

# San Marcos Transportation Equity Cabinet

City Council Workshop  
February 4, 2025

# Agenda

- Introduction to the project
- Overview of Cabinet Meetings
- Definition of Transportation Equity
- What We Shared
- What We Learned
- Issues Identified
- Cabinet Recommendations
- Questions/Discussion

# Introduction to the Project

- Testing the “equity cabinet” model in a smaller city context
- Asking whether it improves members’ sense of agency and experience engaging with city, and whether it changes outcomes
- Based on a model implemented in King County, WA

# What is an equity cabinet?

- Recruit community members from historically underserved communities
- Ask them to attend a series of meetings to learn about a given topic
- Task them with developing a deliverable—in this case a definition of transportation equity and set of recommendations to improve city processes
- Pay them for their time

# Basic SMTX Equity Cabinet Facts

- 7 members
- 10 2-hour meetings, of which 6 including city staff presenting
- Meals at each meeting
- Members paid \$25/hr
- Rides provided for members who could not get to meetings otherwise

# Meeting Schedule

- We met on Mondays and Wednesdays, either at 1 PM or 6:30 PM
- We found that this worked because we had members who worked outside of town during the day and others who worked nights
- Each session had an average of 9 people
- We had an ice breaker to get started and a portion at the end where we wrapped up our thoughts

Topic
Brainstorming Definition
Transportation 101
Transit Route Study
Sidewalks and Bike Lanes
Parking and Scooters
Transportation Master Plan
Brainstorming Recommendations
Review Recommendations
Revisit Transit Route Study and Finalize Report
Present to city staff

# Our Definition of Transportation Equity

- Transportation Equity is:
- Multimodal transportation that provides equal accessibility throughout the city for everyone, especially the historically underserved.**
- We achieve that through:
- Processes that incorporate as much input as possible and allow the community to collaboratively reduce barriers to equal access.**

# What we shared

- Long history of inequitable inclusion in city decisions and inequitable infrastructure provision
- Sense that transit riders and pedestrians can't travel with dignity
- Inability to reach workforce training after relocation
- Uneven vulnerability to flooding post-development
- Confusion around information and prioritization
- Difficulty accessing events late at night without a car



# What we learned

- Many processes are less obvious than we thought, like sidewalk construction
- When plans have clear prioritization metrics, like CIP, it is easier to understand how to collaboratively reduce barriers
- Equity metrics for prioritization have not been used in the past/are not currently being utilized in decision making/are not easy to find publicly
- Heavy emphasis/lens on student population versus community members

# Issues Identified

- Information and Communication
- Prioritization
- Lack of consideration of non-drivers
- Funding

# Information and Communication Recommendations

- The city should hire a transportation planner to help secure funding to increase equity, help to work across silos, and keep plans “living”.
- Dashboard for plans to highlight projects in pipelines, what barriers are, how the city is performing on indicators, and where pilots stand
- Expand outreach beyond farmers market
- Publicize prioritization rules
- Create a standard protocol for translations

# Prioritization Recommendations

Bus Stops	Bus Shelters	Sidewalks
Location of affordable housing	Long wait times	Higher priority:
Most popular employers	High ridership by people with limited mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- low car ownership</li><li>- higher social vulnerability</li><li>- higher proportions of people with disabilities</li></ul>
High density	High ridership overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- most dangerous roads</li><li>- existing neighborhoods</li><li>- areas with high walkscores (areas with many destinations close together, but may not have safe sidewalks, e.g Clarewood)</li></ul>
Share of residents without cars		

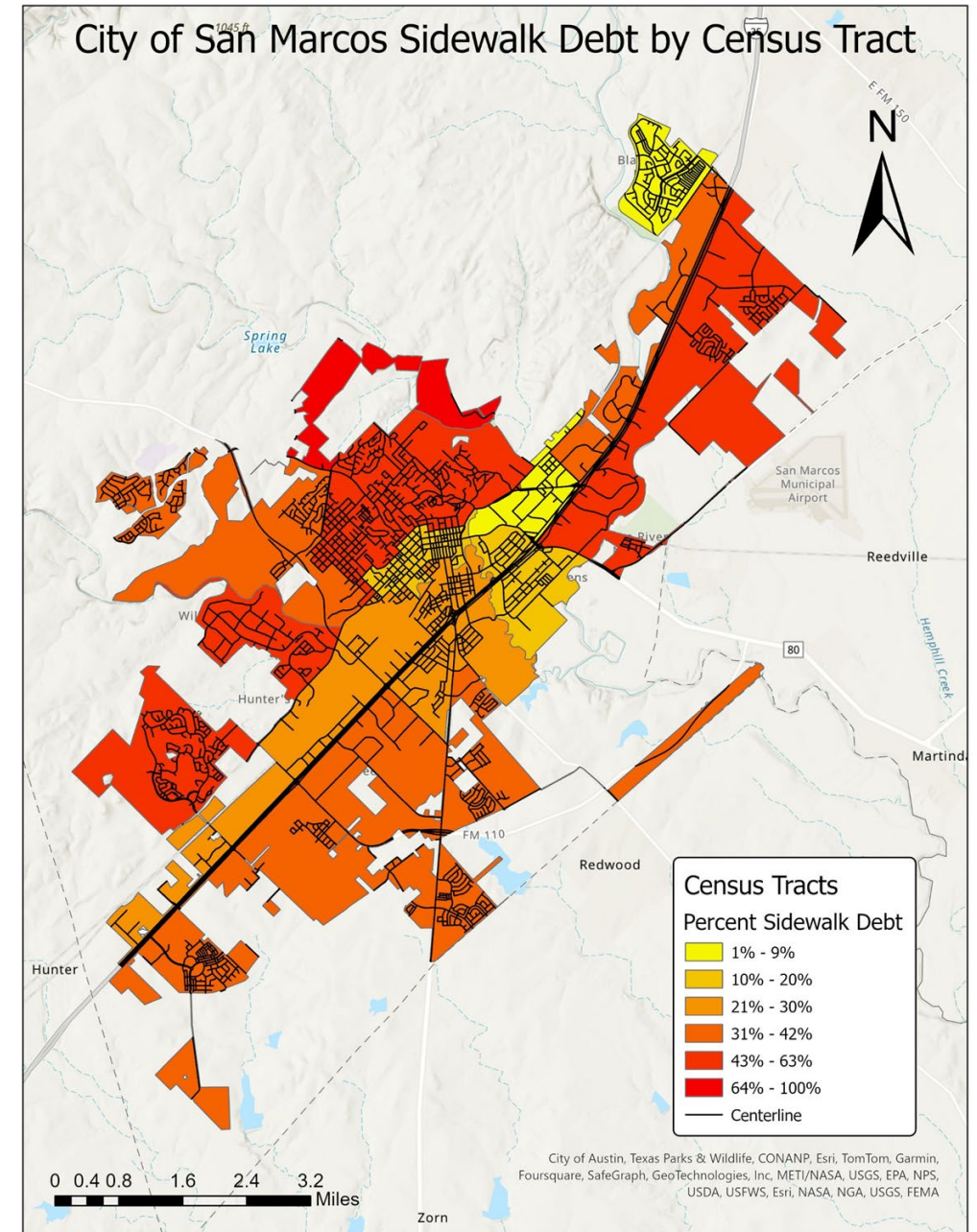
# Addressing Needs of Non-Drivers

**Investments that improve access to certain places without a car should be prioritized (either capital or operating)**

- E.g. prioritize sidewalk connections to transit and gap infill
- Measure accessibility with respect to:
  - Childcare facilities
  - Affordable housing complexes
  - Grocery stores
  - Transit stops
  - Medical facilities
  - Job training programs
- Consider non-car accessibility in land use and grant funding decisions (extra points for locations that are accessible without a car)
  - utilizing a scoring matrix for each category based on recommendations

# Funding

- Continue to aggressively seek grants
  - prioritizing the highest need in the community based on data and feedback
- Leverage sidewalk plan and dashboard to be transparent about funding needs and priorities.
  - Is \$240,000 sufficient to meaningfully improve and maintain the city's sidewalk infrastructure?
- Treat sidewalks like a utility in development agreements and another planning negotiations to secure funding to connect new developments to existing sidewalks and transit stops
  - Consider a density “trigger” for new sidewalks and transit stops- may occur within the 5yr plan highlighting a previous recommendation of a living comprehensive plan
- Increase transit funding to meet VisionSMTX goals of improved frequency, coverage, and ridership
  - Example: adding weekend service or extending into the night could be \$500-800k



Map by Dr. Ray's RA. Represents the percent of roads in a Census tract that do not have a sidewalk within 150ft of the centerline.

# Thank you!

Questions/Feedback very welcome!