

City of Austin Urban Trails Master Plan

April 2014



Agenda:

- Definition of an Urban Trail
- Urban Trail Master Plan Goals
- Existing Urban Trails
- Public Input
- Design Criteria and Considerations
- Prioritization Matrix



Definition of an Urban Trail

A citywide network of non-motorized, multi-use pathways that are used by bicyclists, walkers and runners for both transportation and recreation purposes.

- Included in 2009 Bicycle Master Plan,
- Follows Imagine Austin,
- Considers definitions used by other communities, and
- Confirmed by Citizen Advisory Group and Technical Advisory Group.



Urban Trail Goals for Austin

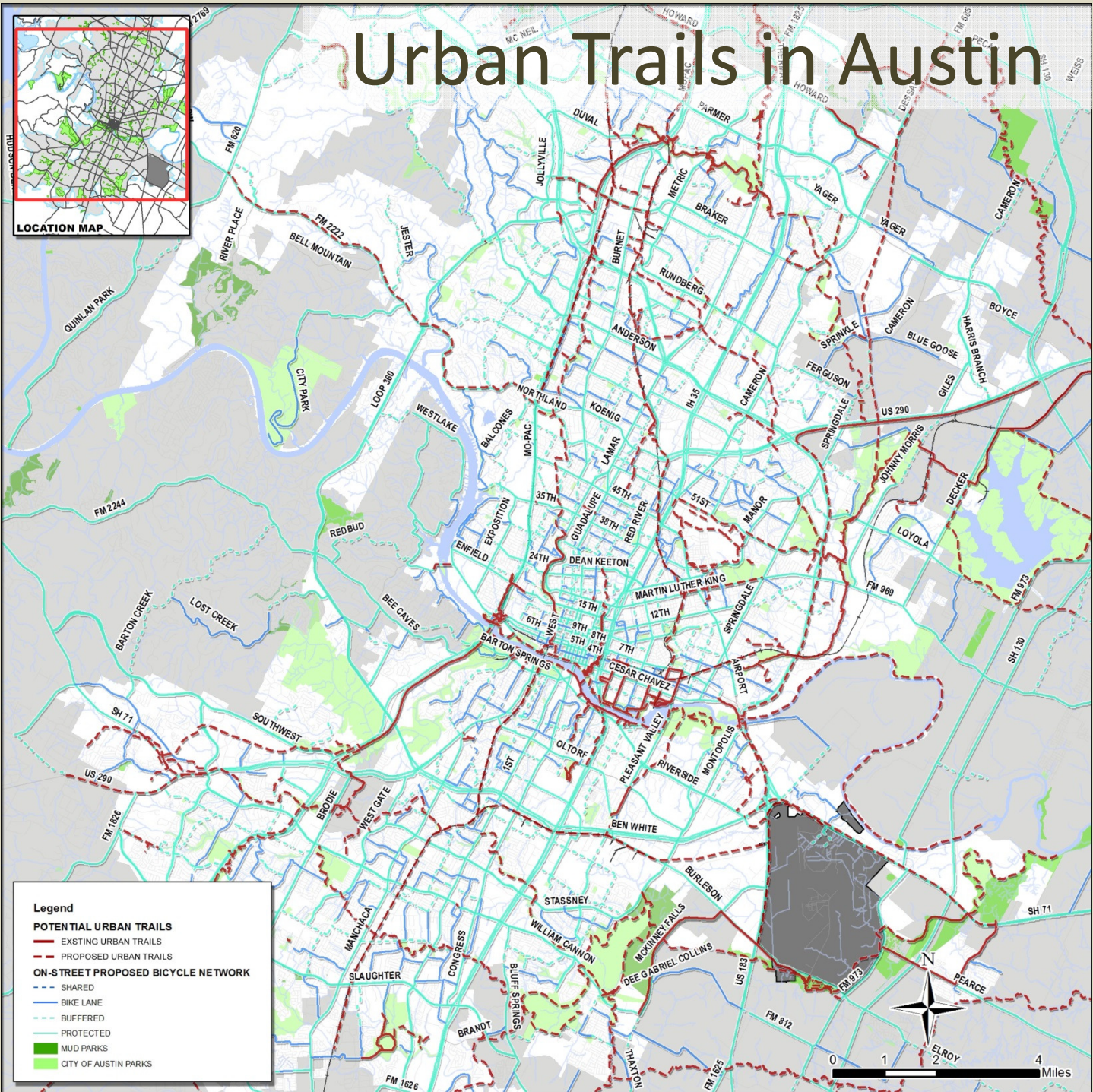
1. Provide **easy access** to urban trails for both transportation and recreation users.
2. **Connect** urban trails to the on-street bicycle network, sidewalk network, transit stops and bike share stations.
3. Ensure **adequate trail width** to accommodate both recreation and transportation uses.
4. Incorporate **trail amenities** and **features** that create unique, whimsical greenways.
5. Provide adequate funding and resources for **maintenance** and **operations**.
6. Ensure that all urban trails are **context-sensitive** and **environmentally sustainable**.



Existing Urban Trails in Austin

- About **300 miles of trails** of all types.
 - About **60 miles** of existing trails are defined as Urban Trails.
- Boardwalk Trail at Lady Bird Lake – 1 mile
 - Country Club Trail – 4 miles
 - Johnson Trail – 1 mile
 - LAB – 6 miles total (about 2 miles of Urban Trail)
 - Shoal Creek Trail – 8 miles
 - Southern Walnut Creek Trail – 6 miles
 - Northern Walnut Creek – 8 miles
 - US 290 Sidepath to Manor – 5 miles



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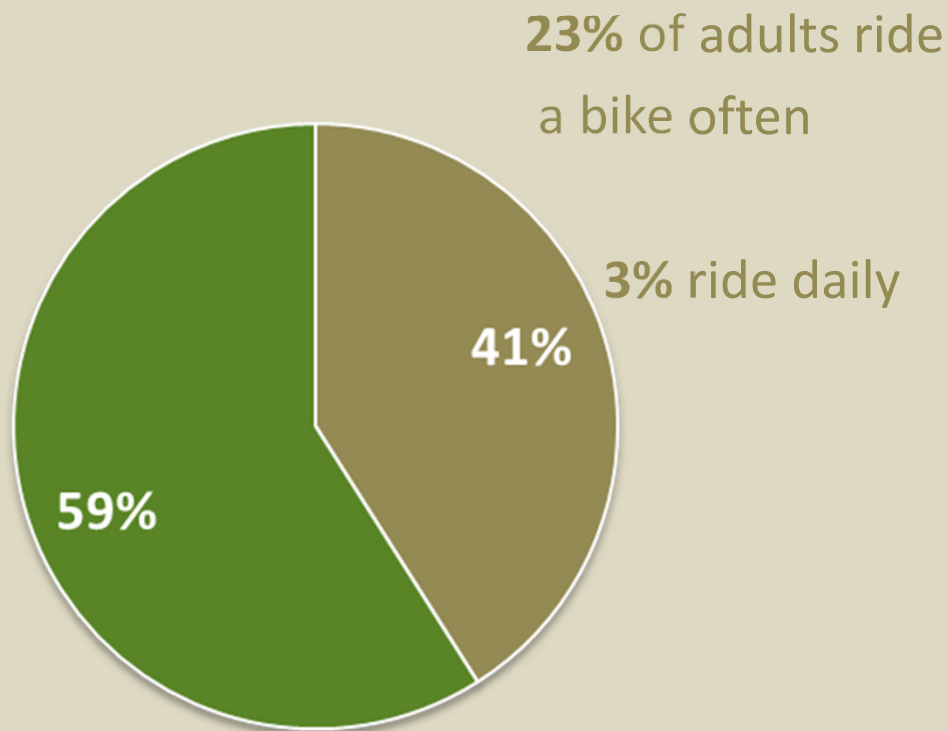
Public Input on Urban Trails

- Telephone survey (statistically relevant survey): 603 respondents
- Austin Urban Trail User survey: 189 respondents
- Online survey: 2,392 respondents
- 5 public meetings
 - Questionnaire: 105 respondents
 - Online Open House survey: 66 respondents

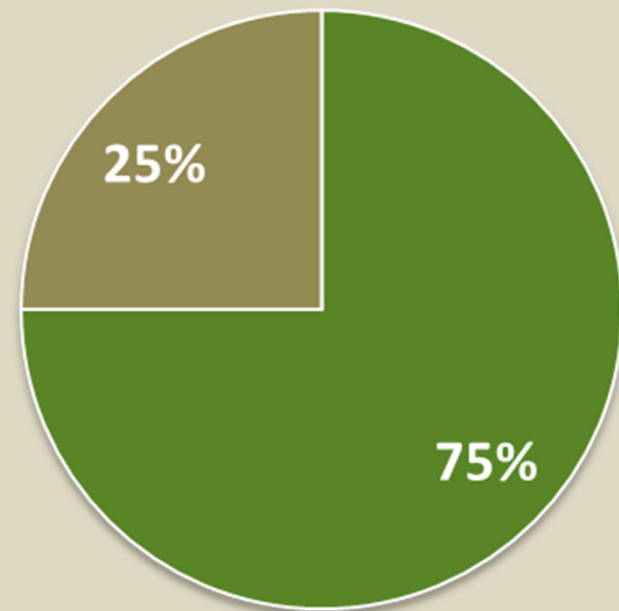


Public Input on Urban Trails

**41% of Adults
Ride Bikes in Austin**

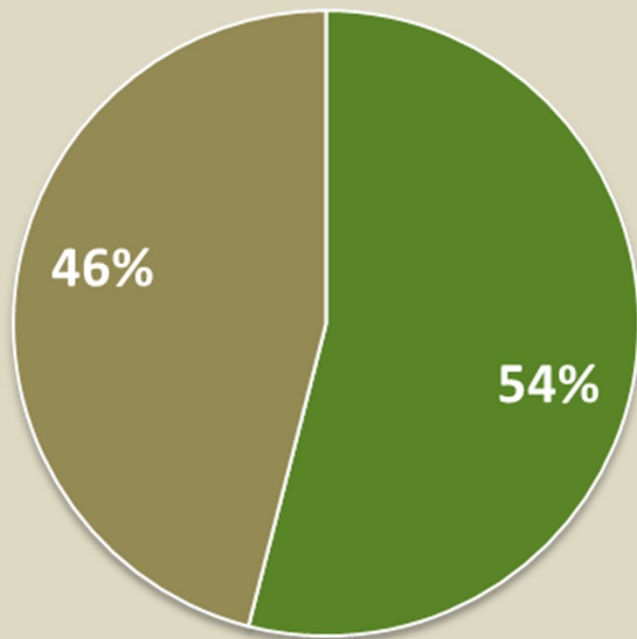


**Over 75% of Kids
Ride Bikes in Austin**

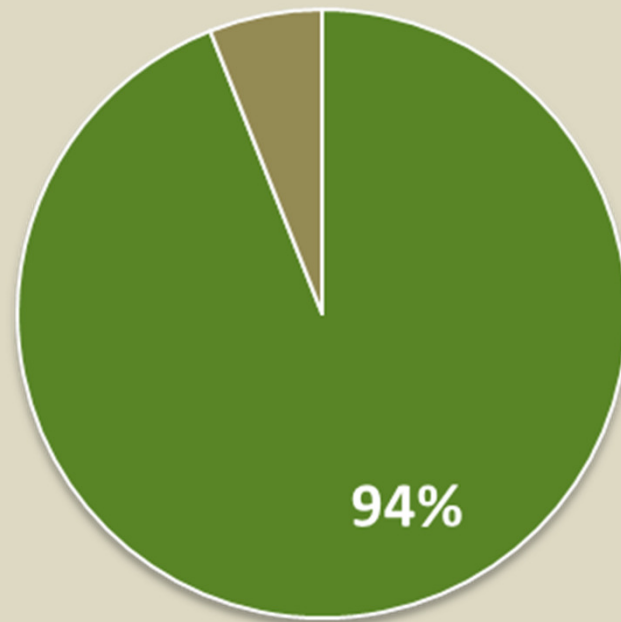


Public Input on Urban Trails

54% of people in Austin want to ride more

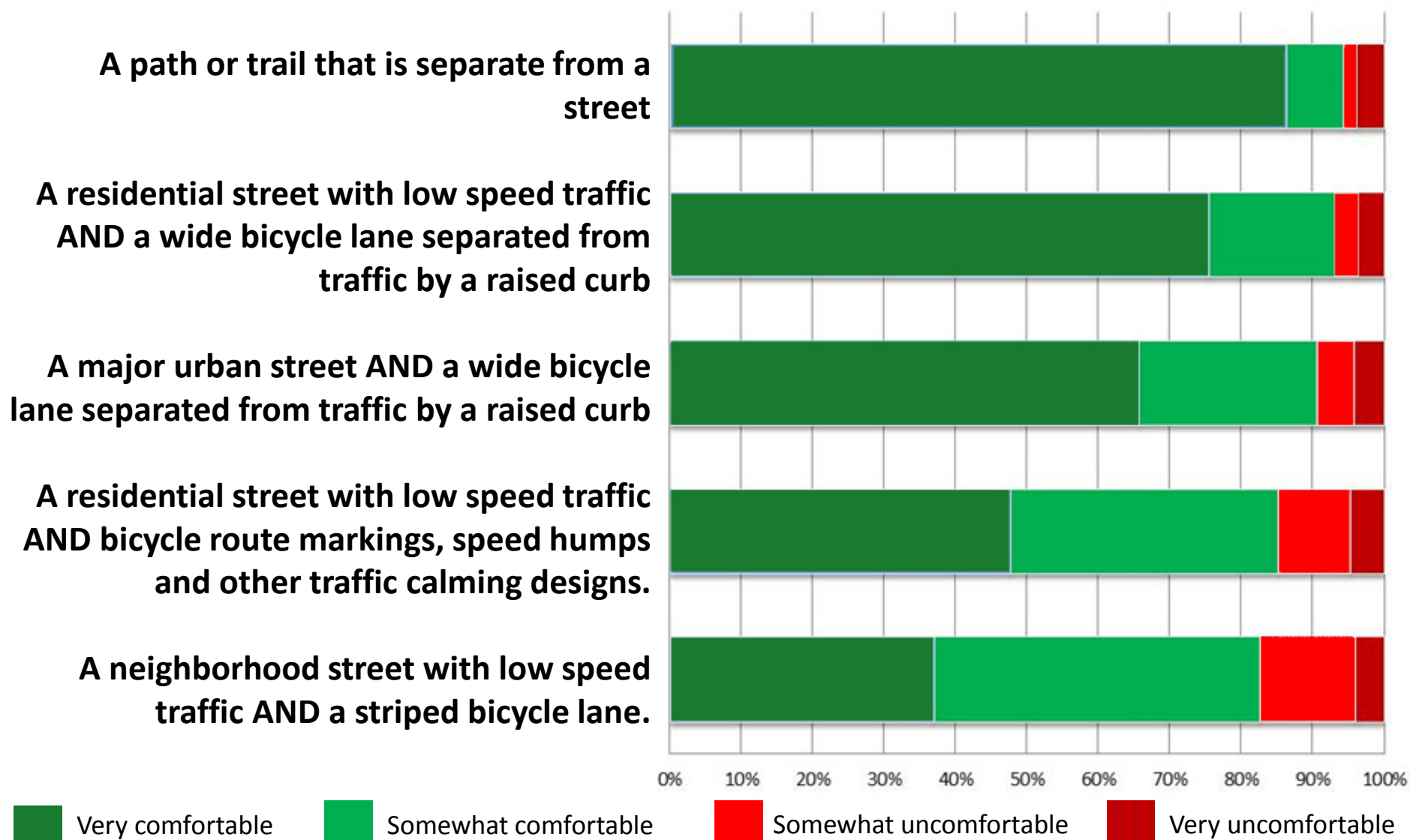


94% of bike enthusiasts feel comfortable riding on an Urban Trail
50% feel comfortable riding in a traditional striped bike lane



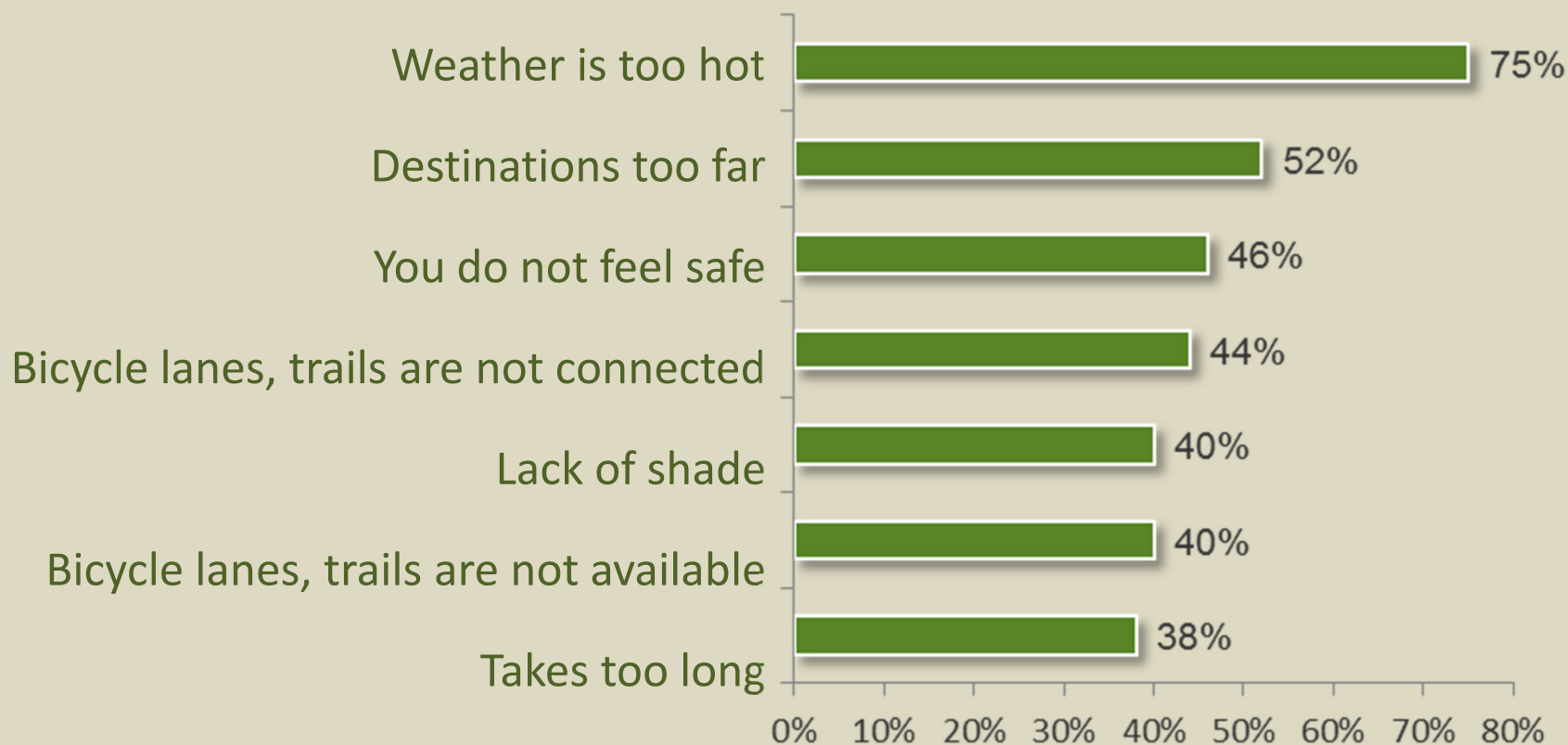
Public Input

Scenario Preferences



Public Input on Urban Trails

Top 7 barriers preventing people from riding a bike



Public Input on Urban Trails

Most Important Potential Improvements



The Austin Urban Trail



Southern Walnut Creek Trail

	Criteria
Minimum Width	12'
Minimum Shoulder	2'
Min. Vertical Clearance	10'
Maximum Cross Slope	2%
Maximum Grade	5% (8.25 % with handrails)



Dual Track Urban Trail



Source: American Trails



Source: American Trails

	Criteria
Minimum Width	8' for pedestrian side 10' for bicyclist side
Minimum Shoulder	5' user separation 2' shoulder
Vertical Clearance	10'
Maximum Cross Slope	2%
Maximum Grade	5%



Urban Trail Design Considerations

- Include **connections** to surrounding neighborhoods, businesses, places of employment, other trails, on-street network, public transit stops, bike share stations.
- Install **lighting** where appropriate to enhance security and nighttime accessibility.
- Design for **environmental preservation**:
 - Preserve trees or vegetation closer to the trail,
 - Incorporate scenic overlooks or pull-offs,
 - Incorporate smaller curve radii to preserve the scenic qualities of the corridor, and
 - Watershed Protection Ordinance supports Urban Trails.



Other Urban Trail Considerations

- Plan for security presence and **emergency access**
- **Location Markers & Wayfinding**
 - Orientation, distance, and travel time,
 - Provide safety information, and
 - Educate about trail etiquette.
- **Promote and provide incentives** for development of Urban Trail segments and connections
- **Create a sense of place**
 - Engage the community

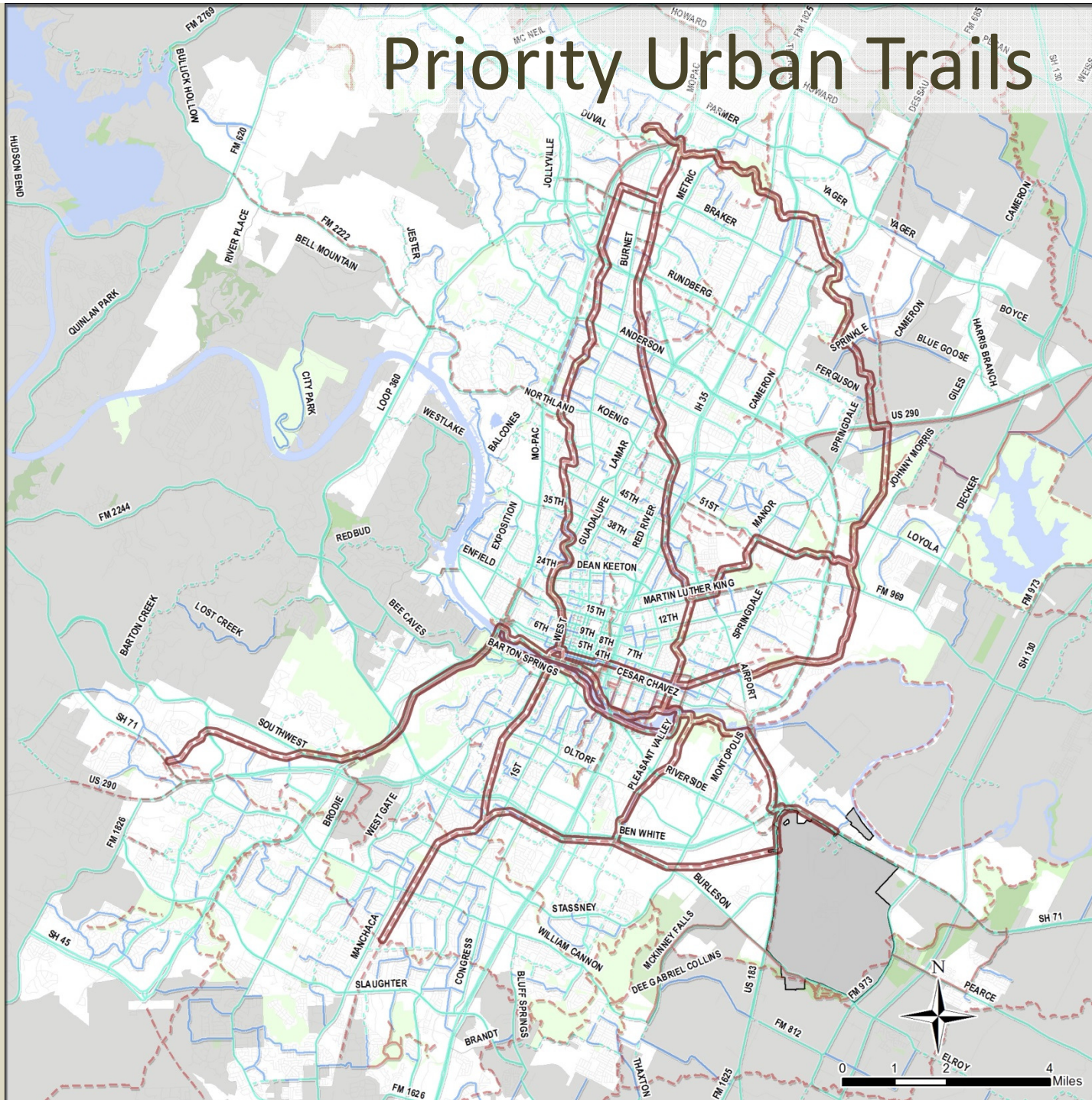


Urban Trail Corridors – Prioritization Criteria

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

- Uses a point system.
- Criteria are weighted to emphasize importance.

Priority Urban Trails



Timeline for Implementation

- April 8 – East ANC and Urban Transportation Commission
- April 14 – Land, Facilities, and Programs Committee (Parks and Recreation Board)
- April 15 –Bicycle Advisory Council
- April 16 – Environmental Board
- April 22 – Parks and Recreation Board
- May 1 – City Council (set public hearing)
- May 13 – Planning Commission
- May 22 – City Council (conduct public hearing)