CRITICAL NEXT STEPS
AURA recommends the following actions over the course of the year to jump start Austin’s transition to a transit-oriented city.

1. Include a ballot proposition in November to fully fund the Bicycle Master Plan as well as all High Priority sidewalks in Austin’s Sidewalk Master Plan through municipal bonds.

2. Allow and promote abundant housing near existing transit. Council should not wait on CodeNEXT to enact sensible reforms that give more people the ability to live in Austin’s high-opportunity neighborhoods.

3. Reduce parking minimums throughout the city, and eliminate them entirely in the University Neighborhood Overlay. Enact parking maximums downtown.

4. Improve and extend existing transit priority lanes by 2017: 1) South across the 1st Street Bridge until the intersection of Riverside and Congress and 2) North on Guadalupe until 38th Street.

5. Build generous stations similar to those at Houston’s MetroRail and Dallas’s DART rail platforms at Austin’s busiest bus hubs like the 4th Street/Republic Square and West Mall stops by 2017. They should be sufficiently long and wide to comfortably provide shelter to all riders at peak times. Substantially increase the number of stops with basic shelters throughout the city. The design of these shelters must prioritize effectively shielding riders from sun and rain at a reasonable cost so that as many as possible can be built.

6. Replace free parking for public employees with a cash benefit of equal value; look for ways to incentivize private employers to do the same.

7. End premium fares for MetroRapid and flyer routes. There should be one fare for all local bus service.

8. Implement a multi-line, high-frequency core transit network with physically separated lanes. This process can be expedited by using existing data and studies and should begin this year.

9. Alter street standards to better accommodate pedestrian movement. Elements like curb extensions at intersections and bus stops, 10 foot vehicle lanes, minimal turning radii, and high-visibility crosswalks should be the default design whenever major street reconstructions occur, in accordance with NACTO standards.

10. Begin a long-term plan to complete Austin’s broken street grid and prevent future megablocks.

Transit Vision: Towards a Transit-Oriented Austin
Who We Are
We are a grassroots organization made up of Austinites from all over. We share a love for Austin and a desire to make the city as welcoming and inclusive as possible.

What We Believe
We believe that anyone who wants to become an Austinite should have the opportunity to do so. We believe that better land use and transportation policy can make Austin greener, more affordable, and more livable.

What We Do
We advocate for improving Austin’s land use and transportation policies by reaching out to lawmakers, producing and publishing policy analysis, and participating in public outreach and engagement.

Become a member at www.aura-atx.org

The AURA Board
Susan Somers, President
Tommy Ates
Timothy Bray
Eric Goff
Andrew Houston
Mary Pustejovsky
Stephanie Trinh
Chris “Kaz” Wojtewicz
Steven Yarak

Transit Vision Committee
Carrie Gammell
Seth Goodman
John Laycock
Roger Cauvin
Robert Prentiss

Copyright 2016 AURA Austin
Contents

7  Where We Stand Today
8  Why Transit?
10 Pedestrian Infrastructure
12 Bicycle Network
14 City Planning
16 Bus Operations
18 Core Network
20 Coverage & Commuter Service
22 Policy & Funding
24 Urban Rail

26 Footnotes
Austin’s population and traffic are on the rise, yet the share of Austinites getting around by transit is decreasing. Furthermore, housing shortages in the urban core are forcing Austinites away from areas best served by transit.

Ridership on Capital Metro has remained flat over the past ten years even as the number of potential customers has greatly increased. Meanwhile, traffic delay experienced by the average driver has returned to its pre-recession peak. While Austin struggles, other large American cities have made progress in shifting to other transportation modes.

Austin’s transportation system is not serving its citizens well, but the majority of policymakers’ focus is currently directed at facilitating the least efficient, most dangerous transportation option available: private automobiles. The never-ending cycle of “congestion relief” has only succeeded in accommodating more sprawl, which leads to more driving and, in turn, quickly overwhelms added highway capacity.

A new focus on efficiently moving people with more and better transit options is the only sustainable path towards solving Austin’s mobility issues.
In Austin, energy used for transportation generates more greenhouse gas emissions than all the electricity used in every home across the city. Better transit will provide more of us the opportunity to significantly reduce our impact on climate change and the environment.

Car-related costs make up a significant component of most household budgets. Going car-free or car-lite can ease the strain on affordability. It’s not something that will happen overnight for everyone, but we should pursue incremental steps to make it possible for more people.

High-speed Internet access allows bus commuters to spend time productively, whether it is by checking emails, catching the latest news, or watching a favorite show.
WHY TRANSIT?

We envision a transit-oriented Austin, where the vast majority of homes and destinations are within an easy, comfortable walk of a frequent bus or train line. By 2040 our goal is for Austinites to take over half their trips by public transportation, walking, or bicycling. It’s an ambitious goal with huge benefits.

- **Affordability**

  Affordability is about more than just the cost of housing. The average Austin household spends 20% of their total income on transportation.² High-quality transit will help many families reduce or eliminate the huge burden of owning and operating a car.

- **Environmental Sustainability**

  The Austin Community Climate Plan recognizes transit’s role in reducing our carbon footprint. A robust mass transit system is absolutely necessary to achieve carbon neutrality in a reasonable time frame.

- **Financial Sustainability**

  Endless expansion of highways is financially unsustainable,³ leading TxDOT and other agencies to continually seek new funding. High-quality transit moves people efficiently, lowers long-term costs, and uses less land. With better transit, Austin could de-pave expanses of asphalt and return that space to beneficial and productive uses.

- **Health and Safety**

  Austin suffered record traffic fatalities and untold traffic injuries in 2015.⁴ More people riding transit means fewer vehicles on the road and thus fewer crashes. Transit also encourages more active lifestyles as people walk to and from their local stops.

- **Productivity and Quality of Life**

  Transit strengthens social bonds in a community by allowing neighbors to interact as they move about the city and trades stressful time wasted in traffic for time that can be spent productively and peacefully.
Sidewalks should be provided on all streets in urban areas. Rather than creating additional pavement, sidewalks can be part of a road diet to slim many of Austin’s extra wide streets. (Image courtesy of NACTO)

Frequent crossings enhance walkability and can help increase foot traffic. Curb extensions, also known as bulb-outs, improve the visibility of people on foot and reduce the distance they have to cross. (Image courtesy of NACTO)

Bus stops must be safely and comfortably accessible via sidewalks and appropriate street crossings. Providing curb extensions at stops ensures that riders have access to the bus without having to squeeze between parked cars. (Image courtesy of NACTO)
PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

A transit-oriented community must first be a walkable community. Therefore, addressing Austin’s massive deficiency in safe, inviting, and comfortable sidewalks and streetscapes should be priority number one.

- Fully fund Austin’s Sidewalk Master Plan, starting with all High Priority sidewalks by the end of 2016. For about the cost of widening I-35, we can transform our entire city for the better. To make that happen, Austin needs a major bond package on the 2016 ballot, along with action from CAMPO to secure state and federal matching funds. Making Austin a walkable city is the most fundamental and cost-effective way to encourage transit ridership; it cannot wait any longer.

- Safe streets must be the standard, not the exception. Austin can realize safer streets by fully implementing NACTO design standards and eliminating AASHTO standards that conflict. Funding the changes recommended in completed corridor studies would be a good first step.

- Transit riders deserve safe access to transportation. We envision a street-appropriate crosswalk within 200 feet of every stop.

- Austin’s Great Streets program has been a huge success. The City of Austin should expand Great Streets along transit thoroughfares.

- In Austin’s hot and sunny climate, shade is a necessity, not a luxury. Capital Metro must provide shelters that provide shade all day long at every stop, starting with those serving the most riders.

- Excessively wide driveways and intersections encourage drivers to take turns at high speeds and are dangerous for people on foot. However, Austin requires driveways to be much wider than do its peer cities. A collaborative effort between Council and the Austin Fire Department is needed to allow narrower driveways and set reduced maximum widths and radii.

Road Diet: Streets that are too wide encourage dangerous vehicular speeds while creating wasted pavement. A road diet reduces the excess width and makes room for sidewalks, bike lanes, or green space.

CAMPO: The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is responsible for conducting the transportation planning that allows Austin’s six-county area to receive federal and state funding.

NACTO: The National Association of City Transportation Officials creates design guides for urban streets that are used by transit, cars, and people on foot and bike.

AASHTO: The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials creates the standards that were used to design Austin’s dangerous, anti-pedestrian streets.

Transit Vision: Towards a Transit-Oriented Austin
“By offering people a viable low-cost transportation option, the bicycle network can help families [like AURA Board member, Mary Pustejovsky’s [pictured]] significantly cut the household expense of owning and operating a motor vehicle.” (Executive Summary, Austin Bicycle Master Plan)

Protected cycle tracks dedicate and protect space for bicyclists in order to improve perceived comfort and safety. According to the City of Austin 2013 Statistically Valid Telephone Survey, 55-60% of Austinites would ride in protected bike lanes. (Image courtesy of NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide)

“Significant bike share systems, such as an expanded Austin’s B-Cycle, are a powerful and flexible tool to connect transit users to their destinations solving the ‘last mile’ problem.” (Executive Summary, Austin Bicycle Master Plan; Photo courtesy of Counse Broders, Flickr)
BICYCLE NETWORK

Encouraging cycling will help reduce households’ transportation costs and make Austin more affordable for all. Cycling, along with walking, provides built-in exercise and is the most ecologically friendly way to travel. Federal data shows that 40% of all trips are 2 miles or less; safe, pleasant, and efficient routes will allow bicycles to replace cars for many of these trips.

• Fully fund the Bicycle Master Plan to create a network of bike routes that are safe and comfortable for people of all ages and all abilities. For less than the cost of widening North MoPac ($151 million vs. $203 million) the completed Bicycle Master Plan will move more people (20,000 vs. 19,000) and will reduce, rather than increase, the pollution caused by motor vehicle trips.

• Some people live too far away from a transit stop to walk there every day. Bicycles can help overcome this extra distance often called “the last mile.” We can do several things to better integrate the bicycle network with the transit network:
  • Increase the number of transit stops that have convenient and secure bike storage, focusing especially on connecting people who live between a half-mile and two miles from a frequent bus line.
  • Extend physically separated bike lanes and paths to and from existing commuter stations to encourage cycling and reduce the demand for spaces at park-and-rides.
  • Expand Austin’s B-Cycle to areas surrounding major stations to provide a more flexible option.
  • Showers and changing facilities at workplaces are a low-cost but crucial way to make cycling a viable commute option for many. Austin’s building code already specifies minimum quantities of toilets, sinks, and drinking fountains. It should do the same for showers and lockers at workplaces so employees can be assured a comfortable and dignified working environment.

Transit Vision: Towards a Transit-Oriented Austin
Following international best practices like the ITDP TOD standard will ensure plans are sufficiently ambitious in a region where effective Transit Oriented Development remains uncommon. (Image above courtesy of ITDP India)

“Service guidelines incorporate transit service planning factors including residential and employment density, land use, activity centers, street characteristics, and demographics.” - Capital Metro Service Guidelines and Standards, Revised Summer 2015

(Map courtesy of Transportation Management Design Connections 2025)
CITY PLANNING:
A FOUNDATION FOR HIGH-QUALITY TRANSIT

Transit works best in areas that are rich in residents, destinations, and pedestrian connectivity. At the same time, mass transit helps these places thrive by efficiently moving many people through limited space.

• Allow and promote abundant housing near existing transit. A compact transit network is less expensive to run at high frequencies and cheaper to build for high capacities. CodeNEXT must result in a new, progressive zoning code that will encourage small scale multifamily, neighborhood commercial, and incremental density in Austin’s central communities.

• Correspondingly, we envision a zoning code that discourages sprawling “leap-frog” development. Austin will not be able to provide quality, cost-effective transit to far-flung “activity centers” along limited-access highways like SH130.

• Coordinated city and transit planning is needed so that Austin’s zoning code promotes transit supportive development in the same places where Capital Metro operates (or intends to operate) high-frequency lines.

• A rigorous street master plan will enable Austin to gradually knit communities back together. Our local street network is too important to the public interest to be left to uncoordinated private development, especially near major transit investments. Stronger connectivity requirements that limit city blocks to 600 feet in length will reduce the barriers that make walking to and from transit difficult.

• All Austinites deserve safe access to education. AISD, ACC, and UT should locate campus facilities on sites well-served by transit, comfortably accessible on foot, and central to the communities they serve.

• Austin’s minimum parking requirements are among the highest in the nation. Council should reduce them everywhere and repeal them entirely in places that already manage street parking with meters.

ITDP: The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy works with cities worldwide to bring about transport solutions that cut greenhouse gas emissions, reduce poverty, and improve the quality of urban life.

TOD: Transit Oriented Development is compact, higher density, mixed-use, walkable development that is centered within a half mile of a transit station. (ITDP)

CodeNEXT: The “City of Austin initiative to revise the Land Development Code, which determines how land can be used throughout the city – including what can be built, where it can be built, and how much can (and cannot) be built.”
Extended and fully separated **transit lanes** will allow buses to bypass Austin’s “ring of congestion.” The time savings will encourage more people to ride while allowing the same busses to make additional round trips. Transit riders already come close to outnumbering motorists on these streets at peak hours. They deserve a lane of their own.

---

**Off-board fare kiosks** allow riders to pay the fare before the bus arrives. In New York this improvement has helped cut transit times by 20%. 

---

1. www.aura-atx.org
2. Existing proposed
BUS OPERATIONS

Local Bus service will provide the “bread and butter” of Austin’s transit for the foreseeable future. Incremental system-wide enhancements are critical to increasing ridership and improving the overall experience.

- **Improve and extend the existing downtown priority lanes across the 1st Street bridge until the Riverside/Congress intersection and North on Guadalupe until 38th Street by 2017.**

- The distance between stops must reflect the quality of the operating environment. Stops no farther than a quarter mile apart are appropriate in stretches where vehicles operate in mixed traffic. Half-mile spacing is only justified where lines run in physically separated, exclusive lanes.

- Downtown and UT stops are uncomfortable, undersized, and undignified. Riders need the University of Texas, the City of Austin, Travis County, CTRMA, and CAMPO to help Capital Metro and Austin Energy build continuous, substantial platform-style shelters within 2 years.

- **Fare Simplification and Parity:** Austin only needs two fare tiers, local and commuter. Ending premium fares for MetroRapid and flyer routes will strengthen the local bus service, eliminate needless complexity, reduce the burden on low-income riders, and encourage ridership. Staggered timing can help MetroRapid complement, rather than compete with, local buses.

- **Off-board Fares:** Riders should be able to buy a ticket before the bus arrives, either at kiosks or through the CapMetro app and then just step onto the bus like onto a train, on any door without having to stop and swipe a pass or dig for change. This step will reduce dwell time, speed up the buses, and make the experience more pleasant.

- Austin is a pet-friendly city; its transit can be too. Peer agencies allow pets in carriers to board; Capital Metro can do the same.

---

**CTRMA:**

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority was created by the Texas legislature in 2002 to “implement multi-modal transportation solutions”. In reality, CTRMA has focused nearly exclusively on constructing toll roads.

**Dwell Time:**

The time a bus spends at a stop letting riders off and letting new riders on. Dwell time is greatly increased when people have to pay their fares as they step onto the bus.

---

**Transit Vision:** Towards a Transit-Oriented Austin
Bus shelters—three walls and a roof—help promote mass transit and increase system ridership. Not only do they protect riders from the elements, but they also make wait times feel shorter. (Photo courtesy of Leadership Houston via OffCite)

“An efficient transit line—and hence one that will support good service—connects multiple points but is also reasonably straight so that it’s perceived as a direct route between any two points on the line.” - Jarrett Walker, Human Transit (Images adapted from MRCagney Consultants)

Dedicated center-running right of way is an essential element of ground-level high-capacity rapid transit that minimizes conflict with general traffic. (Image courtesy of ITDP India)
CORE NETWORK

A network of high-frequency transit lines with separated lanes will create the framework for Austin’s transit-oriented future, bypass our infamous traffic, and provide a reliable and speedy alternative for Austinites of all walks of life.

• To make Austin a transit-oriented city, we will need to build infrastructure that provides a much higher level of service than anything we currently have. Core transit lines spaced 3/4 to 1 mile apart will ensure that most places are within a half-mile walk of high-quality service. These critical elements will ensure a successful network:

  1. Dedicated, center-running right of way - transit vehicles should have physical separation from general traffic
  2. Direct and straight alignments that ensure rapid, efficient travel along walkable surface streets
  3. Arrivals every 15 minutes or less most of the day, 7 days a week
  4. Easy transfers with no additional fare between the local bus system and other core lines
  5. New lines that serve areas with the highest existing demand
  6. Off-board fare collection so the vehicle spends less time stopped and more time moving
  7. Stop spacing no greater than every 1/2 mile
  8. Platform-level boarding for ease and accessibility
  9. Investment in street-grid connectivity around station areas

• We envision 30 miles of such infrastructure in operation by 2025. Austin City Council should direct its representatives on the Capital Metro and CAMPO Boards to propose such a network with a clear long-term plan to achieve it.
It takes around 30 park-and-ride spaces to fill just one bus for a single trip. Spending Capital Metro transit dollars on car storage is not a cost-effective or scaleable way to increase ridership. Better circulator routes and bicycle parking combined with a focus on transit oriented development are better solutions to improve transit in the long run.

Capital Metro's commuter routes have half the ridership/revenue hour of its local routes. (Source: CapMetro Spring 2014 Ridership)

Expanding bike infrastructure around commuter bus stops is not only more efficient than park-and-rides, it is considerably cheaper.¹ (Source: CapMetro 2016 Budget)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Commuter Routes</th>
<th>Local Routes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekday Revenue Hours</td>
<td>156.4</td>
<td>2308.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Weekday Ridership</td>
<td>2246</td>
<td>68550.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riders/Revenue Hour</td>
<td>14.36</td>
<td>29.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proposed Ben White Park & Ride  $3,700,000
Proposed Lakeline Park & Ride Expansion  $1,838,000
Bus Shelter (three walls and a roof)  $4,200
Bus Shelter (+ urban design & infrastructure)  $15,000-20,000

³ How Big Does a Park-and-Ride Have to Be Just to Fill One Bus?
COVERAGE AND COMMUTER SERVICE

Maximizing system-wide ridership creates more value for more people. To do that, Austin must focus on providing frequent, high-quality service to areas with the greatest need and demand for transit.

- **Commuter Service**

Express commuter service is difficult and expensive to provide and struggles to attract riders in Austin: currently Capital Metro’s commuter routes have half the ridership per revenue hour of its local routes. Significantly improving commuter ridership would require resources disproportionate to the expected gain. Instead, the city and Capital Metro should focus on improvements to local service and infrastructure that promotes transit.

Promoting **affordable and attainable housing** in areas already served by transit will allow Austin to take advantage of existing transit resources. Infill housing will give more Austinites access to a better, more efficient system.

Good transit gives people the freedom to live with fewer cars and realize meaningful savings. It does not require riders to drive to a station. Capital Metro should ensure that its commuter stations and bus stops are comfortably accessible by bike and foot. Building sidewalk and bicycle connections is cheaper and more beneficial than building more car storage.

- **Coverage/Lifeline Service**

Coverage service refers to the idea that Capital Metro should provide some bus service everywhere in its service area. This is an important and equitable goal, and Capital Metro should continue to allocate resources for basic access. Future investments should focus on improving the frequency and reliability of service where a high density of people are especially burdened by transportation costs rather than increasing the already sprawling footprint of Capital Metro’s network.

**Revenue Hour:**
Every hour a bus is in operation and picking up riders.
Policy & Funding

We face many systemic barriers to becoming a transit-oriented city. They must be addressed to help Austin move forward.

Shift Planning Priorities

- **Focus on access rather than mobility.** Traveling a short distance at low speed is often preferable to traveling a long distance at high speed. Allowing more Austinites to live closer to where they work, shop, play, and learn will increase access without growing demand for mobility.

- **Eliminate TIAs unless they can be reformed to better reflect reality and support transit.** The ITE methodology currently used in TIAs has been shown to overestimate trips generated by an average of 55%. Many developments actually reduce the need for travel, yet the deeply flawed ITE standards fail to account for this. For example, a new grocery store does not increase the number of people looking to buy groceries. In fact, more local grocers would reduce total VMT by allowing shorter trips, more of which would occur on foot, bike, or transit. Incredibly, current traffic studies conclude the exact opposite.

- **Stop using LOS as the benchmark of transportation impact, and begin evaluating projects’ impact on regional VMT.** Transportation problems in central Texas are systemic, and restricting analysis to the LOS of nearby intersections is missing the forest for the trees.

Reform Institutions

- **Reform the Board memberships of CAMPO, CTRMA, and Capital Metro** to reflect the population of the constituent cities and counties. Austin and Travis County deserve fair representation.

- **Foster a culture of transit ridership and advocacy** among Capital Metro staff at all levels and seek consultants who are likewise dedicated to transit in their everyday operations.

- **Increase transparency in transportation planning** by providing open access to planning criteria and detailed ridership and expenditure data.
Opt-Out of Car Dependence

- **Parking is massively expensive**, but the costs are usually hidden in higher prices, higher rent, and lower pay. Austinites deserve the ability to opt-out. To accomplish this, Austin should encourage 1) employers to replace ‘free’ parking with a cash benefit of equal value and 2) landlords to separate housing rent from parking rent so that residents only pay for what they need.

Shift Funding Priorities

- **As it stands today**, new transit and pedestrian infrastructure requires bond elections, while massive highway projects are built with minimal public input. This structural bias is unacceptable.

- **Stop using flawed traffic predictions to justify road widenings.** Far from inevitable, CTRMA, CAMPO, and TXDoT’s self-fulfilling prophesies can never outpace the induced demand extra highway capacity itself creates, as wider roads quickly return to a congested equilibrium.\(^5\) No thriving city has ever solved traffic congestion, but many provide mass transit that circumvents it. Austinites deserve serious investment in those alternatives.

- A warped understanding of “regional significance” has led oversized undertakings in Austin’s hinterland to be favored over fundamental infrastructure like sidewalks and street connectivity. **Local streets, sidewalks, and transit stops are regionally significant.** Every piece of the whole contributes to the network’s utility and resilience. Many smaller projects will have a greater effect on regional mobility than a few mega-projects.

- **Prioritize transit capital expenditures that serve the basic needs of the majority of customers** instead of building high-dollar terminals for “premium” riders.

TIA:

A Traffic Impact Analysis is required for some new buildings in Austin. The study imposes cost and regulatory burdens and can be used to justify widening existing streets. TIAs typically do not consider the needs of people moving on foot, bike, or transit. They must be reformed to reduce VMT and prioritize transit.

ITE:

The Institute of Transportation Engineers produces the *Trip Generation Manual* that attempts to predict how many motor vehicle trips a new building will induce. Many of the manual’s reported ratios are statistically meaningless due to insufficient data or a lack of correlation between the data collected and trips taken.

VMT:

Vehicle Miles Traveled is a measure of the total distance traveled by all vehicles within a transportation network over a given amount of time. Tracking VMT provides an understanding of whether overall levels of motorized traffic are increasing or decreasing in the network as a whole.

LOS:

Level of Service is a system for rating how long vehicles are delayed by congestion at individual intersections. It does not consider how well the street serves people on foot, bike, or transit, nor does the rating reflect the broader benefits of a compact transportation network.
Looking to the past:
In 1913 automobiles and horse-drawn carriages rolled easily over the brick pavement of South Congress, while electric streetcars, a predecessor to urban rail, continued to follow the tracks in the center lane. “The Avenue” was Austin’s center of commerce.

Looking to the future:
Austin was once a transit-oriented city, and it will be again. Residents will be able to live and work centrally while having ready access to everyday goods, services, and amenities.
A Recipe for Success

• Meet all Core Network criteria outlined on page 19.

• Create a multi-line, city-wide plan with a starter line that has built-in ridership on day one. Current high-ridership bus corridors, such as Guadalupe-Lamar to the north and South Congress and East Riverside to the south, are obvious starting points.

• Choose a starter line that has lower operating costs than bus service in the same corridor. Because the State of Texas limits Capital Metro’s sales tax funding to 1%, operating costs are critical. Rail should not come at the expense of the transit system as a whole, and the preferences of stakeholders cannot override uncomfortable financial realities.

• Dedicate protected right-of-way along at least 90% of the line. Plan and construct center-running transit priority lanes and Bus Rapid Transit to facilitate conversion to rail at a later date.

• Support every station with transit-oriented zoning. Small groups of vocal citizens should not be allowed to undermine major infrastructure investments by “opting out” of transit-oriented development.

• Make urban rail stations easily accessible by walking. Most transit trips begin and end on foot. Circulator buses are not a substitute for a good rail route, as the low-ridership circulator routes to the Red Line have demonstrated.

• Where necessary, acquire right of way through private property to complete connectivity at crucial points.

• Allow for future extensions as well as additional capacity and frequency.

Transit Vision: Towards a Transit-Oriented Austin
7 WHERE WE STAND TODAY

1. Population Growth

2. Resident Displacement

3. Capital Metro Ridership

4. Traffic Delay
“Congestion Data” for Austin, TX. Texas Transportation Institute. http://mobility.tamu.edu/ums/congestion-data/

5. Transportation Modeshare
“Table S0801” (Austin). American Community Survey. http://factfinder.census.gov/

8 WHY TRANSIT?

1. Typical Costs for Austin Renters and Homeowners

2. Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Travis County

3. Transportation as a Percentage of Income Center for Neighborhood Technology’s Housing and Transportation (H+T) Affordability Index. http://htaindex.cnt.org/map/

4. Expansion of Highways Is Financially Unsustainable

5. Record Traffic Fatalities

10 PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Relative Costs

TXDOT plans to spend between $1.6 billion and $1.9 billion reconstructing and expanding I-35 through Travis County.


2. Great Streets Success
City of Austin Economic Development Department: Second Street District. https://austintexas.gov/2ndstreet

3. Driveway Widths and Pedestrian Danger

4. Peer Cities’ Driveway Widths
The minimum width for a two-way driveway in Austin is 25 or 30 feet depending on the type of street it abuts. The maximum is 40 or 45 feet. (Transportation Criteria Manual § 5.3.2, Table 5-2.)

In Portland, OR the minimum is 20 feet with a maximum of 30 feet. (Portland City Code and Charter, § 17.28.110.C.2).

In Miami, FL the minimum is 20 feet. Maximums are determined by transect, and range from 20 feet to 30 feet. (Miami 21 Code, Article 4, Table 5 and §5.3.4.d, §5.4.4.e, §5.5.4.e, §5.6.4.g)

12 BICYCLE NETWORK

1. 40% of Trips Are Two Miles or Less

2. MoPac Improvement Project Cost vs. Bicycle Master Plan Cost
Austin Bicycle Master Plan, Chapter 4, p. 172


3. Bicycle Master Plan Effects vs. Additional Highway Lanes Effects
Austin Bicycle Master Plan, Executive Summary, p. 17

4. Showers and Changing Facilities
The U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system for New Development (ND) awards two points to commercial projects that “provide at least one on-site shower with changing facility for the first 100 regular building occupants and one additional shower for every 150 regular building occupants thereafter.”

Austin Energy Green Building awards one point to commercial projects that incorporate “bicycle securing areas and shower / changing facilities that accommodate 10% or more of the building occupants.”

San Francisco’s bicycle parking requirements standard “establishes new, increased requirements for the provision of showers and lockers based upon use type and occupied floor area.”
14 CITY PLANNING

1. 2010 Population & Employment Density Map
   Transportation Management Design (TMD) and the Connections 2025 service plan update with data sourced from 2010 Census and 2010 CAMPO

2. Minimum Parking Requirements
   A 2013 survey of 50 large cities across the United States found that Austin required more parking than the national median for four of five building types studied: apartments, offices, restaurants, and high schools. (Austin was not included in the fifth category: places of worship.) https://graphingparking.com/

16 BUS OPERATIONS

1. Transit Riders Nearly Outnumber Motorists
   AURA, “Transportation Data on The Drag.”
   https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1L6ffg-nt529zdBcl6sIM4gADyM_MhJupQeaNLCaDet/edit#slide=id.g77db4947c_014

2. Off-Board Fare Kiosks

3. Peer Agencies & Pet Carriers
   Capital Metro: “Animals are not permitted onboard except service animals assisting a rider with a disability, or a service animal in training.”
   http://www.capmetro.org/rules/
   Houston METRO: “Customers can carry a pet on the bus and the rail as long as it is caged properly.”
   http://www.ridemetro.org/Pages/Bus.aspx
   DART: Animals are allowed in carriers. Dallas Area Rapid Transit Regulations for Management of the Authority §2.02.5

18 CORE NETWORK

1. Perceived Wait Times

22 POLICY & FUNDING

1. ITE Overestimates

2. CTRMA Population & Representation
   City representatives counted toward the county where the majority of that city’s population lives.
   Capital Metro representative divided according to representatives on its board excluding the CAMPO-appointed members.

3. ITE Flawed Data

4. California Has Moved away from LOS
   The State of California Governor’s Office of Planning and Research provides a thorough explanation of the problems associated with LOS including that, “mitigation for increased delay often involves increasing capacity (i.e. the width of a roadway or size of an intersection), which may increase auto use and emissions and discourage alternative forms of transportation” and that “LOS scale of analysis is too small.”

5. Induced Demand
AURA advocates for an Austin that’s inclusive, open to change, and welcoming to everyone.

If you agree, please become a member today

www.aura-atx.org