

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

About VIA's Advanced Rapid Transit Project

What is VIA's Advanced Rapid Transit Project, or "ART"?

The ART project is designed to move more people faster and farther, using vehicles traveling in dedicated and mixed-use lanes along designated corridors that connect major residential and business centers.

The first ART corridor will cover 11.7 miles, from the San Antonio International Airport, along San Pedro Avenue, through Downtown and south to the Missions area. It includes service connections to Brooks Transit Center and Stone Oak Park & Ride.

ART stations will offer high frequency service, level boarding, off-board fare collection, transit signal priority for vehicles, and other convenient amenities.

Where will the first corridor for the project be?

The North-to-South ART corridor is the first phase of a system that could include more corridors in the future. It will provide connectivity to key destinations within San Antonio and the surrounding region, including employment centers, the airport, universities, and health care. A second ART corridor is proposed to run from east to west.

How much will the project cost?

The ART North-to-South corridor project is expected to cost \$386.4M in the year of expenditure, 2027.

How will the project be funded?

The ART North-to-South corridor will be funded using VIA Project Funds, Federal Transit Administration Capital Investment Grant Funds, and through a loan (TIFIA) that will be paid back using ATD Sales Tax Revenue.

How could the project improve safety?

VIA's ART project is designed to improve safety by adding sidewalks for station access, improving pedestrian crossing conditions, and managing turns along the corridor. It supports the City of San Antonio's Vision Zero goals/actions, including safer access to transit, eliminating sidewalk gaps, improving traffic signal timing for people walking and biking, and adding infrastructure in high-injury areas.

According to City of San Antonio data, there are 500 to 700 accidents on San Pedro annually. The ART station designs include medians that provide pedestrian refuge, eliminate conflicts along roadways, resulting in safer streets, reduce crashes up to half (per TxDOT Statewide Motor Vehicle Crash Statistics) and create significantly fewer intersection conflict points.

What phase is the project in (as of January 2023)?

We are in the preliminary design phase of the first corridor for VIA's Advanced Rapid Transit project. Service is expected to begin in 2027.

I received a "right of entry" letter from VIA, what does that mean?

VIA is in a preliminary design phase of its Advanced Rapid Transit (ART) North/South Corridor Project. VIA is reviewing the feasibility of placement for passenger stations and other operational improvements on the route. Property owners along the route, were sent a right of entry letter. This letter establishes VIA's right of access, if VIA determines access to a property is necessary. If access is necessary, the purpose will only be to gather information for project development and design. This may include a visual inspection, utility investigation and/or property boundary survey. Should VIA need access to a property for these purposes we will coordinate with property owners in advance.

There was an attachment in the letter, titled the "Landowner's Bill of Rights" that mentions "eminent domain." Why was that included?

The purpose of the Landowner's Bill of Rights is to inform landowners who may be impacted by the proposed project of their rights under state statutes. The inclusion of the "Landowners Bill of Rights" does not reflect VIA's intent to acquire property by eminent domain and is instead included only to inform the property owner of its possible use, should the need arise.

Is VIA planning to take anyone's home through eminent domain?

There are no plans to acquire homes along the proposed North-to-South corridor.

Will residential properties be affected by the project?

Limited access to residential areas is expected, based on current designs. Most of the property used will be in the commercial areas of San Pedro Avenue.

When could VIA use eminent domain to acquire property along the corridor?

Current plans have preliminarily identified the need for small portions of properties along the corridor for passenger station placement, pedestrian improvements, or other operational improvements. These specific impacts will not be known until the conclusion of the Preliminary Design. While VIA has the authority to use eminent domain to acquire property, as of December 2022, plans do not identify any residential property for full acquisition/taking. No acquisitions would occur until the necessary studies and required public hearing, including Board action, is completed. Draft plans and roll plots of the project can be found at KeepSAMoving.com.

How will new transit service affect land use in my neighborhood?

VIA has no land use authority, so when we add stations, we are not altering land use at all. VIA cannot rezone property and change its use.

Will this project decrease my property value?

Increased and improved transit options do not have negative effects on property values, historically. Projects like ART increase frequency and decrease the number of stations along the corridor to move people faster, often from residential areas to commercial corridors. San Pedro Avenue has been a major transit hub for over 100 years and continues to be a busy corridor for public transportation in San Antonio.

How has VIA reached out to the community?

VIA has conducted extensive community and public outreach throughout the project's development. For example, ART project staff attended 11 neighborhood and resident association meetings, visited nearly 200 businesses along the corridor, and held three telephone-town hall meeting, during 2022 to share information about the project. Community members were notified by mail, online, and local media regarding project developments. Visit the [Keep SA Moving website](http://KeepSAMoving.com) for information and resources about the project and to request a presentation for your group or organization.

General Questions

What is the Advanced Transportation District?

On Nov. 2, 2004, voters in San Antonio approved the formation of the Advanced Transportation District, or ATD. This district uses a quarter-cent sales tax to fund transportation improvement projects carried out by VIA, the City of San Antonio, and the Texas Department of Transportation, or TxDOT. VIA receives half of the ATD revenues to enhance local public transportation services, and the other half is split between the city and TxDOT for improving streets, highways, and related transportation infrastructure.

Why is the sales tax for VIA's Advanced Transportation District, if approved by voters, the agency's "in perpetuity?"

In the 1970s, the Texas Legislature created state laws that authorized the creation of metropolitan transit agencies (MTAs) and created a funding structure – up to 1 cent of local sales tax. MTAs operate large transit networks that rely primarily on funding from local sales tax. In creating the legal infrastructure for MTAs, The Texas Legislature did not include a path for rescinding funding for them because they provide a public service and require funding certainty to cover recurring operating costs. MTAs could not adequately plan or execute services if their funding sources were uncertain.

Benefits and Impacts of the Plan

What is the Keep SA Moving plan?

The *Keep SA Moving* plan is designed to improve the transit and mobility network by connecting more people to more places with fast, frequent and reliable service. The plan includes:

- Enhanced bus system that connects people to places of interest
- A more direct network for new and experienced riders
- Increased frequencies in busiest corridors
- More evening, late-night and weekend service
- Planning for ART, a high-frequency network of dedicated lanes conveying high-capacity vehicles
- New infrastructure projects attracting increased federal investment