



Project: Austin Light Rail Phase I
To: File
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From: XXXX
Subject: 38th Street Park-and-Ride Design Changes
Date: July 23, 2025

1. Preliminary Considerations for the 38th Street Park-and-Ride Design

As stated in the Project's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), in August 2024 Austin Transit Partnership (ATP) performed initial travel forecasting estimates using the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Simplified Trips on Project (STOPS) travel demand model. Results indicated an approximate park-and-ride (PNR) demand of 300 spaces in 2045 to accommodate average weekday ridership at the Project's 38th Street end-of-line station.

ATP received extensive public feedback during the Austin Light Rail Phase I DEIS comment period regarding the 38th Street PNR. As stated in the DEIS, ATP proposed to build a multi-story parking structure at the northeast corner of 38th Street and Guadalupe Street to accommodate the estimated 2045 parking demand. DEIS commenters stated that the proposed parking structure would be inconsistent with local plans; cause adverse visual, traffic, and neighborhood impacts; and displace a unique business that is a valued community resource. Commenters also noted that the parking garage would become obsolete once the priority extension to the Crestview Station is constructed. Commenters also indicated nearby surface parking lots should be considered in lieu of a new structure.

2. Changes to the 38th Street Park-and-Ride Design

In response to input from the community, ATP is proposing to advance an alternative design for the 38th Street PNR that would be surface level only. Initial design layouts demonstrate that a surface lot using the properties shown in the DEIS could accommodate approximately 60 parking spaces. However, the PNR is not projected to be the most popular mode of access. According to modeling performed with the 300-space garage, nearly two-thirds of riders would access the 38th Street station by walking, and those being dropped off at the station in a private vehicle would also outnumber PNR users.

ATP performed subsequent travel forecasting to determine potential impacts to ridership if there were no PNR at all. Generally, the reduction in parking spaces at the 38th Street PNR would be a direct correlation to a reduction in ridership. Removing the 300-space parking garage would result in 250 fewer boardings at that station in 2045. However, considering average daily boardings for the whole system are projected to be 28,968, a reduction of 250 riders would be negligible (approximately 0.01 percent of the estimated ridership). An additional consideration for the 38th Street Station is that the location currently offers transfers to six CapMetro bus routes. This means that for those living beyond a walking distance from the station, taking the bus from the station could substitute a PNR trip.

A peer review of U.S. light rail systems demonstrates minimal end-of-line parking availability does not inhibit the success of a system. For several of the highest ridership light rail systems in the country, including LA Metro, Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, New Jersey Transit, and Southeast Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, end-of-line stations with limited parking availability are common. This is especially relevant in the case of the 38th Street PNR which is located in a dense, walkable neighborhood.

3. Mitigation Commitments

ATP shall design the 38th Street PNR with direct access to 38th Street and include appropriate signage and traffic controls to direct users away from residential streets and minimize cut-through traffic impacts. ATP shall monitor traffic conditions and PNR usage after the facilities open to ascertain capacity constraints. ATP will coordinate with other nearby property owners to lease unused parking spaces, such as the Austin State Hospital, Hyde Park Baptist Church, and the Baker Center. Additional measures could be considered in coordination with the City, should operational issues arise.