



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Transit
Administration**

REGION VI
Arkansas, Louisiana,
New Mexico, Oklahoma,
Texas

819 Taylor St. Suite 14A02
Fort Worth, TX 76102
(817) 978-0550
(817) 978-0575 (fax)

March 8, 2021

Megan Spencer
South River City Citizens Neighborhood Association
vicepresident@srccatx.org

RE: Section 106 Initiation for the Capital Metro Orange Line Project in Austin, Travis County, Texas

Dear Ms. Spencer:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), in cooperation with the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Capital Metro), is initiating an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the **Orange Line Project** (the Project) in Austin, Texas. As lead Federal agency, FTA has determined that the Project is a Federal undertaking subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and is the type of activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties. As part of our responsibilities under the NHPA, FTA is initiating Section 106 consultation and invites your participation as a consulting party.

Project Description

The Project is a part of Capital Metro's 2018 *Project Connect Long-Term Vision Plan* (Project Connect). Project Connect lays out a regional vision for high-capacity transit investments that would add mobility options for the Central Texas region. The Project Connect region includes the surrounding five-county metropolitan statistical area of Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, and Williamson counties.

The Project includes a 20-mile light rail transit service extending from the Tech Ridge Park-and-Ride, along the west side of the University of Texas at Austin campus, through downtown Austin to Slaughter Lane at the southern end of the corridor. The line would operate at street-level throughout most of the corridor, except where underground through downtown. Route alignment and station locations will be further refined during the EIS process, working in close consultation with the public, agencies, and key stakeholders. A map of the Project is provided in Figure 1 (enclosed).

Responsibilities of a Consulting Party

A consulting party has a formal and defined role in the Section 106 process. It is typically an agency, group, or organization with special knowledge of, concern for, or a mandated regulatory role that pertains to cultural resources in a project area. Cultural resources can include archaeological sites, historic buildings, and historic structures or landscapes. Consulting parties help FTA and Capital Metro consider the impacts of a proposed project on cultural resources. This includes helping to identify resources located in or near the project area, assessing the

historic significance of those resources, and identifying potential measures that could be implemented to minimize or mitigate adverse effects. Being a consulting party would involve your time and expertise. Your input could be in the form of written correspondence or in-person meetings. We do not anticipate an overly burdensome amount of time being necessary.

If you are interested in participating as a consulting party for the Project, please respond in writing within 30 days of receipt of this letter via the attached form. We ask that you include a statement of demonstrated interest in the Project. We will notify all consulting parties of future meetings.

If you have any questions please contact Terence Plaskon, FTA Environmental Protection Specialist, at (817) 978-0573 or via email at terence.plaskon@dot.gov. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Donald R. Koski, AICP
Deputy Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration, Region VI

Enclosures

cc: Jacob Calhoun, Capital Metro Project Manager

Figure 1. Orange Line Project



**Consulting Party Invitation Response
Orange Line Project**

Yes, I _____, wish to be a consulting party under Section 106 of the NHPA for the Orange Line Project. My demonstrated interest (e.g., legal or economic relation to the Project or affected properties) is as follows:

Or;

No, I _____, do not wish to be a consulting party under Section 106 of the NHPA for the Orange Line Project.

Date: _____

Name of Individual: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Please return to:

AECOM
Attn.: Melinda Jensen
9400 Amberglen Boulevard
Austin, Texas 78729
Email: melinda.jensen@aecom.com