

ORDINANCE AMENDMENT REVIEW SHEET

Amendment: C20-2026-003 Transit System Projects Ordinance Amendment

Description:

Amend the 2022 Transit System Projects Ordinance to add additional streamlining elements with a focus on project-specific technical regulation.

Background:

On October 29, 2021, City Council approved Resolution No. 20211029-003 directing staff to review City Code, criteria manuals, and permitting procedures to identify impediments to the design, construction, implementation, and operation of Project Connect to add streamlining elements with a focus on project specific technical regulation. The foundational ordinance for Transit System Projects, [Ord. No. 20221115-048](#), was approved by Council on November 15, 2022.

The Transit System Projects foundational ordinance created a central location for transit-specific regulations, expanded permitting options, clarified uses, and provided a programmatic approach to construction noise mitigation. The foundational ordinance was passed anticipating additional impediments being identified as the light rail design progressed.

The Ordinance Amendment was developed through coordination between eight City of Austin departments and Austin Transit Partnership in response to design-specific agreements for Austin Light Rail with the focus on streamlining process, supporting project delivery, guideway construction and its impacts to underground utility placement.

Summary of Proposed Code Amendment:

1. Modifies site plan requirements to accommodate permitting tools for the light rail permitting process.
2. Recission of obsolete utility ordinance from 2000.
3. Establishes back-of-curb streetscape standards for light rail.
4. Establishes a water quality compliance program for light rail.
5. Establishes administrative review of heritage trees for light rail.
6. Incorporates administrative rule modifications that proactively address constrained right of way conditions where compliance will be challenging and ensures consistency in expiration of site plan components.

Proposed Text Amendment(s): See attached draft ordinance.

Staff Recommendation: Recommended

Staff supports the proposed amendments to Ordinance No. 20221115-048. The amendments will further support Resolution No. 20211029-003 which directed staff to review City Code, criteria manuals, and permitting procedures to identify impediments to the design, construction, implementation, and operation of Project Connect to add streamlining elements with a focus on project specific technical regulation.

Staff concurs with the Environmental Commission recommended condition in bullet 5: Staff, ATP, APC, and relevant stakeholders will present updates to this Commission regularly as they become apparent.

Board and Commission Action:

April 15, 2026 – Codes and Ordinances Joint Committee (Forwarded to Planning Commission without a recommendation, 3-0-1).

April 15, 2026 – Environmental Commission (Recommended with Conditions, 9-0-1).

April 28, 2026 – Planning Commission (Approved Staff Recommendation 12-0)

Council Action:

May 21, 2026 – Public hearing and action by City Council.

Sponsor Department: Austin Project Connect

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