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**CONTACT:** Joanna Wolaver

**PHONE:** 512-565-0812

**EMAIL:** joanna@shoalcreekconservancy.org

## **SHOAL CREEK CONSERVANCY RELEASES DRAFT *SHOAL CREEK TRAIL: VISION TO ACTION PLAN***

*Plan lays the groundwork for a continuous 13-mile pathway along Shoal Creek*

**AUSTIN, TX, June 29, 2018** -- Shoal Creek Conservancy released the draft *Shoal Creek Trail: Vision to Action Plan* ("Trail Plan"), which lays the foundation for implementing major improvements to the existing 3.9 mile Shoal Creek Trail, extending the Trail by nearly 9 miles, and connecting it to the Walnut Creek Trail north of Highway 183. Ultimately, the extended Shoal Creek Trail will become part of a 30-mile continuous "Big Loop" of urban trails traversing the city from Lady Bird Lake to Walnut Creek Metropolitan Park (see map on next page).

"As our city continues to grow, Austinites increasingly want practical alternative transportation options and green places of respite," said **Joanna Wolaver, Shoal Creek Conservancy Executive Director**. "The Shoal Creek Trail will serve both as a cycling and pedestrian thoroughfare and as a revitalizing setting where families can enjoy the Creek and enjoy nature."

The City of Austin Public Works Department (PWD), the Conservancy's chief partner in crafting the Trail Plan, has adopted the Plan as a framework to guide future Trail improvements. "It is with great pleasure that the Public Works Department accepts the *Shoal Creek Trail: Vision to Action Plan* as a guiding document for trail projects along the Shoal Creek corridor," said **Janae Spence, Urban Trails Program Manager with PWD**.

The Conservancy, in partnership with PWD and McCann Adams Studio, led a yearlong public process to guide development of the Plan. The Conservancy hosted three public workshops for over 230 community members during 2017 to share information and collect input on the proposed Plan.

In addition to general public input, two advisory entities provided guidance on Plan development: a Community Advisory Group (CAG) comprised of representatives from over 70 stakeholder organizations and businesses, and a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) including representatives from over 10 City departments and other public entities with an interest in Shoal Creek. In addition to PWD, key TAG entities included the City of Austin Watershed Protection, Transportation, and Parks & Recreation Departments. "We are excited to work towards implementing the transformative vision of this plan brought forward with broad community support," said **Laura Dierenfield, Active Transportation Program Manager with the Transportation Department**.

**Michael L. Personett, Watershed Protection Department Interim Manager**, also expressed support on behalf of his department: "The Watershed Protection Department is excited to continue working with Shoal Creek Conservancy and other City departments to implement the *Shoal Creek Trail: Vision to Action Plan*. Our department strives to improve the urban environment by promoting public use and enjoyment of Austin's creeks. Through thoughtful, environmentally-sensitive design, trails can be successfully integrated along waterways and will help foster a deeper appreciation of these unique resources by connecting people with nature."

The CAG, TAG, and members of the public identified and ranked five projects for priority implementation. In order of importance, these projects include:

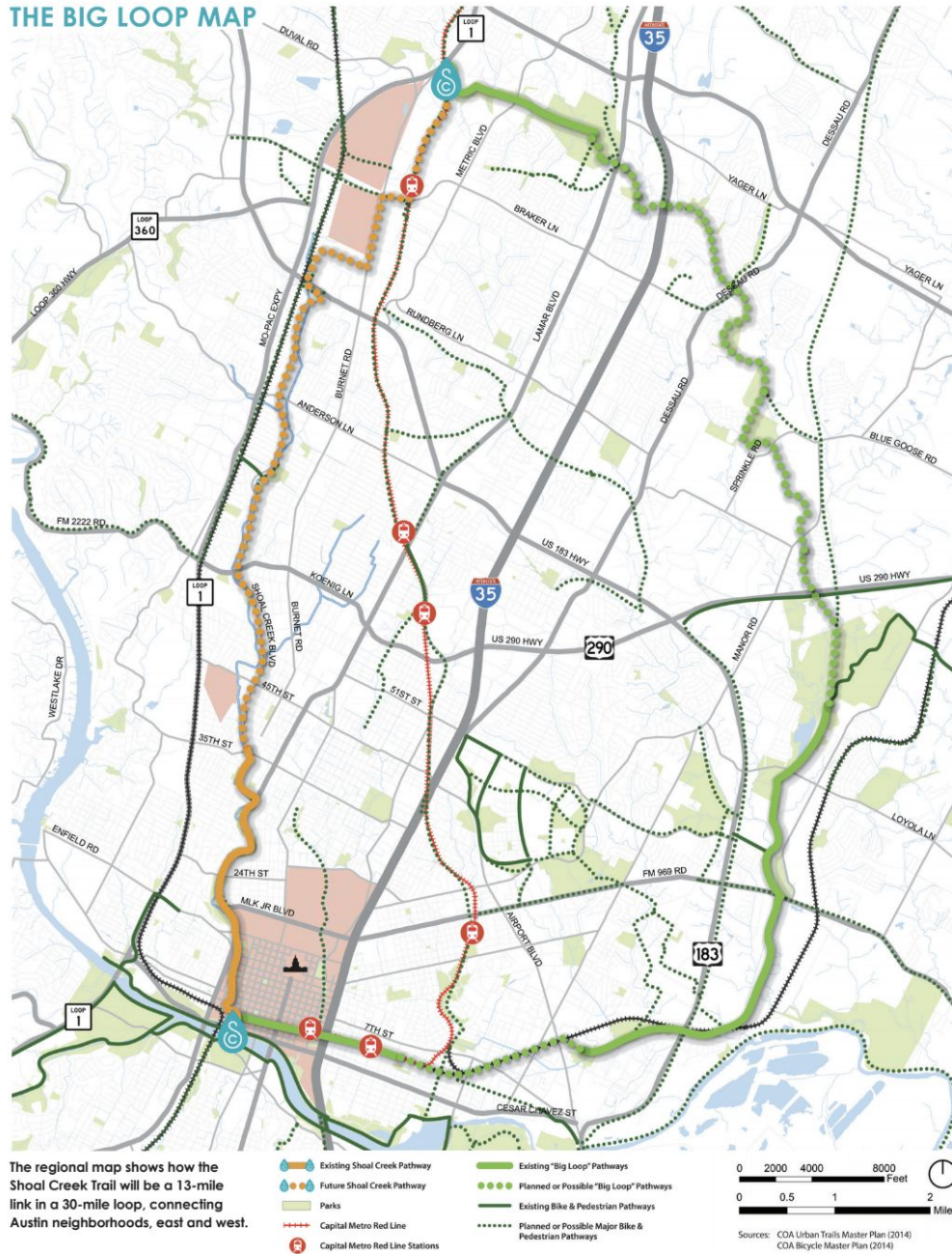
1. *Shoal Creek Blvd.*: Re-stripping of Shoal Creek Boulevard, from West 38th Street to Foster Lane, to create a two-way protected bicycle lane and a wider sidewalk, where space is available, on the western edge of the street.
2. *Wayfinding & Interpretation*: Creation and implementation of an Interpretive and Wayfinding Master Plan for the entire Shoal Creek Trail Corridor.
3. *Safety Gaps*: Addressing key connectivity and safety gaps along the route, including the bicycle/pedestrian crossings at West 34th and West 38th streets, and the intersection of West 45th Street and Shoal Creek Boulevard.
4. *Cypress & Shoal*: Creation of a public plaza at the intersection of Shoal Creek and 3rd Street, which will involve construction of a bicycle/pedestrian underpass at 3rd Street, and repurposing the nearly century-old railroad trestle bridge as a scenic overlook.

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5. *5th to 6th Streets Trail*: Implementing Trail improvements between West 5th Street and West 6th Street, including installation of a formal Trail access point adjacent to the West 6th Street Bridge.

Over the next several months, Shoal Creek Conservancy and the Public Works Department will give informational presentations on the Plan to City Council and to City boards and commissions. A schedule of upcoming presentations can be found at [www.shoalcreekconservancy.org/trailplan](http://www.shoalcreekconservancy.org/trailplan). Ultimately, the Public Works Department will work to incorporate the Plan as an amendment to the City's Urban Trails Plan (UTP) during the UTP's next revision process.

Members of the public are encouraged to view the draft Plan and provide input at [www.shoalcreekconservancy.org/trailplan](http://www.shoalcreekconservancy.org/trailplan). Public feedback will be collected through July 31, 2018.



*Shoal Creek Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that champions the 13-square-mile Shoal Creek watershed and the creek and trail running through it. The Conservancy engages in thoughtful public-private partnerships, leads fun and meaningful educational programming, and spearheads on-the-ground improvements that make Shoal Creek and the Shoal Creek Trail safer, more accessible, and more inspiring places to be. Learn more at [www.shoalcreekconservancy.org](http://www.shoalcreekconservancy.org).*