

PROJECT CONNECT STATUS REPORT

ATP BOARD BRIEF | AUGUST 2022

In November 2020, the Austin voters approved Proposition A to dedicate new revenue to the implementation of Project Connect—a program of transit projects designed to provide transportation alternatives for our community. Voters simultaneously created the Austin Transit Partnership (ATP) and tasked its Board of Directors with overseeing the program. This Project Connect ATP Board Brief serves as an update to the ATP Board about the progress of the projects that make up the Project Connect Program.

» PROGRAM UPDATE

LIGHT RAIL

As discussed in the July Board meeting, ATP has initiated development of an Updated Light Rail Implementation Plan to ensure the light rail program's community support and eligibility for federal funding. The first step in its development was bringing the dialogue and information shared at the July 20 Board meeting to ATP's committees and agency partners, including:

- ✓ City of Austin Mobility Committee, Aug 4
- ✓ ATP Finance and Risk Advisory Committee, Aug 9
- ✓ ATP Engineering, Architecture, Construction Committee, Aug 10
- ✓ Project Connect Community Advisory Committee, Aug 11
- ✓ CapMetro Operations, Planning and Safety Committee, Aug 15
- ✓ ATP Planning, Sustainability & Equity Committee, Aug 16

In addition, ATP and CapMetro continue to hold ongoing, regular conversations with the Federal Transit Administration. The result of these conversations to date has been a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities ahead, as well as a sense that our partners and the communities they represent are ready to engage and assist.

Most recently, the Executive Director convened an interagency workplan group whose task is to develop the workplan to produce Updated Light Rail Implementation Plan that will determine the first implementable project. The workplan will be built upon the interdependency of the areas shown and we are working diligently to ensure each is thoroughly examined to reach the best outcome for Austin.

The next steps are to continue the conversations with our partners and the community and simultaneously conduct an intensive technical review through a series of Project Development Workshops to form scenarios for consideration. Technical efforts to advance the light rail program continue, including: collaboration with the City of Austin on items such as betterment criteria and permitting ordinance requirements; establishing our project management and controls systems; and advancement of certain environmental clearance activities.

ANTI-DISPLACEMENT EFFORTS

The proposed budget for fiscal year 2023 allocates \$35 million to continue its investment in the City of Austin's anti-displacement efforts, which will represent a cumulative investment of \$100 million toward anti-displacement program initiatives. This funding is part of the larger anti-displacement strategy to invest \$300 million over 13 years in conjunction with Project Connect.

Under the Interlocal Grant Agreement between ATP and the City, the Austin Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), a subsidiary of the City of Austin, is the designated municipal entity charged with allocating the funding. In fiscal year 2022, AHFC proposed \$65 million (the funding allocated to AHFC in the first two years) to be divided as follows between three displacement mitigation goals: buying property (\$21 million), developing property (\$21 million), and funding community-initiated projects (\$20 million). The AHFC Board is slated to approve the distribution of approximately \$41 million in investments in September.

METRORAPID BUS PROJECTS

CapMetro continues to progress the Expo and Pleasant Valley MetroRapid Lines, the construction funding for which ATP authorized in an Interlocal Grant Agreement with CapMetro in July—a critical milestone to ensuring federal funding eligibility for the bus projects. We anticipate signing two Small Starts Grants with FTA that will provide about \$65 million in federal funding for these two Lines. The grants are scheduled for execution by the end of September 2022.

On the ground, contractors have completed station construction of two Expo Line stations and one Pleasant Valley Line station, and the team is busy finalizing end-of-line site plans, resolving utility conflicts, and submitting zoning applications. CapMetro is still targeting Summer 2023 for both Lines to enter revenue service.



RED LINE

Since we reported at the July Board meeting about the McKalla Station groundbreaking, contractors have completed advance culvert construction work and the team is developing a station area design-build contract and RFP for double track and drainage improvements. The work at McKalla Station is scheduled for completion in Fall 2023.



» ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

CONTRACTS & PROCUREMENTS

ATP is wrapping up solicitations for both Systemwide Architecture, Urban Design and the Engineering Services (SAUDES) and Real Estate Acquisition and Relocation Services. In addition, ATP is in the process of contracting for the final phase of the Enterprise Resource Management (ERP) System to support implementation of critical financial and human resources systems. We anticipate presenting the ERP System and Real Estate Acquisition and Relocation Services contracts for the Board’s approval in September and the SAUDES contract for the Board’s approval in October.

ATP HEADQUARTERS OPENS

Austin Transit Partnership celebrated a milestone this month with the move of its entire staff, and agency partner staff into 203 Colorado Street office. ATP’s new headquarters will serve a collaborative space for the partnership working on Project Connect, as well as a regular space for the Board, technical advisory committees, and Community Advisory Committee to meet in person.