

I-35 CAPITAL EXPRESS CENTRAL



Comment Themes and Responses Virtual Public Meeting with In-person Event Aug. 10 – Sept. 24, 2021

The following themes were the primary topics expressed by the public and agencies in comments submitted to TxDOT Aug. 10 -Sept. 24, 2021. Listed in alphabetical order, the themes represent frequently mentioned subjects and are not intended to summarize all feedback given by project stakeholders during the official meeting comment period. All comments received during the 45-day comment period have been documented and are being considered by the project team.

At the summer 2021 virtual public meeting and in-person event, TxDOT announced that two of the three proposed build alternatives (Alternative 2 and 3), along with the no-build alternative, would be carried forward for further evaluation in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Since that time, TxDOT has reviewed community feedback and worked with community leaders and organizations to make additional refinements to both Alternative 2 and Alternative 3. The result of that work was presented to the public at the January 14, 2022, CapEx VOICE meeting, including the announcement of a refined Alternative 2 and a Modified Alternative 3. The modifications incorporated many of the design features requested by the community. Thus, some of the comment responses have been updated to reflect the most recent design changes and may refer to Modified Alternative 3 or refined Alternative 2 where applicable.

For more information about the I-35 Capital Express Central project and how to submit feedback, visit [My35CapEx.com](https://www.my35capex.com).

Comment Themes		Response
1	Aesthetics – TxDOT should consider aesthetics in the project design.	To celebrate Austin’s cultural and community diversity, TxDOT has launched the Live35 (Locally Influenced Visual Enhancements) aesthetic design program in partnership with the City of Austin for the I-35 Capital Express Central project. The goal is to gain community input to help identify design elements for cross streets and east-west connections that resonate with Austinites. This will improve east-west connectivity and enhance bridges and intersections to reflect the Austin community. TxDOT will also work with the community to develop materials and gather feedback on outreach and engagement strategies.
2	Air Quality – TxDOT should consider how the project will affect air quality.	The air quality analysis to be conducted for the I-35 Capital Express Central project is in accordance with the Austin-Round Rock region’s

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		<p>current attainment/unclassifiable status for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards and will follow TxDOT's guidance for complying with the Clean Air Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Federal Highway Administration code regarding project effects on air quality (see Air Quality Toolkit: https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/environmental/compliance-toolkits/air-quality.html).</p> <p>As part of the air quality analysis for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), TxDOT is evaluating quantitative assessments of CO (carbon monoxide) for all proposed build and no-build alternatives as well as a review of MSATs (Mobile Source Air Toxics) for the corridor. This data will be made available for review and public comment as part of the DEIS and Public Hearing. Quantitative MSATs and CO2 (carbon dioxide) analyses, for the preferred alternative, will be presented as part of the Final EIS and Record of Decision (ROD).</p>
3	Alternative 1 – Alternative 1 should be carried forward in the DEIS and built for the design of the project.	At the summer 2021 public meeting, TxDOT announced that two of the three proposed build alternatives (Alternative 2 and 3), along with the no-build alternative, would be carried forward for further evaluation in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Since that time, TxDOT has reviewed community feedback and worked with community leaders and organizations to make additional refinements to both Alternative 2 and Alternative 3. The result of that work was released in January 2022, with the announcement of a Modified Alternative 3, which incorporates many of the design features requested by the community.
4	Alternatives the Same – Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 seem the same.	Both Alternative 2 and Modified Alternative 3 include operational and safety enhancements that would reconstruct ramps, bridges and intersections; improve frontage roads; enhance bicycle and pedestrian crossings, accommodate transit routes and accommodate the construction of caps, or deck plazas. The most significant difference between the two is the shifting of the frontage road in Modified Alternative 3 from the east side of the interstate to the west side to create an urban boulevard. Other distinguishing features include the number of bicycle-pedestrian crossings proposed in

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5	<p>Bike/Ped Safety – Safety for bicyclists and pedestrians should be considered and access provided within the project design.</p>	<p>Modified Alternative 3, as well as the innovative intersection at East Riverside Drive and the removal of the previously proposed flyover at US 290 East.</p> <p>Enhanced, continuous bicycle and pedestrian paths in both directions along I-35 are included in the proposed build alternatives. Additional improvements include: 16.6 miles of shared-use paths in construction or design, 13 connections to the urban trail network and bicycle network, and more than 28 intersections that contain bypass lanes to reduce through traffic and create safer areas for people walking, biking, or otherwise not in vehicles.</p> <p>Further, based on input from community groups, including Downtown Austin Alliance, Reconnect Austin and Rethink35, each east-west crossing within the project area has been enhanced to include wider bridge structures with 30 feet of combined shared-use path and buffer between bicyclists and pedestrians and vehicular travel lanes for a safer, more user-friendly experience. Among the recent design changes included in the proposed build alternatives are several new bicycle-pedestrian-only crossings throughout the corridor.</p> <p>For illustrations on the bike/ped safety concept, visit: https://my35capex.com/bicycle-pedestrian-improvements/</p>
6	<p>Bury/Tunnel – TxDOT should consider burying or tunneling I-35 instead of the proposed alternatives.</p>	<p>In the process of preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in 2020, TxDOT moved three proposed build alternatives forward to the scoping process for further evaluation. Alternative 1 proposed the installation of managed lanes into tunnels with the mainlanes in a lowered section above the tunnels and frontage roads at street level to keep the profile as narrow as possible.</p> <p>Three proposed build alternatives and a no-build alternative were evaluated based on engineering and environmental criteria established through the agency and public scoping process. Based on the results, TxDOT determined that Alternative 1 would not be carried forward. Proposed build Alternatives</p>

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	<p>2 and 3 were carried forward for evaluation as part of the Draft EIS (along with the no-build alternative), based on the following key advantages they offer when compared to Alternative 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster response times for EMS, police, fire department and hospitals. • Shorter construction duration by 1.5 years. • Improved traffic operations during construction with fewer lane closures. • Fewer utility conflicts and lower relocation costs. • Fewer drainage conflicts. • Lower design-build costs. • Lower annual and lifetime maintenance requirements and cost. <p>The evaluation was presented to the public in August-September 2021. TxDOT will continue to evaluate and improve the proposed build alternatives through additional public involvement and coordination with stakeholders and the City of Austin to maximize improvements and minimize environmental impacts.</p>
<p>Business/Residential Displacements/Do Not Widen – Widening the I-35 footprint will displace too many businesses and residents.</p> <p>7</p>	<p>Minimizing the amount of right of way is one of the major objectives of TxDOT’s Mobility35 Program, which includes the I-35 Capital Express Central project, and right of way will continue to be refined throughout the process. The majority of the proposed impacts are in the upper deck area (Airport Boulevard to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard). Right-of-way (ROW) in this area is 200 feet. TxDOT will require at least 100 additional feet of right of way to accommodate construction, which will include deconstructing the decks while keeping three lanes of traffic open in both directions on I-35 during construction.</p> <p>The Community Impacts Assessment, which began spring 2021, will explore and evaluate the needs of adjacent communities and document the existing and projected social environment with and without the proposed action. The assessment will include an analysis of mobility, safety, access to employment, relocation, isolation and other community issues.</p>

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		<p>TxDOT will focus on determining the potential impacts to people of color, minority and low-income populations, those with limited English proficiency, elderly populations, people with disabilities and children. Among the elements to be analyzed are displacements and relocations, the availability of affordable housing and bicycle and pedestrian improvements as connections between the east and west sides of I-35.</p> <p>For more information about TxDOT’s right-of-way process, visit: https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/right-of-way.html Link to Row forms and publications page: https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/forms-publications/consultants-contractors/forms/row.html</p>
8	<p>Caps/Deck Plazas – Implement caps for east-west connectivity and for park/greenspace opportunity.</p>	<p>In coordination with the City of Austin, TxDOT is evaluating potential locations to accommodate caps, or deck plazas, that were recommended for design as green spaces within Central Austin. These include areas from 12th Street to 11th Street, 8th Street to 6th Street and 4th Street to Cesar Chavez Street. An enhanced cap area at Dean Keeton Street near The University of Texas is also being considered.</p> <p>The City of Austin can implement cap-and-stitch development, funding and implementation within the Capital Express Central project. If outside funding is committed, TxDOT’s proposed improvements will include the infrastructure to support the city’s cap-and-stitch plan. Working together with the community, our agencies can bring improvements to enhance connectivity within our city. Similar projects across Texas were funded through local partnerships, such as the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas.</p>
9	<p>City of Austin – TxDOT should coordinate with the City of Austin to align the Capital Express Central project with other city projects and improvements.</p>	<p>TxDOT is coordinating with the City of Austin and other local agencies to align plans, where feasible and appropriate, while conforming with state and federal requirements. TxDOT hosts regular meetings on the overall program. Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike/pedestrian accommodation. • Cap Metro coordination. • Community values.

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	<p>Where possible, TxDOT is incorporating elements of the City of Austin’s current Bicycle Master Plan, the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, City of Austin Vision Zero goals, Austin’s Climate Equity Plan and adopted neighborhood plans adjacent to the I-35 corridor.</p>
<p>Climate Change – TxDOT should consider how this project will affect the climate.</p> <p>10</p>	<p>TxDOT has conducted a greenhouse gas (GHG) analysis for the statewide on-road transportation system and associated motor vehicle emissions and published the Statewide On-Road Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis and Climate Change Assessment technical report. This report also discloses projected climate change projections for the state of Texas, how TxDOT is responding to a changing climate and TxDOT actions and funding that reduce on-road GHG emissions. A brief summary of this report will be incorporated in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).</p> <p>Potential impacts on the human and natural environment that would result from the proposed build alternatives and no-build alternative will also be evaluated as part of the EIS process. The outcome of these studies and the identification of the preferred alternative included in the Draft EIS will be presented to the public and agencies at the public hearing. Topics include water resources, air quality, traffic noise, community impacts, vegetation and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, indirect and cumulative Impacts, historical and archeological resources, hazardous material sites, land use, parkland and climate change.</p>
<p>Community Alternatives – Community alternatives should have been considered and evaluated before the alternatives were presented at the public meeting.</p> <p>11</p>	<p>Three community alternatives were independently evaluated for feasibility by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI), including those developed by Reconnect Austin, Downtown Austin Alliance and Urban Land Institute and Rethink35. The evaluation found that none of the community concepts could be considered feasible as stand-alone projects. However, many elements of the community concepts have been incorporated into TxDOT’s planned improvements, and this work continues as the alternatives are refined.</p>

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	<p>The I-35 Capital Express Central project alternatives under evaluation would reduce traffic on neighborhood streets whereas the proposed community alternatives would increase neighborhood traffic. The TTI report found that Rethink 35 and Reconnect Austin reduce the capacity of I-35 and increase traffic volumes on the adjacent city street network, in many cases by more than 25%, particularly in east Austin. The city network is neither designed for, nor capable of handling the additional traffic.</p> <p>View the TTI report at: https://my35capex.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Community-Alternatives-Analysis.pdf.</p>
12	<p>Crash Rates – Crash rates and safety should be considered as the project develops.</p> <p>Federal regulations require that the purpose and need statement “briefly specify the underlying purpose and need to which the agency is responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action.” TxDOT has revised the purpose and need statement based on community feedback to further emphasize safety. We are currently updating the design to current design standards and focusing on what will improve the road and facilities safety including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving east-west connectivity across I-35 with widened bridges. • Proposing 20-inch buffers between bike/ped and vehicular travel. • Utilizing bypass lanes that relieve frontage road intersection congestion. • Including extra lanes between entry and exit ramps that will reduce the conflicts in these weaving areas across the corridor. <p>Based on public and agency input and comments from Scoping Meeting #1, TxDOT revised the project purpose and need statement to incorporate a project purpose of enhancing safety within the corridor. Criteria added to the safety evaluation included a summary of crash rates, crash severity, and crash types. The Purpose and Need Technical Report, which can be found here: https://my35capex.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Final-Purpose-Need-Technical-</p>

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	<p>Report.pdf, includes crash data, including safety related to bicyclists and pedestrians.</p>
13	<p>East-West Connectivity – The project design should improve connectivity between the east and west sides of I-35.</p> <p>TxDOT is improving east-west connectivity by rebuilding cross street bridges for wider, safer bicycle and pedestrian crossings. These proposed crossings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 feet of combined shared-use paths and buffers between the road and the paths. • A street and shared-use path connection at 5th street. • New bicycle-pedestrian bridges between US 290 East and 51st Street, at both Red Line crossings at Airport Boulevard and 4th Street, and other potential locations. <p>Each alternative was evaluated on its ability to provide enhanced vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian east-west crossings along the I-35 Capital Express Central project limits, as well as its ability to accommodate Capital Metro’s Project Connect proposed light rail system at east-west crossings.</p> <p>TxDOT, in coordination with the City of Austin, is evaluating multiple deck cap areas that were recommended as potential green spaces within the urban core of Austin. The deck plazas will also improve east-west connectivity. The locations were recommended from 12th Street to 11th Street, 8th Street to 6th Street and 4th Street to Cesar Chavez Street as well as an enhanced cap area at Dean Keeton Street near The University of Texas.</p> <p>TxDOT is evaluating multimodal enhancements to east-west crossings including wider and more accessible cross streets at multiple locations. TxDOT is also coordinating with the City of Austin to tie into the city street network as well as the Butler Hike and Bike Trail at Lady Bird Lake for continuity of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.</p>

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		To celebrate Austin’s cultural and community diversity, TxDOT is launching Live35, an aesthetic design program in partnership with the City of Austin for the I-35 Capital Express Central project. The goal is to gain community input to help identify design elements that create an I-35 with cross streets and east-west connections that resonate with Austinites. This will improve east-west connectivity and enhance bridges and intersections to reflect the Austin community. TxDOT will also work with the community to develop materials and gather feedback on outreach and engagement strategies.
14	East-West Connectivity/Racial Justice – The project design continues to divide the east and west sides of I-35 and promoting systematic racism.	<p>I-35 was built along East Avenue in Austin, which was seen as a racial divide in the city’s early history, and later evolved as a regional highway corridor throughout 1930-1950. By 1955, one year before the Interstate Highway Act was signed into law, the East Avenue corridor carried the designation as the ‘Interregional Highway’, ‘Blue Star Memorial Highway’ along with U.S. Highways 79, 81 and 290.</p> <p>TxDOT understands the significance of I-35 to the local community and the chance to address local concerns as we develop and implement the Capital Express Central project. This project offers the chance to remove the visual separation within Austin and provide opportunities to reconnect communities and spaces east and west of I-35. The reconnection would involve removing the upper decks and elevated lanes, lowering I-35 through the downtown core and rebuilding the east/west bridges for wider and safer bicycle and pedestrian crossings.</p> <p>TxDOT is working closely with the City of Austin, CapMetro and the community to allow for outside funding to be committed for the development of deck plazas to rebuild I-35 in a way that encourages transit and meets the needs of commuters, local bicyclists and pedestrians.</p>
15	Induced Demand – Improvements to I-35 will induce demand and cause more congestion.	The stretch of I-35 within the project area is one of the most congested roadway sections in the state. The Capital Express Central project is being proposed to keep this multi-functional interstate moving, as it plays an

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	<p>important role in the transfer of people, goods and services within Austin and throughout Texas and the central United States.</p> <p>The project proposes to maintain the same number of mainlanes, three in each direction, excluding auxiliary lanes connecting ramps, as exist currently. The main additional capacity proposed as part of the project is in the form of four high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) managed lanes, two in each direction, that seek to provide travel time reliability while limiting the negative impacts of induced demand by restricting the lanes' use to high occupancy and mass transit vehicles thus moving more people not necessarily cars. Bypass lanes are also being proposed to reduce congestion along I-35 at local streets and frontage roads to allow drivers to avoid stoplight-controlled intersections. By implementing safety and operational improvements, rather than inducing demand, the project will address latent demand, which refers to travel that cannot take place because of constraints or congestion. We see latent demand when drivers who would use I-35 avoid it in favor of neighborhood streets. Due to congestion on I-35, traffic is spilling over into neighborhoods causing further delays to local travelers. When additional multi-modal opportunities and operational improvements are provided, the driver would likely opt for a more direct route and use I-35. At that point, the latent demand materializes as actual usage. The recent Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) study found the TxDOT design alternatives help alleviate traffic from the local street network.</p>
<p>16 Keep Upper Decks – Do not remove upper decks on I-35.</p>	<p>The Capital Express Central project proposes to remove the existing I-35 decks within the project limits. This design reflects community feedback and the results of evaluating both maintaining and removing the decks. The decks no longer meet current design standards nor can they be upgraded to permanently accommodate additional lanes. The community feedback began in early 2010 including the Downtown Stakeholder working group led by former City of Austin Mayor and Texas State Senator Kirk Watson. The report may be viewed at: https://ftp.txdot.gov/pub/txdot/my35/capital/projects/capital-express-central/stakeholder-report.pdf</p>

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	<p>TxDOT also hosted five Decks Neighborhood Workshops for nearby neighborhood residents and The University of Texas. The “decks area” is located between Airport Boulevard and MLK Jr. Boulevard. Participants called for the decks to be removed. In both alternatives under consideration, the decks remain elevated. The Downtown Stakeholder Working Group releases a report with recommendations (https://my35capex.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Downtown-Stakeholder-Working-Group-Report.pdf) and supports lowering the mainlanes and managed lanes.</p> <p>In January 2020, TxDOT hosted the I-35 Capital Express Central design charrette to solicit input from stakeholders regarding previous concepts that were developed. During this meeting TxDOT received additional input to be considered during the development of further proposed build alternatives, including the addition of two managed lanes in each direction and removing the decks. More than 30 concepts were proposed during the charrette. Design charrette participants included TxDOT personnel, Mobility35 General Engineering Consultant staff, representatives from the City of Austin Transportation Department, Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, CapMetro, CAMPO, FHWA, the University of Texas and Downtown Austin Alliance.</p>
<p>17 Reduce Speed Limits – Request to reduce speed limits within the project limits.</p>	<p>Current frontage road posted speeds within the project area range between 40-50 mph. Posted speeds are determined once construction is complete. For all proposed build alternatives, TxDOT is lowering frontage road design speeds to 35-40 mph.</p> <p>TxDOT routinely evaluates the design guidance, which includes design speed, and must comply with federal and state standards for highway design, including TxDOT’s Roadway Design Manual, the AASHTO Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets and the Texas Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.</p>

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		<p>Design speed is used explicitly for determining minimum values for road design, such as horizontal curve radius and sight distance based on the roadway function and classification. Roadway geometric design features such as cross-section elements, lane widths, shoulder width, etc., are determined based on the road function and safety in relation to the design speed.</p> <p>The posted speed limit is normally set at the nearest value to the 85th percentile speed ending in 5 or 0 of the observed speed of a group of vehicles traveling on a section of road. City governments and TxDOT must conduct traffic and engineering studies according to requirements outlined in TxDOT's publication, Procedures for Establishing Speed Zones, when setting a speed limit on the state highway system.</p>
18	Lowered Lanes – Lanes should be lowered within the project limits.	All proposed build alternatives include removal of the upper decks and lowered lanes through the project corridor.
19	More Lanes Needed – The project should include adding more lanes instead of moving forward with the proposed alternatives.	<p>TxDOT is optimizing the number of lanes based on traffic demand. All proposed build alternatives propose to add two high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) managed lanes and bicycle and pedestrian shared-use paths, carpools/vanpools, in each direction from US 290 East to SH 71/Ben White Boulevard. The HOV lanes would be reserved for use by carpools, vanpools, transit vehicles and emergency responders.</p> <p>TxDOT is also evaluating an intersection bypass lane system throughout the project. Bypass lanes are being proposed to reduce congestion along I-35 at local streets and frontage roads to allow drivers to avoid signalized intersections. The project will maintain three to four mainlanes in each direction, which is the same number that exists today. These design options would improve operations by allowing vehicles to bypass frontage road intersection signals in certain areas and improve overall operations that benefits transit and provides enhanced people-carrying capacity.</p>
20	Mount Calvary Cemetery – Concern for taking right of way from cemetery.	TxDOT is considering acquiring right of way along the border of Mount Calvary Cemetery where it meets the northbound I-35 frontage road. St.

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		Edward’s University, which owns the cemetery property, has expressed full support of the I-35 Capital Express Central project. Assumption Cemetery, which maintains the grounds, has confirmed that no recorded graves appear in the proposed right of way. In accordance with best practices, TxDOT will use extreme care to fully examine the land as design details are finalized.
21	No Build – Not in favor of any of the proposed build alternatives.	The proposed build alternatives, along with the no-build alternative, are undergoing further evaluation in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The project is still in the design phase, and proposed improvements are subject to change as community feedback is collected and considered. The most recent developments include significant refinements to Alternative 3, which has resulted in Modified Alternative 3 as of January 2022.
22	No Higher/No Wider – Do not elevate or widen I-35.	<p>The proposed improvements include removing the upper decks, lowering the roadway and adding two high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) managed lanes in each direction along I-35 from US 290 East to SH 71/Ben White Boulevard. The project will also reconstruct east-west cross-street bridges, add pedestrian and bicycle paths, and make additional safety and mobility improvements within the project limits.</p> <p>In 2011, TxDOT was looking at a modified existing design including elevation. In 2014, the North Central neighborhoods requested the removal of the upper decks as part of the project. In 2017, TxDOT announced it could add two high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) managed lanes in each direction and remove the upper decks between Airport Boulevard and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard.</p> <p>To remove the upper decks, we are working to minimize impact and displacement of residents and business owners. In our effort to lower the lanes and provide adequate space for two high-occupancy vehicle/transit lanes in each direction, the current schematics propose acquiring an additional 100 feet of right of way in this area. To dismantle the upper decks and keep three traffic lanes operating in each direction during</p>

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	<p>construction, TxDOT requires more than the 200 feet that is currently available in the upper deck section. As a comparison, the downtown section, from Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard to Lady Bird Lake, has between 375-400 feet of right of way.</p> <p>The proposed build alternatives also include a 20- to 25-foot buffer between residential fences and I-35, and a lowered speed limit of 35-40 mph along the frontage road. Minimizing additional right of way is a major objective of TxDOT's Mobility35 Program, which includes the I-35 Capital Express Central project, and right-of-way needs will continue to be refined. For more information about TxDOT's right-of-way process, visit: https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/right-of-way.html</p> <p>Link to Row forms and publications page: https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/forms-publications/consultants-contractors/forms/row.html</p>
<p>Public Transit – The alternatives proposed for the project should accommodate and promote public transit.</p> <p>23</p>	<p>Each alternative was measured for its ability to accommodate Capital Metro's Project Connect proposed light rail system at east-west crossings.</p> <p>At the present time, public transit buses, registered van pools and emergency vehicles must remain in traffic with all other vehicles on I-35. Managed lanes would help manage overall traffic demand and provide qualifying vehicles with a more reliable route, allowing them to bypass congestion and arrive at their destinations more quickly. Transit would have access to the managed lanes in the proposed build alternatives, which could improve transit operations.</p> <p>TxDOT is collaborating with CapMetro to study the feasibility of direct transit access and identify funding to be provided by others.</p>
<p>Reroute Traffic, Reroute to 130 – Reroute traffic to another corridor within the city or to SH 130.</p> <p>24</p>	<p>The project team has considered and documented community input regarding rerouting traffic from I-35 or redesignating I-35 to SH 130. Every day, more than 200,000 vehicles travel on I-35 within the project area (from US 290 East to SH 71/Ben White Boulevard). Of this amount, 82% is local traffic, meaning it originates or ends in the vicinity of the project</p>

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	<p>area. Through traffic, or traffic that does not start or stop within the project area, comprises 18% of total traffic. With regard to truck traffic, even if there were no trucks that used I-35, the same number of lanes would be required to manage current and future demand. In addition, incentives to use SH 130 would have little effect on trucks needing to make deliveries along the I-35 corridor.</p> <p>SH 130 is part of the Central Texas Turnpike System (CTTS), which is made up of segments from SH 130, SH 45 North, Loop 1 and SH 45 SE. An outstanding \$3 billion in debt is assigned to the system which would also be the cost to remove the tolls on SH 130. The current \$4.9 billion allotted for the I-35 Capital Express Central project would not be eligible for paying this outstanding debt. TxDOT would need a waiver to reduce or remove the tolls. While this does happen, it is usually for a temporary scenario such as construction.</p>
25	<p>Sound Walls / Noise Barriers– The project should include methods to reduce traffic noise.</p> <p>TxDOT is evaluating existing and future traffic noise impacts and ways to reduce them (by implementing noise barriers) as part of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The results of this study, including proposed noise barriers, will be included in the Draft EIS and presented at the public hearing.</p> <p>For more information, please refer to the traffic noise barrier brochure: https://ftp.txdot.gov/pub/txdot-info/env/toolkit/730-01-bro.pdf</p>