



TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC WORKS

Living Streets Program Briefing

Mobility Committee – November 14, 2024

Matt Macioge, Capital Improvements Program Manager, Living Streets Program Manager



TRANSPORTATION
PUBLIC WORKS



Transforming Streets, Building Community

Content:

1. Living Streets Background and Overview
 - Types of activations:
 - Neighborhood Block Parties
 - Healthy Streets
 - Play Streets
2. Program Schedule
3. Demand and Response
4. Initial Activations and Lessons Learned
5. Improvements and Transitions
6. Studies



TRANSPORTATION
PUBLIC WORKS



Resolution No. – 20211021-02

Council directs the City Manager to create the "Street Programs" - Living Streets

Living Streets Program is a resident-led process.

Uses "soft" closures to reduce vehicle speed, improve safety, and create connectivity and community.

60% of the residents of a proposed street must approve with a signature to support an activation.

Either single day for Neighborhood Block Party or 3-6 months for a Play Street or Healthy Street with an option for renewal.

Address equity issues by making Living Streets accessible



Living Streets Program



Neighborhood Block Parties

Block Parties are one-time closures of a single block to allow residents to hold small, locally-focused events.

Permits are valid for the day of the event only. Each new event requires a new permit.



Play Streets

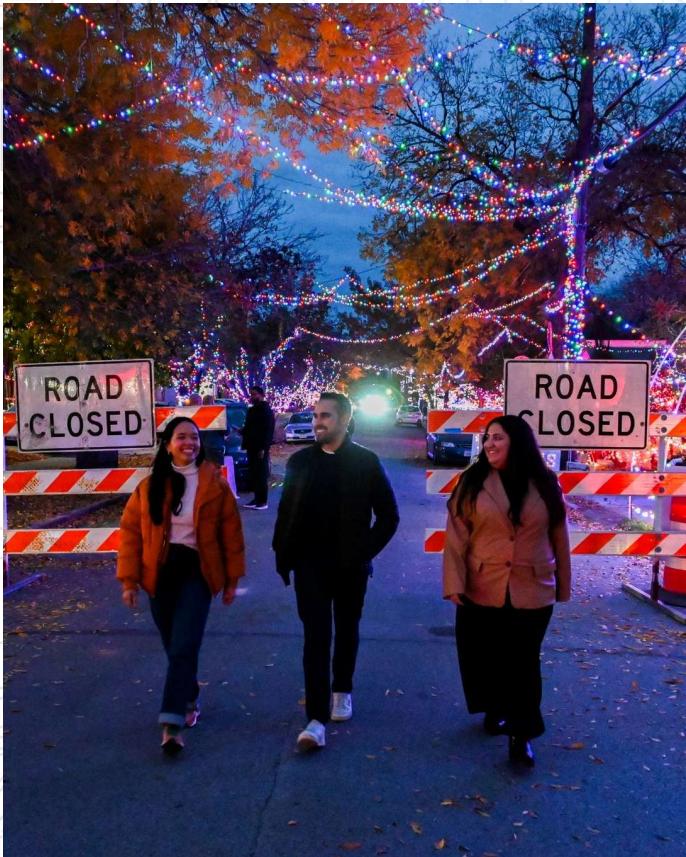
Play Streets provide space for children and adults alike to gather and play in a local street by allowing residents to partially close a single block to motor vehicle traffic for a few hours per day several days per week.



Healthy Streets

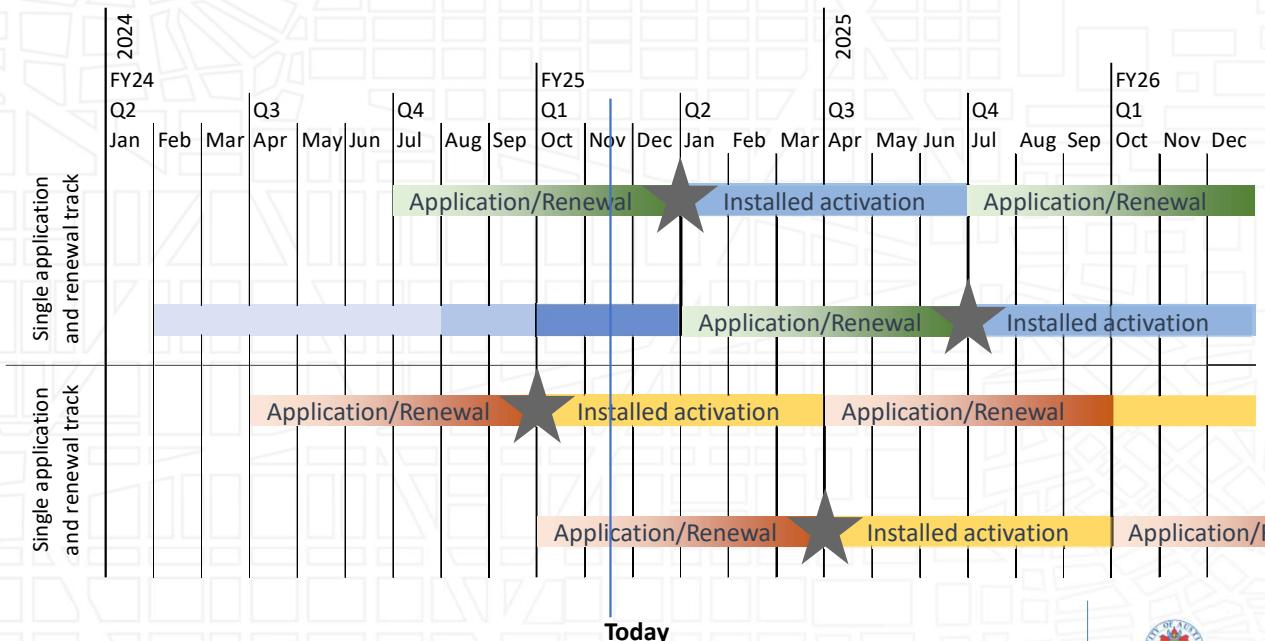
Healthy Streets provide space for people to walk, bike, roll, exercise, and build community within the public right-of-way by discouraging motor vehicle traffic along several local streets.





Two consecutive application and renewal tracks allow staff to maximize capacity and address back log of applications

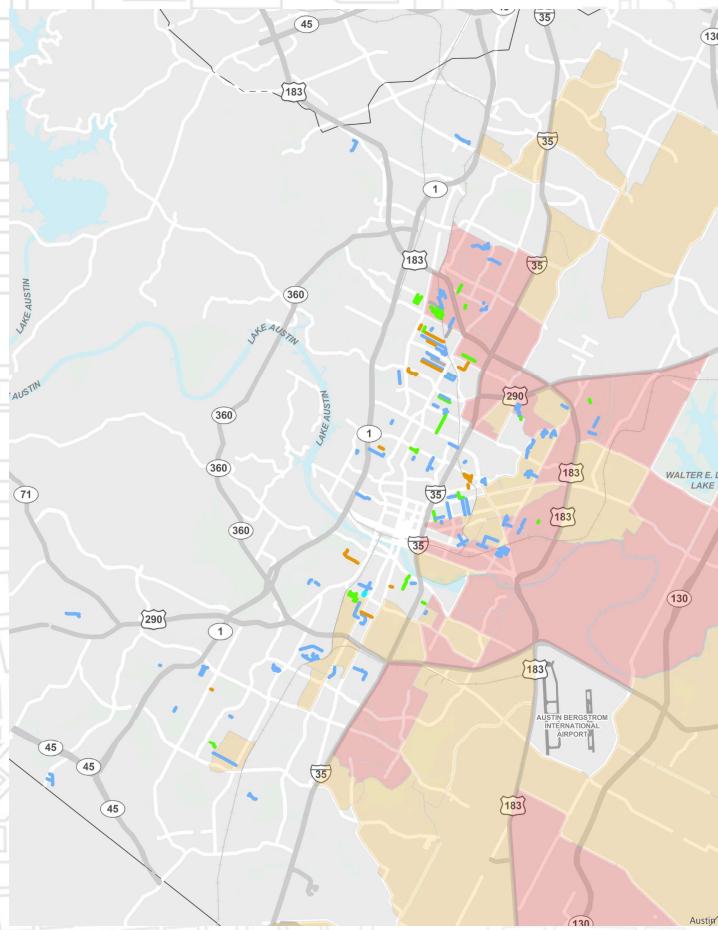
Applications not completed in time for review will roll over to the next cycle



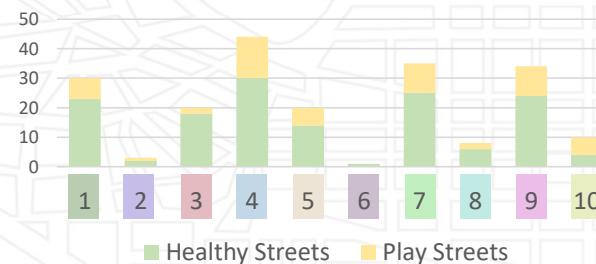
Application Cycles Every 3 Months



Activations and Council Districts Mapped



EOIs by Council District



Interests, Applications, and Installations

Council Districts 4, 7, & 9 had the most Expressions of Interest (EOI)

Medium-Low Equity Analysis Zones (EAZs) had the most EOIs

Least and Medium-Low submitted more applications than Medium-High and Most

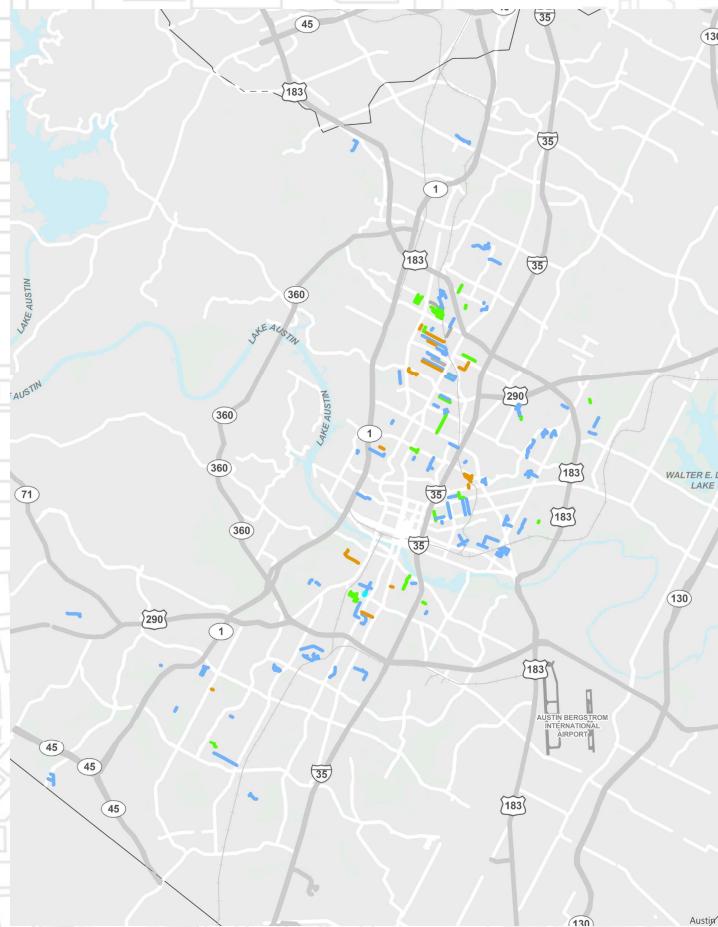
EOIs by Equity Analysis Zone



*All submitted EOIs



Activations Mapped



Interests, Applications, and Installations

First round of applications had the option to renew and align with the City's Fiscal Year and budget cycle

7 of 9 Healthy Street and 4 of 7 Play Streets from the initial cycle chose to renew

Second round of applications was **October 4th, 2024**

6 of 12 completed Healthy Street applications and 4 of 10 completed Play Street applications are installed

Next round of applications are **due January 3rd, 2025**.

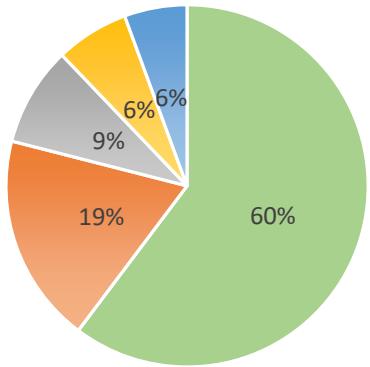
Initial activations coupled with a successful outreach campaign have helped to inform the public

Application Status	Application Approved	Application Deferred	EOI Reviewed	Total
Healthy Streets	13	6	56	75
Play Streets	8	6	23	37
Total	21	12	79	112

*Submitted and Viable EOIs



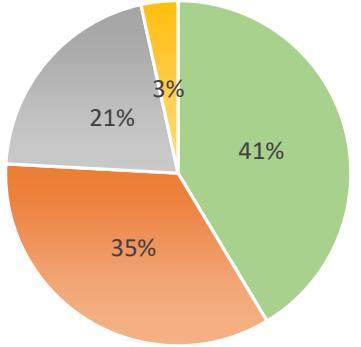
Healthy Streets Support



69% supportive

- I am very supportive
- I am somewhat supportive
- I am neutral
- I am somewhat opposed
- I am very opposed

Play Streets Support



62% supportive

Note: The surveys were sent out to all parcels within approximately 1 block of each activation. This varied based on the street network and neighborhood connectivity.

First Activation Installations

First round of resident led Healthy and Play Streets launched in February 2024

Neighborhood Block Party is fully integrated into the Living Street Portfolio

From December 2023 to present:

7 of 10 Healthy Streets were extended

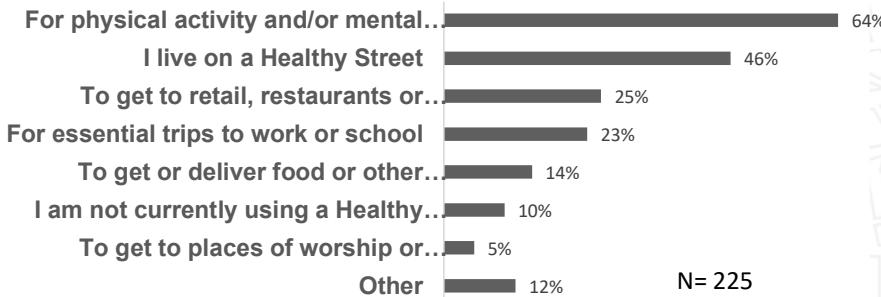
4 of 7 Play Streets were extended

42 Neighborhood Block Parties (current FY to date)



How do you use a Healthy Street?

*Respondents could select multiple options



Why are you using a Play Street?

*Respondents could select multiple options



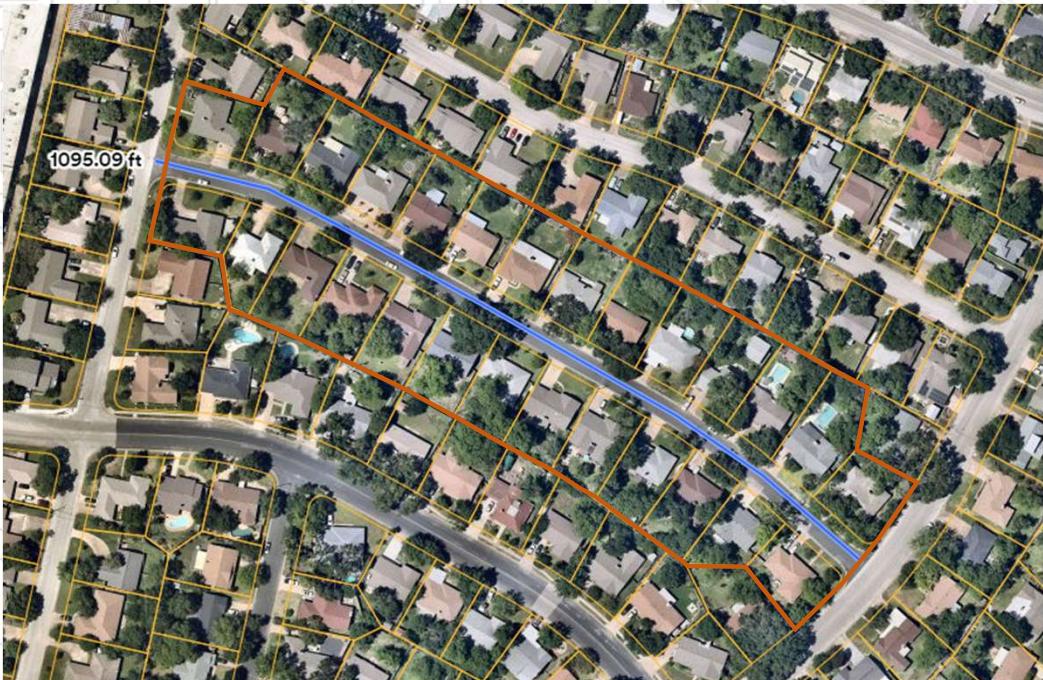
“Choose three words to describe how you feel when you’re using a”...

Healthy Street



Play Street





Kenbridge Drive Play Street

Did not renew

Prioritization: 6.0

Signatures: 17/27

Play Streets

The resolution sets forth that “a Play Street is intended to be a recurring, **complete street closure** that may occur for several hours, multiple times per week;”

“complete street closure” has the appearance of exclusion rather than inclusion.

Control plans include residents at the control points to allow traffic through.

In most cases this means three adults for each time slot need to be present – 1 at each closure and 1 facilitating and monitoring the activities.

More investigation needs to be done to develop real solutions.





Properly installed



Disorganized

Layout and Equipment

The closure system is required to meet TMUTCD standards and safety.

The amount of equipment creates clutter and results in increased maintenance

Though orange cones mean temporary, we are conditioned to assume they are associated with construction not recreation.



Healthy Streets Prioritization					Total of 11 Points Possible
Equity Analysis Zones	Park Deficient Areas	Children	Seniors		
 <p>EAZs are areas of Austin that have higher concentrations of historically marginalized populations and more barriers to achieving equitable outcomes.</p> <p>2 points</p>	 <p>Areas not within 1 mile of a park. These areas are in need of recreational space.</p> <p>1 point</p>	 <p>Census tracts that have greater than average percentage of people 18 and younger.</p> <p>1 point</p>	 <p>Census tracts that have greater average percentage of people 65 and older.</p> <p>1 point</p>		
Civic Destinations	Public Amenities	Culture and Entertainment	Multimodal Transportation	Sidewalks	Food Access
 <p>Banks Post Offices Hospitals & Urgent Care Places of Worship</p> <p>1 point</p>	 <p>Schools Libraries Rec Centers Parks</p> <p>1 point</p>	 <p>Movie Theaters Show Venues Museums Art in Public Places</p> <p>1 point</p>	 <p>Urban Trails AISD Bus Stops High Comfort Bike Routes Transit Stops</p> <p>1 point</p>	 <p>No Sidewalks Partial Sidewalks Complete Sidewalks</p> <p>1 point</p>	 <p>Grocery Stores Food Truck Parks Food Establishments</p> <p>1 point</p>

Updates

- Added additional destinations to reflect where people could use a Healthy Street to get to
- Added “Food Access” category to better capture how residents can use Healthy Streets to access Austin’s food scene
- Adjusted parks scoring methodology to be more in line with PARD
- Added additional types of parks for data completeness

Healthy Streets Prioritization

Healthy Streets have three goals: community building, recreation, and connection to destinations

Prioritization is based on:

Prioritization Value
* Resident Support
= Approval Rank



Play Streets Prioritization		
Total of 8 Points Possible		
Equity Analysis Zones	Park Deficient Areas	Children
 <p>EAZs are areas of Austin that have higher concentrations of historically marginalized populations and more barriers to achieving equitable outcomes.</p> <p>2 points</p>	 <p>Areas further from parks score higher, because residents have less access to nearby play space.</p> <p>2 points</p>	 <p>Census tracts that have greater than average percentage of people 18 and younger.</p> <p>1 point</p>
Street Length  <p>Shorter streets score higher, because it is easier to monitor.</p> <p>2 points</p>	Access Points  <p>Streets with less access points score higher, because it is easier to monitor.</p> <p>1 point</p>	

Updates

- Play Streets have different goals than Healthy Streets that should be reflected in the prioritization methodology
- Removed all destinations from scoring
- Added points to reflect where Play Streets would be easy to monitor
- Adjusted parks scoring methodology to better prioritize areas of the city without recreation space

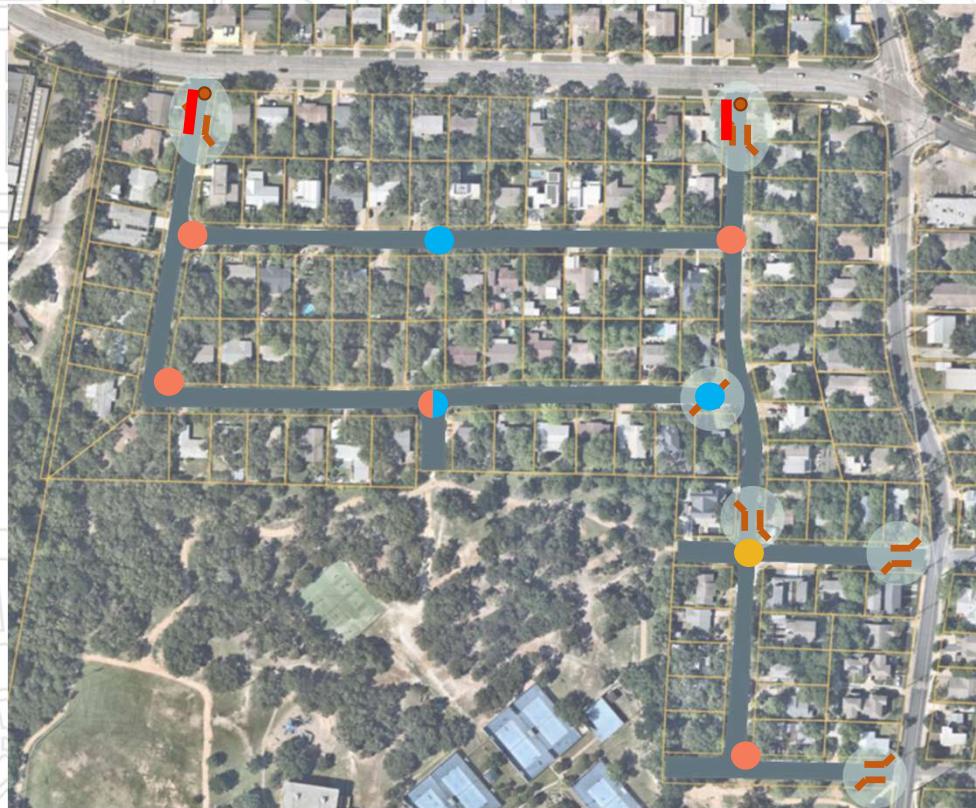
Play Streets Prioritization

Play Streets have two goals: community building and recreation

Prioritization is based on:

Prioritization Value * Resident Support = Approval Rank





South Austin Healthy Street

Prioritization: 6.0

Signatures: 70/93

Healthy Streets to Shared Streets

Living Streets staff and Shared Streets staff are collaborating on moving the temporary activations of a Healthy Street to the permanent installation of curb and gutter as a Shared Street.

The team is piloting South Austin now and in the design phase of the community feedback process.

Other Healthy Streets have expressed interest and are being evaluated.

Legend

- Living Street Closure
- Sidewalk / Median
- Curb Extension
- Pinch Point
- Traffic Circle





Concept sketches showing studies changing overtime for Control Point layouts

Living Streets Lab

FHWA Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant (SS4A)

Use the existing structure of Living Streets program to explore concepts through an iterative process to ensure safety, deliver a resilient community and address requests made of the program.

The demonstration grant will study the Control Point Layouts' configuration, equipment, and placement in the activations

It includes data collection through traffic studies, surveys and focus groups

Goal is to develop Best Practices for Austin





Continuity of the Living Streets Program

- Continue the Program as part of our Community Services Portfolio as scheduled with quarterly review and installations
- Update the marketing plan accordingly

Living Streets to Shared Streets

- Further develop the process between the programs
- Streamline the design and applications of Living Streets as a model for Shared Streets

Living Streets Lab

- Use demonstrations improve the closures and layouts
- Develop the program through Placemaking
- Utilize SS4A funding to address the needs of our Neighbors



Thank You!

Questions?

<https://www.austintexas.gov/LivingStreets>
LivingStreets@AustinTexas.gov



TRANSPORTATION
PUBLIC WORKS