

What process did the City use to reach this decision?

Austin Transportation Department (ATD) staff began a public process for Shoal Creek Boulevard in December 2018. [Input received during an initial community listening session and comment period](#) in December 2018 and January 2019 was used to understand issues along the street and to develop a range of options for community review. In March 2019, ATD shared five alternatives for Lower Shoal Creek Boulevard (38th Street to Foster Lane) and three alternatives for Upper Shoal Creek Boulevard (Foster Lane to US 183), including no build options, at a series of three open houses, which began a second comment period. Over 2,500 survey responses on these alternatives were received. ATD completed a thorough review and analysis of [all survey results](#), including open ended comments and emails to staff. Community input was considered alongside policy direction, engineering/project constraints, and opportunities for improvements along Shoal Creek Boulevard to reach a decision.

Why has the City selected a build alternative (Alternative E - two-way protected bikeway) for the lower section of Shoal Creek Boulevard?

For the lower section of Shoal Creek Boulevard, significant support was received for Alternative A (No Build), with 653 respondents ranking this alternative as their #1 choice and 933 respondents reporting that they are “very comfortable” or “somewhat comfortable” with this option. Stronger support was received for Alternative E, with 974 respondents ranking Alternative E as their #1 choice and 1,482 respondents reporting being “very comfortable” or “somewhat comfortable” with Alternative E. In addition to the analysis of public feedback, a policy analysis was completed. Alternative E aligns with Austin City Council-adopted policies, including the newly adopted [Austin Strategic Mobility Plan \(ASMP\)](#) and its 50/50 mode share goal (shifting from 74% driving alone to 50% driving alone), the [Complete Streets Policy](#), and the [Bicycle](#) and [Urban Trails](#) plans.

Why has the City selected Alternative Y for the upper section of Shoal Creek Boulevard?

For the upper section of Shoal Creek Boulevard, both Alternative Y and Z received strong public support. Alternative Z received 1,115 #1 choice rankings. Alternative Y received 643 #1 choice rankings. Additionally, Alternative Y had 2,070 respondents ranking this alternative as either their first or second choice. Alternative Z had 1,578 respondents ranking this alternative as either their first or second choice. In addition to public feedback and policy analysis, Alternative Y was selected after further technical evaluation of intersection operations for both alternatives.

Additional traffic analysis determined that heavy motor vehicle movements to and from Mopac Expressway at the Shoal Creek Boulevard and Anderson Lane intersection would result in the two-way bikeway on the west side (Alternative Z) receiving limited green time to cross the intersection (approximately 15 seconds of a 150 second cycle). This limited green time window would be the result of the two-way bikeway requiring exclusive signal time to safely cross the northbound left turn volumes and the high southbound right turn volumes. Additionally, the exclusive time needed for the two-way bikeway would increase motor vehicle signal delay. The Shoal Creek Boulevard and Anderson Lane intersection is already at capacity and there was concern that additional delay would impact intersection operations at Mopac frontage road. Alternative Y will give people riding bicycles full access to the needed green time at this signal without creating any additional intersection delay.

How did the City decide which intersections will receive new pedestrian improvements as part of this project?

During the initial December 2018 listening session and first comment period, input was solicited about issues with the street, including at existing intersections and where pedestrian crossings should be improved along Shoal Creek Boulevard. From this input, ATD staff developed intersection designs at major intersections and a list of proposed pedestrian crossing improvement locations, which were shared alongside the draft alternatives in March 2019. As part of the second survey and comment period, feedback was solicited on these proposed improvements, as well as any additional intersections that may have been missed. From the survey data collected during the second comment period, a list of pedestrian improvement locations ([see fact sheet](#)) was finalized. These improvements include new crossings, improvements to existing crossings, and new sidewalks.

What was the preferred alternative of people who live on Shoal Creek Boulevard?

The alternatives survey asked respondents how they use Shoal Creek Boulevard. Of those who identified as living on Shoal Creek Boulevard, the preferred alternative was Alternative A (No Build). Alternative A was the #1 choice of 205 of 292 survey respondents who said they live on Shoal Creek Boulevard.

How did the City communicate with property owners and residents along Shoal Creek about this project and the opportunities to share input?

In advance of the December listening session and the March open houses, notifications were mailed to approximately 1,400 recipients along and near Shoal Creek Boulevard, inviting the community to participate in the public process. City staff posted yard signs on Shoal Creek Boulevard and shared invitations to the listening session and open houses with local media, as well as on Nextdoor, in City newsletters, and on social media. Contacts at all registered community organizations with the City's Community Registry near the project area were notified by email.

Will this decision go to Austin City Council for approval?

This project will not go to Austin City Council for approval. The selection of the build alternatives aligns with City Council adopted policies and is under the authority of the City Traffic Engineer, who makes changes to City streets to best manage mobility and safety in alignment with Council adopted policies. Project implementation will utilize both in-house operations and existing construction contracts.

What process was used to screen for multiple entries on the March/April alternatives survey?

All Internet Protocol (IP) addresses were checked for multiple responses to control for survey abuse. If an IP address had more than two responses, the most recent two were collected and included in the data set. Of 2,599 total online survey responses, 220 responses were removed for IP address abuse. IP addresses with multiple responses from Austin Transportation Department tablets at the March open houses were all included in the data set.

Where can I review the survey results?

All survey data is available on the [project website](#).

Why is the City building this project now?

ATD initiated this project in advance of regular street maintenance, which happens on average every 10 years and is scheduled for Shoal Creek Boulevard in 2019. When roads are resurfaced, the existing lines are covered, providing a "blank slate" to reconfigure the street space if there is an opportunity to provide a safer, more accessible option for all street users. Projects can be implemented with significant cost savings by coordinating changes to a street with routine street maintenance.

Is the proposed underpass at 2222 included in the project?

A new underpass presented as part of Alternative E on the west side of Shoal Creek Boulevard crossing under 2222 for people walking and people riding bicycles received high levels of overall support. The City is moving forward with this option. Further design will be required before this improvement moves into construction to ensure that codes are met, including resulting in no impact to the floodplain level. In the interim, the City will have the two-way bikeway at grade supported by bicycle signals while the underpass is being designed and constructed. Lighting of the trail underpass will also be examined further during design.

How much will this project cost?

The project is estimated to cost between \$3 million and \$4 million. The primary funding source is the Bikeways program of the [2016 Mobility Bond](#), which was passed by Austin voters in November 2016. Supplemental funding is also being contributed from partner programs, including but not limited to Sidewalks, Urban Trails, Safe Routes to School, the Pedestrian Crossings program of the 2018 Bond, and the Street Maintenance Program. Coordinated project delivery between these partners will reduce the overall cost to each program.

When is construction starting?

Construction is scheduled to begin this summer in coordination with planned street resurfacing. Project stakeholders will receive regular email updates on anticipated construction schedules, including planned locations and sequencing of work.

How long will it take to build this project?

The project is anticipated to be constructed in phases. The first phase will immediately follow street resurfacing this summer and includes the concrete and signal work necessary to activate Alternative E and Alternative Y. This first phase of construction is anticipated to take 6 - 9 months. During this first phase, construction at the intersections of 38th Street, 45th Street, Hancock Drive, and the 2222 interim design is estimated to take 2 - 10 weeks per location. The second phase of construction will include work at the remaining non-critical intersections and pedestrian improvements. In following phases, the underpass at 2222 and the proposed raised concrete curb on the lower section of Shoal Creek Boulevard will be constructed as soon as possible after the additional analysis and coordination required for these features is completed.

What are the benefits of a two-way protected bikeway?

Statistically valid survey data taken in Austin shows that only 15% of Austin's population is willing to ride in a painted bicycle lane, however 55 - 60% are willing to ride in a bicycle lane that has physical protection from motor vehicle traffic. In short, four times as many people will consider taking a bicycle trip on a street with a protected bicycle lane. Local analysis of crash data for nine similar two-way protected bicycle lanes on other Austin two-way streets shows no average increase in total bicycle crashes and a 30% decrease in crashes for all modes. Similar two-way protected bikeway projects have also seen a 2 - 3 miles per hour reduction in vehicle speeds after the project was installed.

Why did the width of the two-way protected bikeway change from the initial March proposal?

In response to concerns regarding the proposed width of the two-way bikeway to accommodate existing levels of use, including high levels of recreational bicycle use, the bikeway width was increased from 10 feet to 11 feet by reducing the width of the proposed bikeway barrier to 1.5 feet and the on-street parking lane to 7.5 feet. Typical residential street parking dimensions are between 7 - 8 feet.

What type of protection will you be using to separate the bikeway from the general purpose lanes?

For the barrier on the lower section, ATD is pursuing a raised concrete curb for protection between the two-way bikeway and general purpose travel lanes. ATD is beginning a drainage study to confirm the specific design of the raised curb, which could take 6 - 12 months. In the interim, the new roadway design will be installed with concrete buttons and flex posts. In the upper section, flex posts will be used for the physical barrier for the protected bicycle lanes.

Why does the City need a drainage study for the proposed raised curb on the lower section of Shoal Creek Boulevard and could the study's outcome impact moving forward with Alternative E?

The drainage study will evaluate the proposed raised curb against requirements in Austin's Drainage Criteria Manual. The study could result in localized modification of the proposed concrete barrier, and may also necessitate that sections of the interim protection (concrete buttons and flex posts) remain to meet drainage needs. The results of the drainage study will not affect the decision to implement Alternative E.

If I live on the west side of Shoal Creek Boulevard, how will trash and recycling be picked up in front of my house?

Both interim protection (traffic buttons / flex posts) and proposed final protection (raised concrete curb) will be designed so Austin Resource Recovery vehicles can access collection bins at the curb the same way they are serviced today.

Will the City need to buy any private property to build this project?

The City will not need to acquire any private property or piece of private property to build this project.

Will the speed limit be changed as part of this project?

The speed limit will not be changed at this time, however speeds are expected to reduce in both the lower and upper sections of Shoal Creek Boulevard with a narrower effective travel lane width and new physical bikeway protection, which will necessitate that people driving cars stay in travel lanes around curves. Similar street designs have resulted in a 2 - 3 miles per hour average speed reduction. After the project is completed, a speed study may be conducted to evaluate whether a new speed limit could be considered.

How will street parking be impacted by this project?

On the lower section of Shoal Creek Boulevard, street parking will be removed on the west side of the street to make room for the two-way protected bikeway. Parking will remain on the east side of the street with some parking restrictions at the new pedestrian crossing locations. While density of parking will increase on the east side with the parking removal on the west side, no overall displacement of parking is anticipated. Average parking utilization was observed to be between 4 and 7 percent, with a maximum of 44 percent on a given block.

Access to parking for people who live along the street was a frequently raised concern. Over the last 10 years, over 100 local projects citywide have successfully consolidated parking to one side of the street to balance safety and mobility for all road users. The project is anticipated to reduce traffic speeds by 2 - 3 miles per hour and the new shorter crossing distances will provide improved opportunities to cross the street.

How does this project connect to surrounding trails and bicycle facilities?

The south end of the project will connect to the Shoal Creek Trail that currently ends just north of 38th Street and a new two-way protected bikeway over the 38th Street bridge to neighborhoods to the west of Shoal Creek. The north side of the project will connect to the recently constructed trail which connects under US 183 to the UT Pickle campus. Within the project limits, connections to cross street bike lanes will be made at intersections and pedestrian crossing islands will be installed at key locations, including Far West trail extension and Northwest District Park.

Will the US 183 crossing be improved as part of this project?

Throughout the public process for this project, the City heard concerns regarding the new underpass crossing at US 183 as part of the Mopac North project, which requires trail users to cross the frontage road turnaround twice. After hearing these concerns, crews working for the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA) completed construction of the trail and activated enhanced crossing features, including active warning flashers. The City has confirmed that the crossing is working as intended with these new crossing enhancements. City staff will continue to monitor the US 183 crossing.

Will any trees be impacted to build this project?

Tree impacts are generally not anticipated. Detailed design of the undercrossing at 2222 will determine if any non-protected trees would be impacted or require mitigation.

Why isn't a new signal at 45th Street being included as part of this project?

During both comment periods ATD received requests for a new signal at 45th Street and Shoal Creek Boulevard. Past study of a possible signal at this intersection has raised safety concerns due to the roadway curvature and available sight distance. Further feasibility of this signal will be evaluated separately from this project.

How do I share my feedback on this decision?

Questions, concerns, or comments can be emailed to Emily Tuttle at Emily.Tuttle@austintexas.gov

UPDATED JUNE 24, 2019

Why are there bicycle symbols in the general travel lanes for the Lower Shoal Creek Alternative E?

In the second phase of public engagement Alternative E was presented with bicycle symbols in the general travel lanes to acknowledge that some confident, faster moving cyclists may continue to use the travel lane. Shared markings could be added after major intersections.

UPDATED JULY 12, 2019

How is this project being coordinated with upcoming Austin Water Utility work between 47th Street and North Park Drive?

Three Austin Water projects will affect portions of Shoal Creek Boulevard between 47th Street and North Park Drive that are anticipated to be constructed within the period of 2020 - 2025. Austin Transportation and Austin Water Utility are coordinating the projects to keep safe multimodal access available throughout the duration of Austin Water Utility's work and to optimize approaches for both projects to best use City resources.

What coordination has taken place between Austin Transportation and Austin Fire regarding the design of this project?

Austin Transportation and Austin Fire routinely coordinate street improvements in service of public safety, both to ensure safer design for daily users of the street as well as adequate provisions for emergency response needs. Coordination is currently underway regarding the planned geometric changes to the roadway for this project.

How will the transition from the two-way bikeway to one-way protected bike lanes work at the intersection of Foster Lane and Shoal Creek Boulevard? What about the transition to the one-way protected bicycle lanes and the trail at US 183?

At both locations the combination of stop control (stop signs) and new protected intersection designs will result in shorter, more predictable crossings for people walking or riding bikes. At Foster Lane, the protected intersection will allow a person on a bike traveling northbound to comfortably prepare to cross Shoal Creek Boulevard behind protective concrete curbing at the all-way stop and then proceed to the southeast corner to comfortably prepare to cross Foster Lane at the all-way stop. A similar movement would be available for a person on a bike traveling northbound approaching US 183 where there will be space to comfortably prepare to cross Shoal Creek Boulevard at the stop control. A person on a bike traveling southbound would not have to cross Shoal Creek Boulevard at either intersection.

UPDATED AUGUST 9, 2019

Why is the street being resurfaced in segments at different times, rather than the entire length all at once?

The location and timing of street resurfacing depends on the planned work in a particular segment of street. Segments where intersection construction will occur (US 183, Foster, 2222, 45th Street and 38th Street) will be resurfaced after the intersection construction is complete, which is anticipated to be spring of 2020. Segments falling within three future Austin Water Utility (AWU) projects will be resurfaced after the underground utility work is complete, which is anticipated to be between 2020-2025, depending on the project. In these segments, interim marking removal and spot resurfacing is being done to facilitate the installation of the new street design before AWU's projects are complete.

For the first phase of work in the next 6-9 months, what is the sequence of installation activity happening on the street and when?

First, the pavement is being prepared for resurfacing and restriping. This preparatory work includes removing markings and making spot repairs. This work started in late July and will continue through August and September. Once markings are removed, the street will be resurfaced in areas where intersection or utility work is not planned near-term ([see the Pavement Treatment map](#)). Resurfacing is anticipated to start in mid-August through the end of the month. The resurfacing process requires a "cure" period after which the street markings will be installed in September/October. Intersection work is anticipated to start in early September, starting with Foster Lane, which is expected to take approximately 6-8 weeks to complete at this location. The sequence of the next intersection work will depend on crew availability, weather, and permitting and is expected to take between 1-3 months per location. Once an intersection is complete, the bikeway and pedestrian crossings in that segment will be installed and opened. The first segment of bikeway anticipated to be opened is between US 183 to Foster Ln. Additional segments will be opened as intersection work is completed. Sidewalk work will follow intersection work. To review planned sidewalk work, [see the Pedestrian Improvements map](#).

UPDATED SEPTEMBER 5, 2019

Why did the City move forward with a public process to determine if any changes should be made to Shoal Creek Boulevard given the utility work is planned for 2020-2025?

Many opportunities to make safety or mobility improvements are predicated on the ability to resurface a street. The entirety of Shoal Creek Boulevard will be resurfaced and a majority of the street (3.3 miles of the 5.2 miles in the project area) will be resurfaced this summer. Once the alternatives were advanced as a result of this project's public process, coordination with Austin Water Utility followed to determine the best sequencing of work to ensure responsible use of City taxpayer dollars. The 1.9 miles that include investments in water utility projects will be resurfaced immediately following the utility work, and the resurfacing will include a mill and overlay treatment, which replaces the pavement surface entirely. The Austin Transportation Department and Austin Water Utility are coordinating to enable the installation of the street improvements ahead of the planned utility improvements so the two-way protected bikeway is continuous from 38th Street to Foster Lane, improving street safety along the entire length of Shoal Creek Boulevard.

UPDATED OCTOBER 25, 2019

Why is the project adding pedestrian crossings and what will they look like?

During the public process for this project, ATD received feedback on a number of locations where improvements to pedestrian crossings were desired at busy intersections and access points to better connect to schools, trailheads, parks, and other nearby destinations. Pedestrian crossings have multiple benefits. These crossings allow someone walking across the street to first cross one half of the roadway and then the other. The pedestrian crossings also help drivers slow down and encourages better yielding behavior. Pedestrian crossings on Shoal Creek Boulevard will first be installed using flex posts, which offer a temporary way to define the space as people become familiar with the new crossings. Several of these crossings may be replaced with concrete islands in a future phase of the project. For more information about benefits and locations of these pedestrian islands, see the [Pedestrian Crossing Islands fact sheet](#).

UPDATED FEBRUARY 10, 2020

How have motor vehicle speeds changed as a result of the new street design?

During the initial phase of community feedback for this project in December 2018 and January 2019, ATD received hundreds of responses that slower motor vehicle speeds would make Shoal Creek Boulevard a safer and more comfortable place to be. Initial analysis of motor vehicle speeds on Shoal Creek Boulevard before and after installation of the new street design between US 183 and Shoalmont Drive shows a significant reduction in high-risk speeding. On Shoal Creek Boulevard between US 183 and Foster Lane, high-risk speeding has reduced by 70% and in the section between Foster Lane and Shoalmont Drive high-risk speeding has reduced by 80%. On a residential street like Shoal Creek Boulevard, high-risk speeding is considered speeds 5 miles per hour or more over the posted limit. ATD will reassess speeds after completion of the full project to confirm these benefits are sustained.