



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 24-6518, **Agenda Item #:** 73.

1/30/2025

Posting Language

Approve a resolution authorizing the submittal of the Bergstrom Spur Trails to Transit project as a candidate for the fiscal year 2025 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity discretionary grant program, administered by the U. S. Department of Transportation. Funding: Submitting the grant application has no fiscal impact. Transportation and Public Works is seeking an award amount of \$25 million and a 20% City funding match in the amount of \$5 million would be required and is available from the 2020 Mobility Bond Urban Trails Fund.

Lead Department

Transportation and Public Works

Fiscal Note

Submitting the grant application has no fiscal impact. Transportation and Public Works is seeking an award amount of \$25 million and a 20% City funding match in the amount of \$5 million would be required and is available from the 2020 Mobility Bond Urban Trails Fund.

Prior Council Action:

February 15, 2024 - Resolution No. 20240215-020, authorizing the submittal of the Bergstrom Spur Trails to Transit project as a candidate for the 2024 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity discretionary grant program was approved on an 11-0 vote..

November 30, 2023 - Ordinance No. 20231130-084, updating and amending the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, including the Urban Trails Plan, and establishing a Tier 1 Trail designation for the Bergstrom Spur trail was approved on a 10-0 vote with Council Member Alter off the dais.

For More Information:

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Additional Backup Information:

The Transportation and Public Works Department (TPW) seeks funding for the construction of the Bergstrom Spur Trails to Transit project from the United States Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program. The Trails to Transit project consists of the majority of the six-mile Bergstrom Spur Urban Trail augmented by strategic transit enhancements at intersecting corridors. Funds for the Fiscal Year 2025 RAISE grant will be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that decrease greenhouse gas emissions, address environmental justice and racial equity, and reduce barriers to opportunity. A total of \$1.5 billion is available to be awarded by USDOT for RAISE grants with an individual award size of up to \$25 million.

This action authorizes the City Manager to apply for construction funding of the Bergstrom Spur Trails to Transit project and to seek an award amount of up to \$25 million. A 20% City funding match (\$5 million), if awarded, is available from Urban Trails funds from the 2020 Mobility Bond.

The Bergstrom Spur Urban Trail is a designated Tier 1 Urban Trail extending from Vinson Drive to East

Riverside Drive near US 183 and with an opportunity for eventual extension to the Austin Bergstrom International Airport. This trail provides a recreational opportunity in a high-density, low-income, and park-deficient area. It also provides safe east/west pedestrian and bike connectivity where none currently exists and adds key connections to transit including the future Austin Light Rail.

City staff has partnered with the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Capital Metro) to incorporate transit enhancements to be funded through the Trails to Transit project and create critical connectivity to improve access to MetroRapid and eventual Austin Light Rail transit stops. Staff is also evaluating using Metrobike expansion grant funds received through the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to add bike share stops near the proposed trail-to-transit connections to greatly improve access to affordable and available e-bikes for recreation and transportation.

The Bergstrom Spur Urban Trail project will be supplemented by locally funded projects already underway. The South Pleasant Valley Road extension will complete key network improvements in southeast Austin by connecting the dead-end of South Pleasant Valley Road near Oltorf to Burleson Road, creating an important efficiency for Capital Metro's MetroRapid line under development. In addition, two projects in progress will create a safer crossing of SH 71 at Burleson Road/Todd Lane.

The Trails to Transit project will provide more ways for people in a historically underserved area to safely access transit, schools, employment centers, and other key destinations. The project is located in Council Districts 2 and 3 and is currently in design phase, which will allow construction to begin promptly if funds are received. If a RAISE grant is awarded, the City will be required to enter into a grant agreement with USDOT and formally designate the 20% required matching funds at that time. Final grant applications are due on January 30, 2025.