

Project Connect Status Report

ATP Board Brief
July 2025

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Austin Light Rail Program Update

Austin Light Rail Implementation

ATP continues to advance the environmental evaluation process for Austin Light Rail Phase 1 in partnership with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

With approximately 2,500 comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) that was released earlier this year, the Austin community's feedback is being evaluated to inform the Final Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision (Final EIS/ROD) anticipated in early 2026. Both are necessary in the overall process to receive federal funding. ATP is reviewing the Draft EIS comments and exploring ways to incorporate key elements of the feedback into future design phases.

In addition, ATP is advancing a Mitigation Monitoring Plan (MMP) as part of the Final EIS/ROD. The MMP, which ATP will update and revise as construction advances, documents commitments that ATP will undertake during construction and operation of the light rail system. These commitments are established to mitigate potential impacts identified in the Final EIS.

ATP staff provided a comprehensive update at the ATP Board Meeting May 21 on Austin Light Rail implementation that included an overview of the federal funding process and next steps as the organization advances the work related to the Environmental Impact Statement. As a part of the update, staff provided a status update on Project Delivery and related procurement milestones for Progressive Design-Build, the Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF), and light rail vehicles. The team emphasized a collaborative approach with industry partners, including the early release of solicitation information and industry connections.

Project Delivery



Final Design & Construction contract delivery timeline.

ATP continues to carry out its Project Delivery plan on schedule – advancing key milestones crucial to onboarding industry partners for the design and construction of Austin Light Rail. In June 2025, ATP released the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the final design and construction of the Civil, Rail, Stations and System elements of Austin Light Rail. This is the first step of a two-step procurement process providing comprehensive opportunities to evaluate industry talent while also clearly presenting the requirements to partner with ATP on the project. ATP is currently evaluating the responses from the RFQ and will shortlist qualified proposers to move forward to the Request

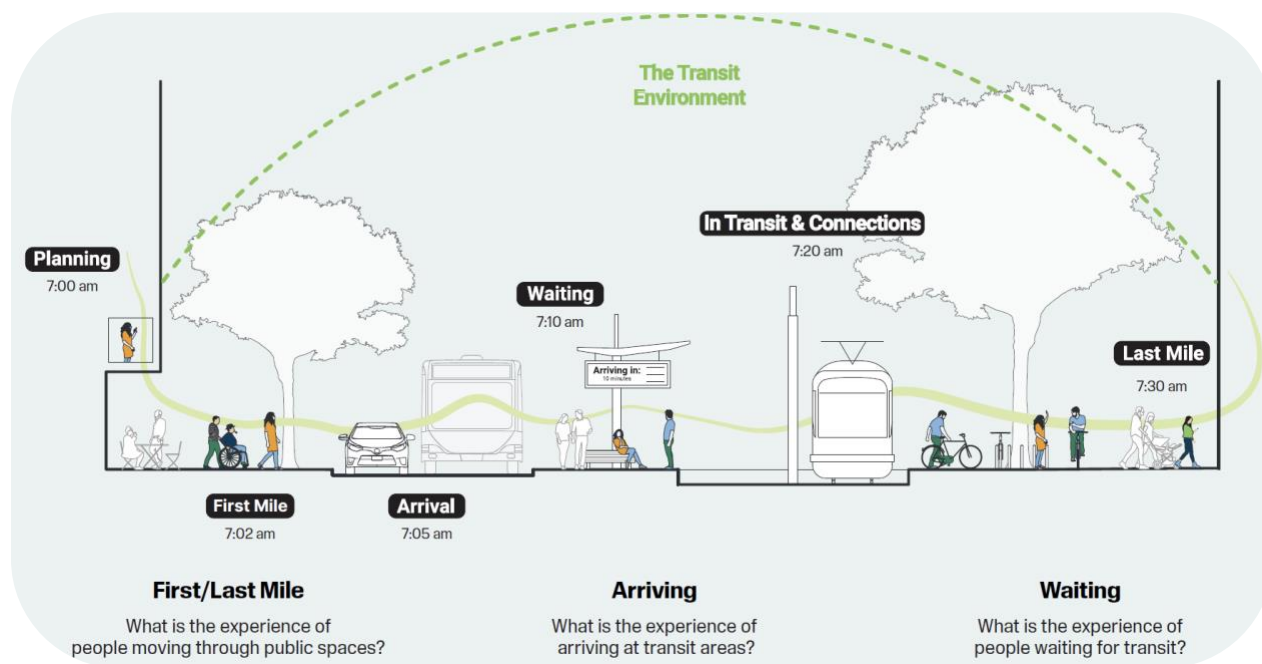
for Proposal (RFP) phase, where qualified proposers will be evaluated based on their technical approach, capability, and certain cost elements. It is anticipated that the RFP will be issued to qualified firms in August 2025.

In April 2025, ATP released a Request for Information (RFI) to solicit feedback on draft forms of the RFQ, RFP, and contract for the final design and construction of the Operations and Maintenance Facility. ATP is reviewing the feedback received through the RFI and anticipates issuing the RFQ for the OMF also in late August 2025. The procurement process will follow the two-step RFQ to RFP process.

In May 2025, ATP also released an RFI for Light Rail Vehicles to solicit feedback on draft forms of the RFP, contract, and vehicle specifications. Responses to the RFI are due at the end of July. This innovative and collaborative engagement with the industry is designed to increase competition, facilitate better solicitation documents, and ultimately, better proposals for ATP to evaluate.

Design Goals

The presentation also included an update on the Austin Light Rail design framework, emphasizing a people-centered, performance-based approach that integrates architecture, urban design, planning, engineering, and community engagement. ATP is implementing an approach to designing Austin Light Rail around framing goals responsive to community input.



An example of user experience analysis for transit riders.

Austin Light Rail will connect to five performance-based goals: user experience, the outdoors, culture, place, and legacy. Below offers additional context to how ATP will consider each of the goals as design continues as well as through future construction of Austin Light Rail:

- User Experience: No matter your ability or confidence level, light rail is designed to ensure ease of use.

- The Outdoors: Austin Light Rail will offer a new way to navigate Austin, connecting people to the city's greenways and trails.
- Culture: Austin Light Rail will reinforce and enhance neighborhood character, fostering safer, more active public spaces.
- Place: Austin Light Rail will be a memorable system that responds to neighborhoods by balancing uniformity with local character.
- Legacy: By prioritizing high-quality materials, long-term durability and operational efficiency, the light rail can keep up with the growth of the city while maintaining a reliable and efficient transit network.

Austin Light Rail is being designed with public input as essential to understanding how people navigate and experience the built environment.

The public may view the latest Austin Light Rail update to the ATP Board of Directors at www.atptx.org/board-meeting-calendar-and-information/. Click on the May 21 Board Meeting.

Austin Light Rail Engagement Highlights



Photos from the Connect & Build event on May 29, 2025.

Connect & Build: Partnerships for Austin Light Rail

ATP hosted the latest Connect & Build: Partnerships for Austin Light Rail event on May 29 bringing industry representatives together for professional networking – as well as education about opportunities to help build Austin Light Rail. Connect & Build events have been an important step in creating forums for industry connections with prime contractors and small and/or local businesses – presenting key networking opportunities prior to ATP initiating its major solicitations. More than 120 industry partners joined the May event to learn more about upcoming opportunities to help build Austin's first light rail—a catalyst for economic development both locally and for Texas. Roughly 85 business owners connected with 5 prime contractors that indicated intent or interest in pursuing the Request for Qualifications for the final design and construction of the Operations and Maintenance Facility.

Mpact National Steering Committee

In June, ATP hosted Mpact's National Steering Committee as the Committee planned its 30th Transit + Community conference, to be held in Portland, Oregon, October 26–29, 2025. The planning sessions included presentations from ATP staff and partners and an Austin Light Rail alignment tour. The upcoming Mpact Conference registration is available at www.mpactmobility.org/conference.



ATP's Jen Pyne presents to Mpact Steering Committee members. Photo courtesy of MPact.

Austin Educational Institutions

ATP continues to engage the community related to the progress of Austin Light Rail, connecting and sharing insights about the project with educational institutions along and near the alignment. Over the summer, ATP has engaged the community through several initiatives. ATP participated in events at Austin Community College, Huston-Tillotson University, and the University of Texas at Austin, engaging with students, faculty and community members at events and targeting opportunities to elevate public awareness about the benefits of Austin Light Rail.



ATXplained

ATP attended KUT's ATXplained, in addition to the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Marketplace, the Downtown Austin Alliance (DAA) Future of Downtown event, and the Soul of Austin Festival. The event provided a unique opportunity to highlight Y'all Aboard – the Austin Light Rail public awareness campaign is designed to educate Austin about light rail.

The first of several *Austin Light Rail, Explained* videos is available at: youtu.be/gk2_FWCHz-o?si=tXxheL-Xlyz77RRb

Left: ATP Team engages with the public on the UT campus at KUT's ATXplained event.



Left: ATP team attends the DAA Future of Downtown event.



Right: ATP Board Member Juan Garza attends the DAA Future of Downtown event.

American Public Transportation Association Events

On April 6–9, transit professionals attended the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) 2025 Mobility Conference in Austin. ATP staff provided tours of the Austin Light Rail alignment to conference attendees to educate them about the project and the benefits of Austin Light Rail for the Austin community.



ATP team provides a light rail alignment tour to APTA Mobility attendees. Photos courtesy of APTA.



Public transportation professionals met in San Francisco, California from June 29–July 2 for the APTA Rail Conference. ATP attended Light Rail Transit, Planning and Capital Projects Committee meetings. ATP VP, Design & Construction Arnab Gupta hosted the Automated Transit Technical Committee meeting as Vice Chair. ATP provided updates on 2025 activities, to include an overall project update.

Left: ATP team at the APTA Rail Conference.

Design-Build Institute of America Conference



ATP team leads an alignment tour for the DBIA-SW.

The Design-Build Institute of America Southwest (DBIA-SW) Annual Conference was held in Austin April 14–15, 2025, with the theme, Driving Innovation Forward: Collaboration in Action.

ATP staff supported the conference planning sessions and hosted a pre-conference Austin Light Rail Alignment Tour led by ATP experts in engineering, procurement, architecture, planning, and community engagement.



ATP team members serve as panelists on DBIA-SW breakout session.

ATP's conference breakout session, "Building Stronger Teams: The Power of Collaborative Behavior Assessment (CBA)," introduced the CBA process to attendees to evaluate how individuals or groups work together to advance highly technical large-scale projects over multiple years. Panelists included ATP team members and representatives from its delivery partner.

Austin Board of Realtors: Moving Central Texas Forward Panel

ATP CEO Greg Canally joined Mayor Kirk Watson and Ashby Johnson, Executive Director of the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) on June 26, at the Austin Board of Realtors (ABoR) Moving Central Texas Forward panel.

The event brought together key regional leaders to discuss the future of transportation and mobility in Central Texas.



Mayor Kirk Watson, ATP CEO Greg Canally, and CAMPO Executive Director Ashby Johnson speak about the future of transportation at an ABoR hosted panel.

Greater Austin Chamber: Infrastructure Summit

On April 8, ATP also participated in the annual Infrastructure Summit hosted by the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce. Event attendees received key updates on transformative projects shaping Austin and the surrounding region: the I-35 Capital Express Project, the AUS expansion, Austin Light Rail, regional energy infrastructure, water solutions, and innovations in smart mobility.

CEO Greg Canally and Project Connect Community Advisory Committee Chair Awais Azhar shared the benefits of Austin Light Rail for Austinites and for the local and broader Texas economy.

***Austin Chamber Federal Advocacy Visit***

The Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce hosted its annual Federal Advisory visit to Washington, D.C. in June, providing an opportunity for leaders representing Central Texas business, government, and the community to meet with congressional representatives on key issues impacting Austin and the region.

Delegates included representation from ATP, the City and CapMetro—all representing issues related to transportation infrastructure being led by each respective entity. Conversations convened by the Austin Chamber included those with members of Congress, federal agencies, and national policy experts on the issues shaping our region's future.



Federal Advocacy Visit attendees. Photo courtesy of Austin Chamber.

Austin Transit Partnership

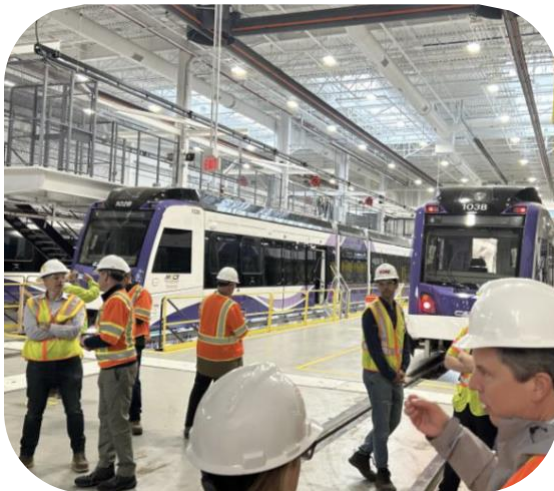
Light Rail Learning and Sharing



Ontario Line South site visit in Toronto, Canada.



Siemens Mobility factory in Sacramento, CA.



Purple Line site visit; College Park, MD.

ATP visited cities nationwide and beyond to learn from peer agencies about existing light rail systems and projects in the pipeline. The visit with **Maryland Transit Administration** surveyed their Purple Line, including recently constructed light rail operations and maintenance facility. The trip to **Sacramento** included a light rail system educational tour on new vehicles. Finally, in **Toronto** ATP toured one of many projects underway for MetroLinx.

The site visits were designed to learn from leaders in a unique position to extend expertise related to projects that are underway and/or complete as well as to share insights on a number of relatable topics across projects. Topics have included procurement, project delivery, design and construction management, vehicle specifications, transit-oriented development opportunities, third-party coordination, communications and community engagement, and leadership collaboration.



Purple Line site visit; College Park, MD.

ATP Administrative Update

ATP Receives Employer of the Year Award

The WTS Heart of Texas Chapter named ATP its 2024 Employer of the Year at its annual gala and awards event last April. ATP received this recognition in part due to its support for employee professional development and continued education and advancement of women in senior and executive positions and as leaders in major initiatives. The mission of WTS is to advance the transportation industry as well as the women who lead in the transportation industry.

To learn more about the award, visit wtsinternational.org/chapters/heart-texas/chapter-awards/employer-year-award.



ATP attendees at the WTS Gala and presentation of Employer of the Year.

The Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) recognized ATP for excellence in community engagement. ATP Public Involvement Manager Yanniss Banks, who serves as president of the COMTO Austin Chapter, along with other ATP team members, received the Best Community Engagement Award at COMTO's national conference in July. COMTO Austin hosted a scholarship fundraiser and engaged with students and businesses in the region, bringing awareness to opportunities in the transportation industry.



Yannis Banks, ATP Public Involvement Manager, along with other attendees at the COMTO National Conference.

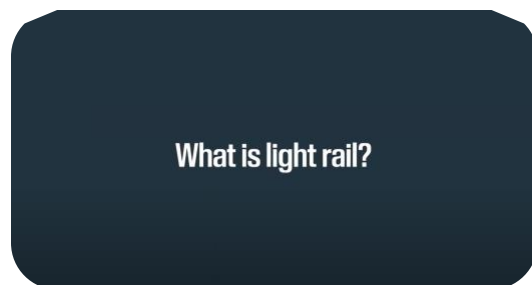


Erick Wilkes (second from left) receives proclamation on behalf of ATP at Austin City Hall.

On July 24, the City of Austin's Small and Minority Business Resources Department proudly celebrated its collaboration with the IC² Institute's Austin Procurement Consortium and Readiness Training Program, proclaiming July 24th as Austin Procurement Consortium Day.

With Mayor Pro Tem Vanessa Fuentes as the proclamation sponsor, Austin City Council recognized the importance of empowering small and minority-owned businesses. Erick Wilkes, ATP's Vice President of Small & Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, accepted the proclamation as a partner on behalf of ATP.

Y'all Aboard: Austin Light Rail Public Awareness Campaign



ATP continues to promote the Y'all Aboard public awareness campaign with Light Rail, Explained video.

On April 8, ATP published *Austin Light Rail, Explained*, an informational video designed to help educate the public about the key benefits and features of Austin Light Rail. The video addresses common questions, providing information about the alignment route, the proposed number of stations and how light rail differs from other modes of transportation.

The first in a series of videos is available online on [YouTube](#). Follow ATP on its social media platforms to learn more about Austin Light Rail.

Austin Light Rail Advisory Group

The Austin Light Rail Advisory Group will hold its first meeting on September 4 to meet with ATP staff regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2025-26 budget. The Advisory Group offers technical feedback to the ATP Board and staff on topics related to the implementation and development of Austin Light Rail Phase 1. The group is composed of seven community members appointed by the ATP Board of Directors. Members are leaders in their fields with experience in large-scale capital delivery projects, particularly those that are publicly funded.

Appointed in 2025, the Advisory Group appointees include L. Ashley McLain, Dave Sullivan, Jim Walker, Kevin Rustagi, and Lyndon Henry. They will have staggered 4-year terms, assigned during the September meeting.

CapMetro Update

CapMetro NorthOps Electric Canopy

CapMetro has recently completed installation of phase 2 of the solar powered electric charging canopy at the NorthOps (9315 McNeil Rd) facility. The project includes 90 pantograph chargers and 30 plug-in chargers with anticipated completion in March 2026.



CapMetro Hosts APTA Mobility Conference & International Roadeo



CapMetro hosted the APTA Mobility Conference and International Roadeo in April with record-setting attendance! CapMetro and ATP staff curated special tours of existing transit services and were well-represented at many presentations and panels throughout the conference.

Left: Dottie Watkins and Jeffrey Travillion present at the APTA Mobility Conference.

Watkins Honored at COMTO Women Who Move the Nation Awards

CapMetro President and CEO Dottie Watkins was selected as an honoree for the COMTO Celebrating Women Who Move the Nation Awards. The prestigious recognition celebrates trailblazing women leaders who are shaping the future of transportation across the country.

Right: Dottie Watkins poses with the COMTO award.



City of Austin Update

The City of Austin has continued its support for the overall Project Connect program through coordination efforts that will have both immediate and long-term effects.

At the June 5 meeting, Austin City Council members approved an application for a planned unit development (PUD) at 200 East Riverside Drive. The agreement's primary effect on Austin Light Rail is that it includes space for right-of-way and related infrastructure for the future Waterfront Station, contributed by the developer and property owner.

Another item addressed by Council at the June 5 meeting was adoption of vision plans for North Lamar and South Congress Transit Centers (more information at <https://publicinput.com/t4686>).

The two plans were developed in partnership with CapMetro, which owns the facilities and properties. Both transit centers serve as transfer stations for several of CapMetro's busiest bus routes but sit adjacent to highways and car-centric land uses, significantly reducing nearby residents' ability to access the facilities without driving.

The vision plans provide a roadmap for breathing new life into the two properties and the neighborhoods immediately surrounding them.



A rendering from the North Lamar Transit Center Vision Plan. Credit: Perkins & Will for CapMetro & COA

The City is currently participating in a variety of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and design-related reviews for Austin Light Rail Phase 1, involving 11 City departments and several subject matter experts. These reviews cover a diverse array of components including early utilities and light rail design, Operations and Maintenance Facility design, light rail streetscape design, City-requested project betterments, and collaboration on mitigation commitments resulting from the NEPA impacts analysis.

A secondary effect of Austin Light Rail on the city will be how Austin's roads, sidewalks, and related infrastructure are reconfigured by the new transit service. Project Connect Office staff members are developing street design standards along the light rail alignment (called the Project Connect Design Criteria) in partnership with ATP and other City teams, including staff from Urban Design, Transportation & Public Works, and the street tree team.