective at reducing egregious speeding as larger trucks and SUVs may also be able to straddle the devices.



CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS

Planned pedestrian crossing island to sidewalk and two-way protected bicycle lanes on Shoal Creek Boulevard. Construction scheduled for 2020.

Planned cut-through for bicycles and realigning curb ramps to sidewalks at W 40th Street/Medical Parkway/Marathon Boulevard island (under construction with ongoing sidewalk work in area)

New bicycle lanes on W 40th Street between Marathon Boulevard and N Lamar Boulevard. Localized parking restriction proposed on north and south curbs.

Optimize signal timing, check/repair detection, and make ADA improvements

New bicycle lanes on W 34th Street between West Avenue and W Guadalupe Street. Proposed parking restriction on the north and south curbs.

New pedestrian crossing island and curb extensions at West Drive/W 30th Street. Curb extensions at East Drive/W 30th Street.



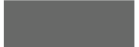





New raised crosswalk midblock on East Drive

New bicycle lanes on W 29th Street between Guadalupe Street and Hemphill Park. Localized parking restriction proposed on the south curb.



Add pushbutton for people bicycling to use the existing pedestrian hybrid beacon. Add a crosswalk on the north leg of the intersection. Improve connection to Shoal Creek Trail and sidewalk on N Lamar Boulevard on southwest corner.

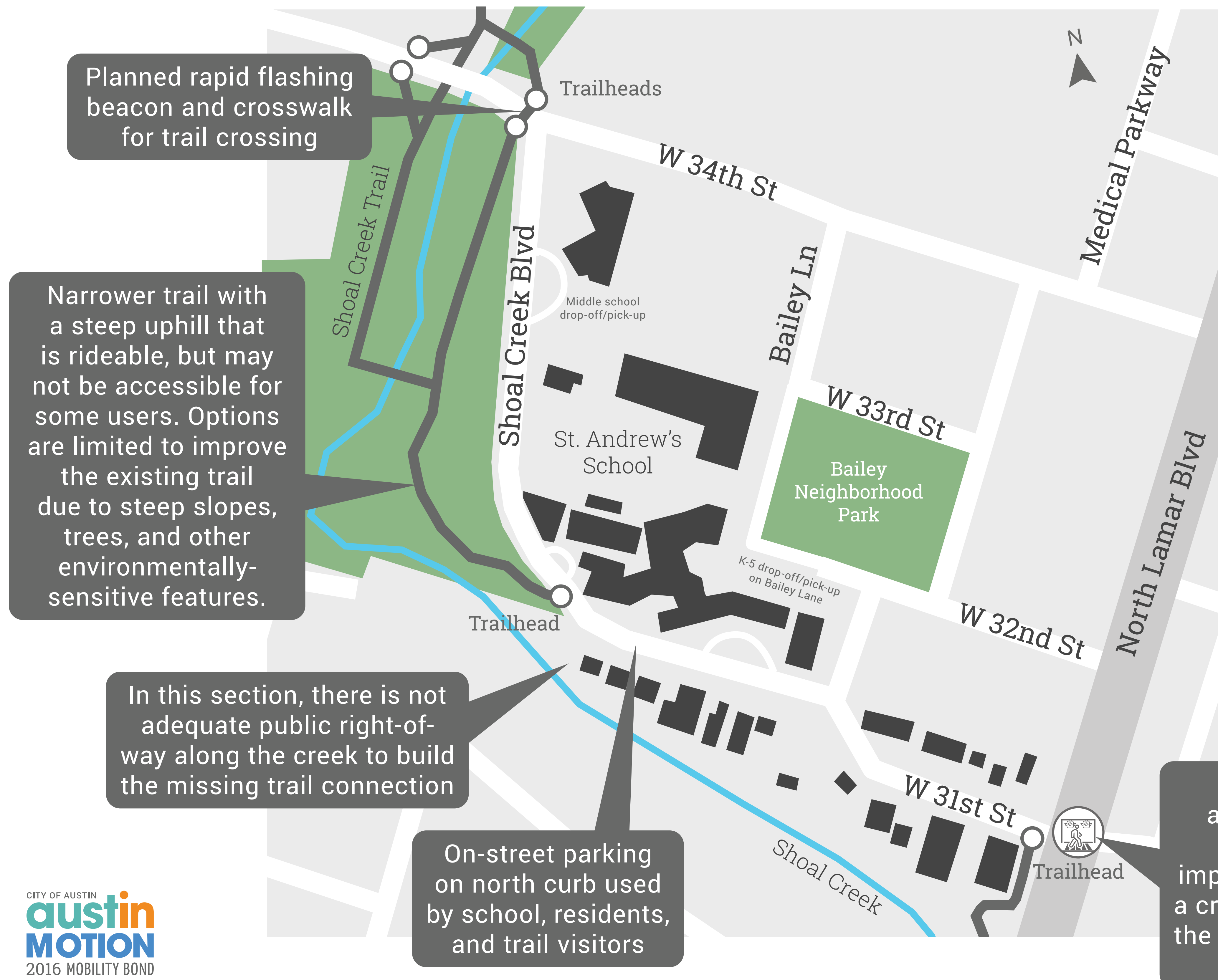
Legend

-  Proposed Neighborhood Bikeway Route
-  Proposed Connecting Bicycle Lanes
-  Shoal Creek Trail Connection
-  Existing Traffic Signals
-  Existing Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon
-  Planned Crossing Island
-  Study Stop Sign Switch Feasibility
-  Planned / Existing All Ages and Abilities Bicycle Network



SHOAL CREEK TRAIL CONNECTION

ALTERNATIVES FOR W 31ST STREET/SHOAL CREEK BOULEVARD (W 34TH STREET TO N LAMAR BOULEVARD)



The Shoal Creek Trail is an important part of both the Bikeways and Urban Trail networks. However, this section of the trail is currently disconnected and there is not adequate public right-of-way along the creek to build the connection. Austin Transportation, in coordination with the Urban Trails Program, is evaluating alternatives to provide a more clear and higher-comfort trail connection.

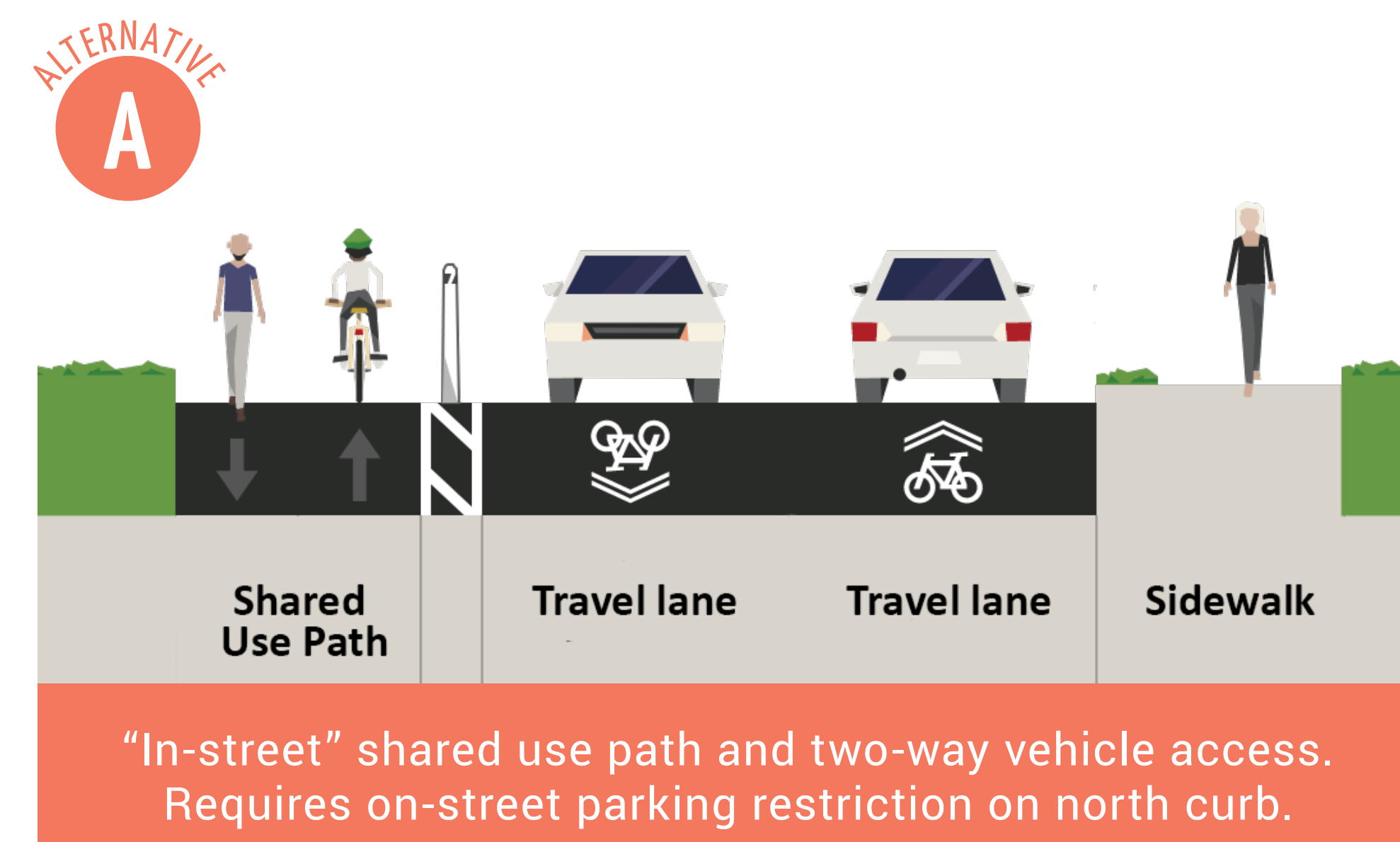
The following alternatives seek to provide options to balance the varied needs of people using the street, including the St. Andrew's school community, residents, businesses, and trail users.

SHOAL CREEK TRAIL CONNECTION

ALTERNATIVES FOR W 31ST STREET/SHOAL CREEK BOULEVARD (W 34TH STREET TO N LAMAR BOULEVARD)

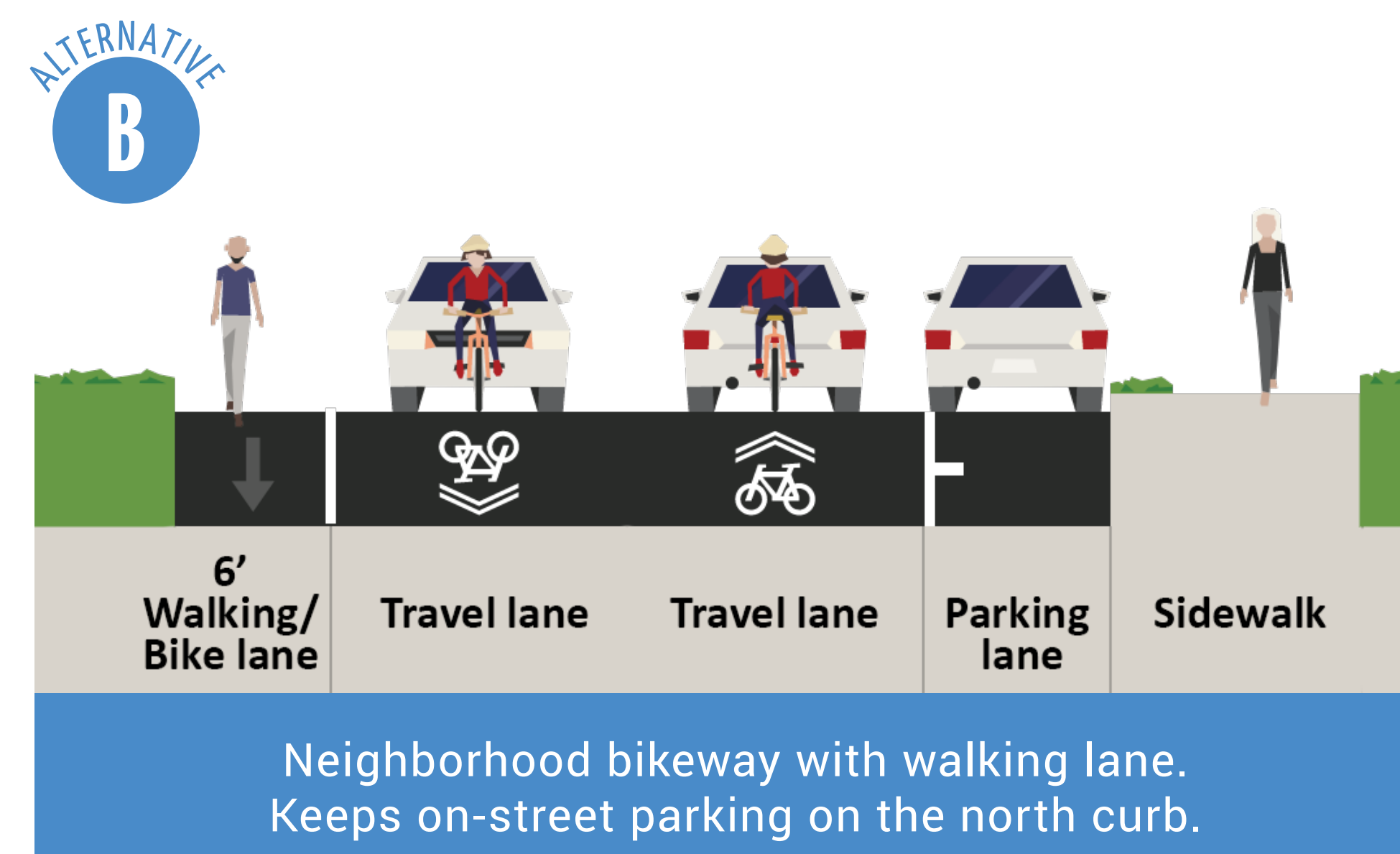
Currently, this section of West 31st Street/Shoal Creek Boulevard allows travel in both directions for motor vehicles. There is a sidewalk on the north side of the street and parking on the north curb. It is a [Level 1](#) (“local”) street with low motor vehicle volumes (less than 1,000 vehicles per day). The street sees higher use during the peak morning and evening periods for student drop-off and pick-up.

Below are typical cross-sections for three alternatives and different trade-offs to consider. The alternatives propose using the available street space on West 31st Street/Shoal Creek Boulevard since existing trees, steep slopes, and utility conflicts prevent constructing behind the south curb of the street.



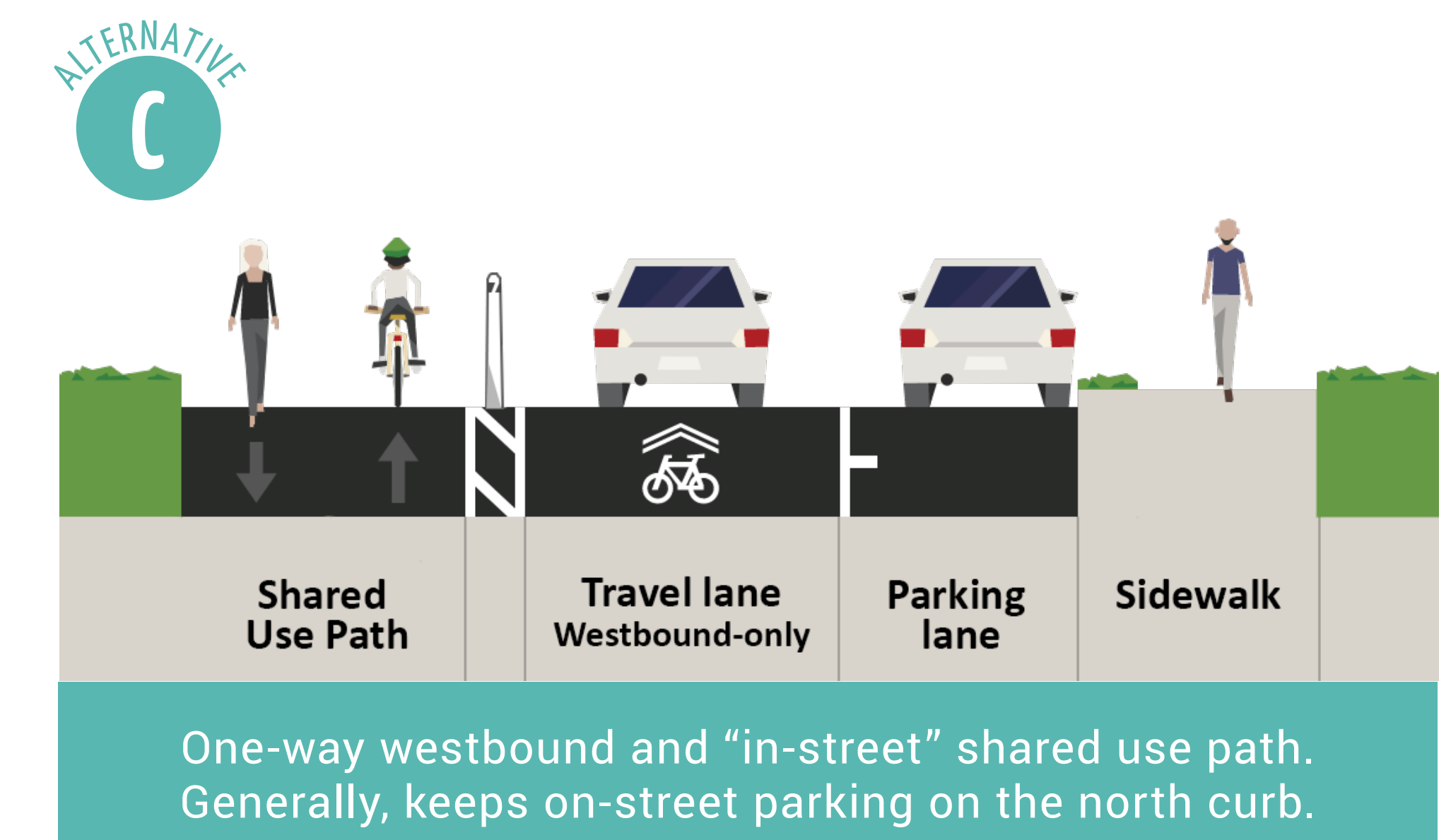
Alternative A proposes to make the trail connection by reconfiguring the street to provide an “in-street” shared use path on the south curb. This would require a parking restriction on the north curb. This proposal would maintain travel in both directions for motor vehicles and the existing sidewalk.

The Shoal Creek Vision to Action Plan, a community-driven plan for the Shoal Creek Trail, recommended completing this trail gap through an “in-street” shared use path.



Alternative B proposes a neighborhood bikeway with an eastbound bicycle/walking lane on the south curb. This would keep existing on-street parking on the north curb.

West 31st Street/Shoal Creek Boulevard meets neighborhood bikeway design guidelines for lower motor vehicle speeds (average speeds of 25 mph) and volumes (less than 1,000 vehicles per day), expect during school drop-off and pick-up peak times. Speed reduction devices are recommended to bring target speeds closer to 20 mph.



Alternative C proposes converting West 31st Street/Shoal Creek Boulevard to a one-way westbound general travel lane and an “in-street” shared use path on the south curb.

This would generally keep on-street parking on the north curb. Parking restrictions may be needed to accommodate longer motor vehicle queues at the middle school drop-off/pick-up loop.

