



Complete Streets News – changes in program management and a look ahead to 2017

Winter 2017

The Complete Streets Program is now part of the [Transportation Systems Development Division](#) of the Austin Transportation Department (ATD). The Division is responsible for transportation planning, transportation demand management programming, and capital project development. As part of a complementary suite of programs within the Division, the Complete Streets Program will thrive through the benefit of additional resources with a focus towards stronger policy implementation strategies to realize complete and safer streets. For example, synergies between the Division's [Air Quality Program](#), [Transportation Planning and Demand Management Programs](#) will advance and evolve Complete Streets policy implementation.

The Complete Streets Program will also be supported by other Divisions within ATD and throughout the City of Austin in coordination with the System Development Division. For example, the [Active Transportation and Street Design Division](#) will assist with implementation of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements towards the advancement of the Complete Streets policy. ATD's Transportation Engineering and Arterial Management Divisions manage several mobility and safety program which further contribute to the implementation of the Complete Streets Policy, such as the [Local Area Traffic Management](#) (traffic calming) program and management of the City's accessible pedestrian signals.

In 2017, several initiatives instrumental to progress on implementation of multimodal complete streets will be the primary focus of the Division, including the [Street Design Guide](#), the [Austin Strategic Mobility Plan](#), and proactive development review. Below are more details on each initiative and its relationship to implementation of the Complete Streets Policy.

Austin Street Design Guide

The goal of the Austin Street Design Guide is to provide consistent and predictable guidelines to City staff and private-sector professionals tasked with reviewing proposed designs and/or designing Austin roads themselves. Whether planning for the retrofit of an existing street, or planning for a new street, this guide is a first step in the application of a consistent and predictable approach to multimodal street design. The guide was developed throughout 2016 by the Austin Transportation Department in coordination with other City Departments. Staff anticipates completing the Guide by March 2017 and piloting the guide for the remainder of 2017. City staff, the development community, and neighborhood organizations are encouraged to use the guide as they work on street design, as it may come up through development applications throughout the year.

This guide is not a replacement for the Transportation Criteria Manual (TCM). The Street Design Guide is meant to provide modern guidance on street design locally, and provide a consistent platform to begin discussion and negotiations regarding street design. At the close of the Street Design Guide pilot, ATD staff will review feedback received and make final adjustments to the guides' approach and recommended street cross

sections. The final outcome will be to amend the TCM to include an updated approach to street design and new cross sections that were developed during the Street Design Guide pilot phase.

Staff anticipates completing the guide in spring 2017 at which point information on how to participate in the Street Design Pilot program will be released. For more information, visit the [Austin Street Design Guide webpage](#).

Austin Strategic Mobility Plan

In September 2016, the Austin City Council authorized funding for an update to the City's transportation plan. Our current transportation plan, the [Austin Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan \(AMATP\)](#), was adopted in 1995 and needs to be updated to reflect the multimodal vision established in [Imagine Austin](#). Staff anticipates a public launch of the [Austin Strategic Mobility Plan \(ASMP\)](#) process in early 2017. The ASMP will focus on:

- Expanding the Imagine Austin transportation vision into actionable mobility-related goals and objectives.
- Identifying ways to improve efficiencies in our existing system, manage demand, and strategically add capacity for all modes.
- An integrated approach to planning for all modes of our transportation system.
- Treating transportation access and mobility as essential to quality of life for Austin residents.
- Performance measures to track the City's progress and ensure accountability.
- Considering technological advances shaping the 21st century transportation system.
- An update to Austin's roadway table through a context-sensitive functional classification update to inform updates to street cross-sections in the Transportation Criteria Manual.

The planning process will take approximately 18 months to complete, with ASMP completion targeted for winter 2017 and the plan review and adoption process in spring 2018. For more information Please visit [AustinTexas.gov/ASMP](#).

Proactive Development Review

The Transportation Systems Development Division focuses not only on long-range and regional planning, but also on current planning and associated development review. A new component to the Complete Streets Program in 2017 will be the addition of a Senior Planner on staff to proactively participate in the development review process. In coordination with the Development Services Department, this staff person will be tasked with implementing the Complete Streets Policy through the development process.

Enhancing and Promoting Complete Streets through Education

Finally, it is important to note that while the focus in 2017 will be on strengthening Complete Streets policy implementation in the areas of street design and overall transportation planning and development review, the department will continue our efforts in multimodal transportation-focused education through presentations, forums, and targeted programs on the topic of the need for and potential benefits of a balanced and equitable multimodal transportation network. Here is a look at key Complete Streets educational efforts completed in 2016:

Planning Commission/Zoning and Platting Commission Presentation

[Click here to view the presentation](#)

In March of 2016 Austin Transportation Department and the Development Services Department partnered to brief the Commissions on multiple ongoing transportation related initiatives. These initiatives service multiple purposes related to the development and improvement of the transportation network, but also all contribute towards implementation of the City's Complete Streets policy.

The Tumlin Report

[Click here to view the Tumlin Report](#)

Jeffrey Tumlin of Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Services, an internationally renowned transportation firm, who is considered one of the pre-eminent experts in urban transportation nationally and internationally, conducted an independent review of the Austin Transportation Department. In meetings with Mr. Tumlin during and after the review, he communicated that he saw the Austin Transportation Department as a national leader in municipal transportation management, specifically due to our willingness to innovate and address longstanding inequities in the transportation network. He also gave a nod to our portfolio of Complete Streets related programs and efforts. The report was completed and distributed in June 2016 after extensive interviews and conversation with key City administrators, managers, and policy makers, making the review process and report educative to all involved.

CodeNEXT Mobility Prescription Paper

[Click here to view the CodeNEXT Mobility Prescription Paper](#)

In Summer 2016 the Austin Transportation Department, in coordination with the Planning and Zoning Department and as part of the CodeNEXT process, led the creation of the Mobility Prescription Paper. The Paper was [presented to the Mobility Committee](#) of the Austin City Council on in October 2016 and served to accent how the new land development code and associated and concurrent transportation regulatory update projects (Street Design Guide and Austin Strategic Mobility Plan) are consistent with the City's Complete Streets policy.

Smart Trips Austin

[Click here to learn more about the Smart Trips Program](#)

An important educational focus for 2016 took the form of evolving the Smart Trips Austin program, in partnership with Capital Metro, and educating the community about transportation options and encouraging them to use them. In this way we manage traffic and maximize our return on investment in the development and implementation of Complete Streets infrastructure, such as sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and transit related enhancements. In 2016 Smart Trips Austin focused its goal to reduce single occupant vehicle trips by five percent and increase walking, bicycling, transit ridership, and carpooling by five percent to households in central Austin. The program will expand to new areas of the City in 2017.

It's going to be a very busy 2017 for the continued implementation of the City's Complete Streets policy.

For questions about the Complete Streets Program please contact Cole Kitten at cole.kitten@austintexas.gov or 512-974-6442.