



604 West 11th Street

Austin, TX 78701

www.originalaustin.org

9 February 2010

Annick C. Beaudet, AICP
Project Manager, Bicycle & Pedestrian Program
Department of Public Works
City of Austin, Texas 78767

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RE: Original Austin NA Bicycle Boulevard support letter

Dear Ms. Beaudet, Mr. Lazarus, Mayor Leffingwell and City Council:

On 9 February 2010, at its regularly scheduled monthly meeting, the Board of Directors (BoD) of the Original Austin Neighborhood Association (OANA) voted unanimously to (1) unequivocally support the concept of a Bicycle Boulevard between Cesar Chavez Street to MLK Boulevard and continuing into the west UT Campus area, and (2) respectfully recommend to the City that the route of the boulevard be Rio Grande Street rather than Nueces Street.

Our recommendation of the Rio Grande Street option is based on the following:

- The Nueces Street option creates an uncertainty not only for the current development density along the street but also the success of future development of already approved projects along Nueces, especially the area between Cesar Chavez and West 6th Street.
- By locating the bike boulevard along Rio Grande Street, City resources can be allocated to complete several ongoing and much needed projects along the street such as the installation of a bike/pedestrian bridge at the south end of the street tying the boulevard into the Lance Armstrong Parkway and the Lake Ladybird and Shoal Creek trail system, and the installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of West 5th Street and Rio Grande Street.
- There are three active schools along Rio Grande Street, the Khabele School with 200 students, Pease Elementary with 240 students, and the ACC Rio Grande campus with over 7,000 students (ACC's long term goal for this campus is 11,000 students, with many of them being dually enrolled at UT). The bicycle boulevard would create a safer bicycle environment directly linking these schools to the UT Campus area.

In response to requests to consider Rio Grande Street as the bicycle boulevard, the City has come up with a plan to accomplish this vision without causing undo impact on traffic associated with or properties located along the street. There will be extensive uses of 12-foot traffic circles in intersections with the concurrent elimination of traffic calming devices envisioned on Nueces Street that resulted in the loss of on street parking spaces. The proposed Rio Grande Street plan would also fund a student drop off at Pease Elementary and the ACC Rio Grande campus thus creating a safe zone separating the student activity from the traffic.

The neighborhood association is committed to working with the City on this matter, and we are available to discuss this matter at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Original Austin NA, President