



Virtual Public Scoping Meeting #2

I-35 Capital Express Central Project

March 11–April 9, 2021

CSJ 0015-13-388



The environmental review, consultation and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated Dec. 9, 2019, and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and TxDOT.



Virtual Public Scoping Meeting #2 Presentation

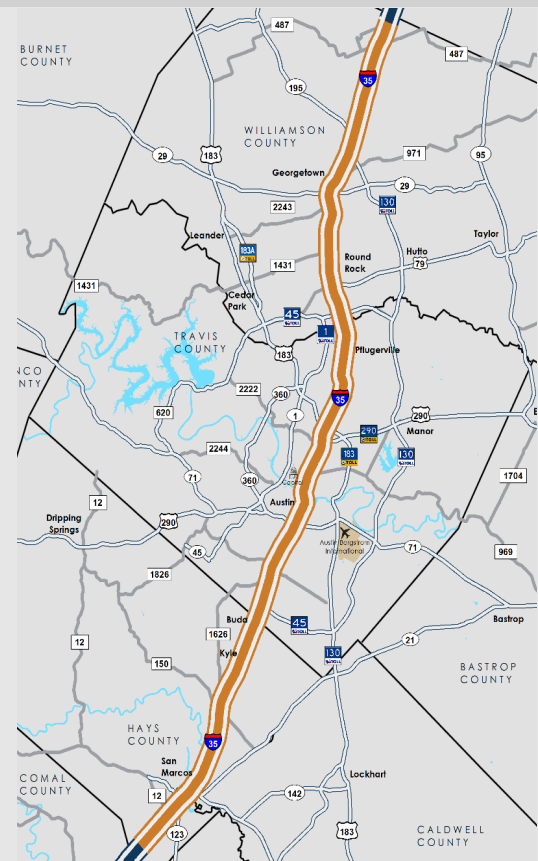


- 1 Environmental Impact Statement
- 2 Scoping Meeting #1 Review
- 3 Build Alternatives and Design Options
- 4 Purpose and Need
- 5 Alternatives Evaluation Criteria
- 6 Environmental Analysis
- 7 How to Provide Feedback



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

- I-35 is one of the most congested highways in Texas. In the Austin area, it is home to 5 of the 100 most congested roadway segments, according to the Texas A&M Transportation Institute.
- Program Goals and Objectives
 - Enhance safety.
 - Optimize the roadway footprint.
 - Increase capacity.
 - Minimize additional right of way.
 - Manage traffic better.
 - Improve east/west connectivity.
 - Improve compatibility with neighborhoods.
 - Enhance bicycle, pedestrian and transit options.





Texas Department of Transportation is developing an Environmental Impact Statement for the I-35 Capital Express Central project in Travis County, Texas.

- An environmental analysis is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). An Environmental Impact Statement is prepared when it is anticipated that a proposed project could significantly affect the quality of the human and natural environment.
- An Environmental Impact Statement evaluates a range of build alternatives and a no-build alternative.

My35CapEx.com

I-35 Capital Express Central Project



Includes improvements along approximately 8 miles of I-35, from US 290 East to SH 71/Ben White Boulevard, with additional flyovers at I-35 and US 290 East

- Construct two managed lanes in each direction
 - Managed lanes, such as high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, are a set of lanes within a highway that are separated from the mainlanes
 - Access is controlled by placing restrictions on use
- Reconstruct ramps, bridges and intersections
- Improve frontage roads
- Enhance bicycle and pedestrian paths
- Accommodate transit routes





SCOPING MEETING #1 REVIEW

Virtual Scoping Meeting #1 (November – December 2020)

- Draft coordination plan and schedule
- Draft project purpose and need
- Draft range of alternatives



Virtual Scoping Meeting #2 (March – April 2021)

- How alternatives will be analyzed
- Coordination plan and schedule
- Project purpose and need
- Range of alternatives

The public and agencies have 30 days to review information and provide comments. Comments must be provided by **Friday, April 9, 2021** to be included in the official meeting record.



- 2,300+ public and agency comments received
- Themes included:
 - Consider additional design alternatives that include deck plazas, or caps, cross-street amenities and/or urban boulevard concept
 - Align with local plans
 - Prioritize safety, including safety for bicyclists and pedestrians as well as vehicles
 - Explore financing options, including fee-managed lanes
 - Evaluate impacts to community health and equity
 - Analyze climate change and greenhouse gases
 - Support and facilitate enhanced transit operations and connections
 - Divert trucks to SH 130 or other corridors



How Comments are Being Addressed



Scoping documents continue to be revised to address and incorporate comments provided by agencies and the public.

Agency Coordination Plan and Public Involvement Plan

- Invitations to Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs and Federal Transit Authority to be cooperating/participating agencies
- Articulates additional, targeted outreach to vulnerable populations

Purpose and Need Technical Report

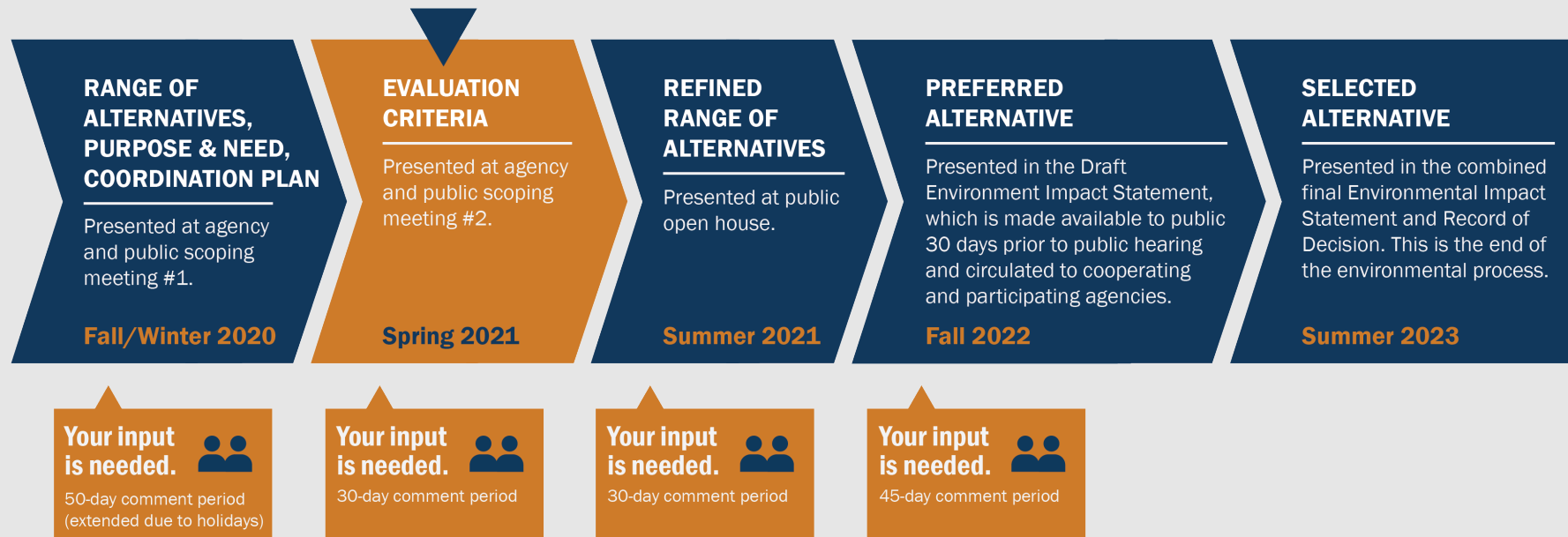
- Purpose and Need statement additions include expanded project emphasis on safety, east-west connectivity, and travel demand

Range of Alternatives Technical Report

- Input used to revise build alternatives and develop alternatives evaluation criteria



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TxDOT encourages feedback throughout the duration of the project. In addition to the official comment periods listed above, feedback may also be submitted via workshops, neighborhood meetings and stakeholder outreach. These events will take place throughout the process, and public comments submitted will be documented and incorporated as the project is developed.



BUILD ALTERNATIVES & DESIGN OPTIONS

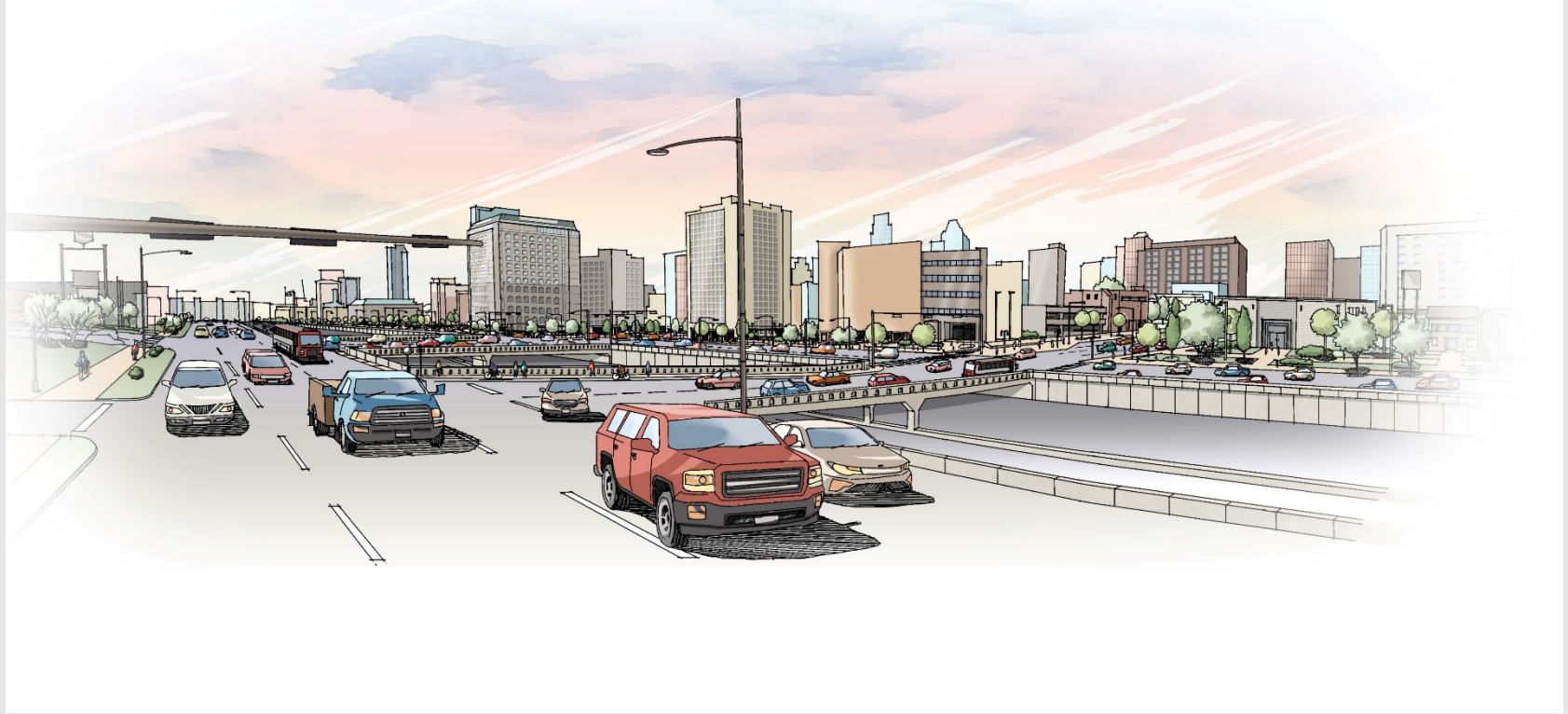


- Build alternatives are concepts for the full corridor that will be measured based on the alternatives evaluation criteria
 - TxDOT has identified three preliminary build alternatives based on known corridor constraints and a “no-build” alternative
- Design options affect only a certain segment of the corridor and may be applied to the alternatives, where feasible
 - TxDOT is analyzing the feasibility of four design options

Envision I-35 at 8th Street - BEFORE



Envision I-35 at 8th Street – AFTER (all build alternatives)



Envision I-35 at 6th Street - BEFORE



Envision I-35 at 6th Street – AFTER (all build alternatives)





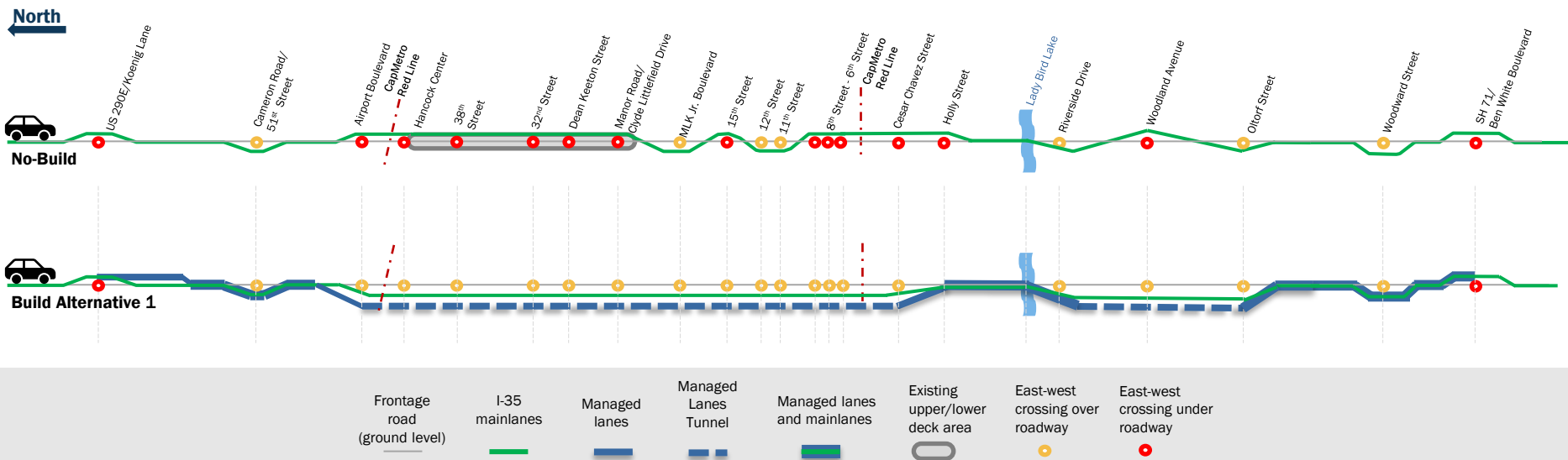
Envision I-35 at 32nd Street - BEFORE



Envision I-35 at 32nd Street – AFTER (all build alternatives)

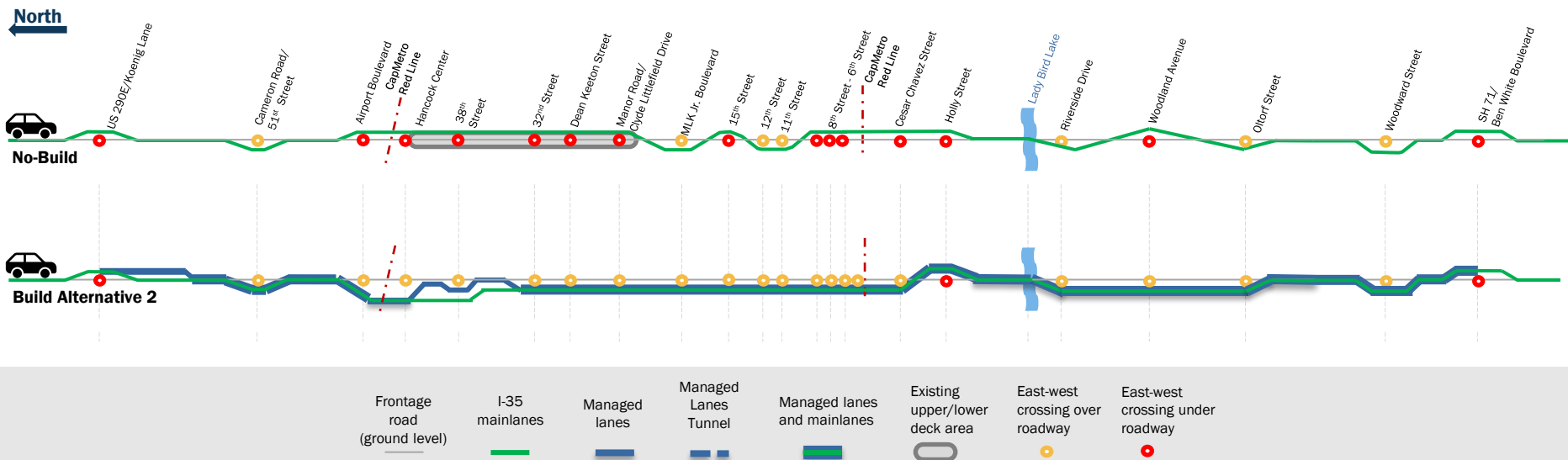


Build Alternative 1: Side-View Elevation Looking East



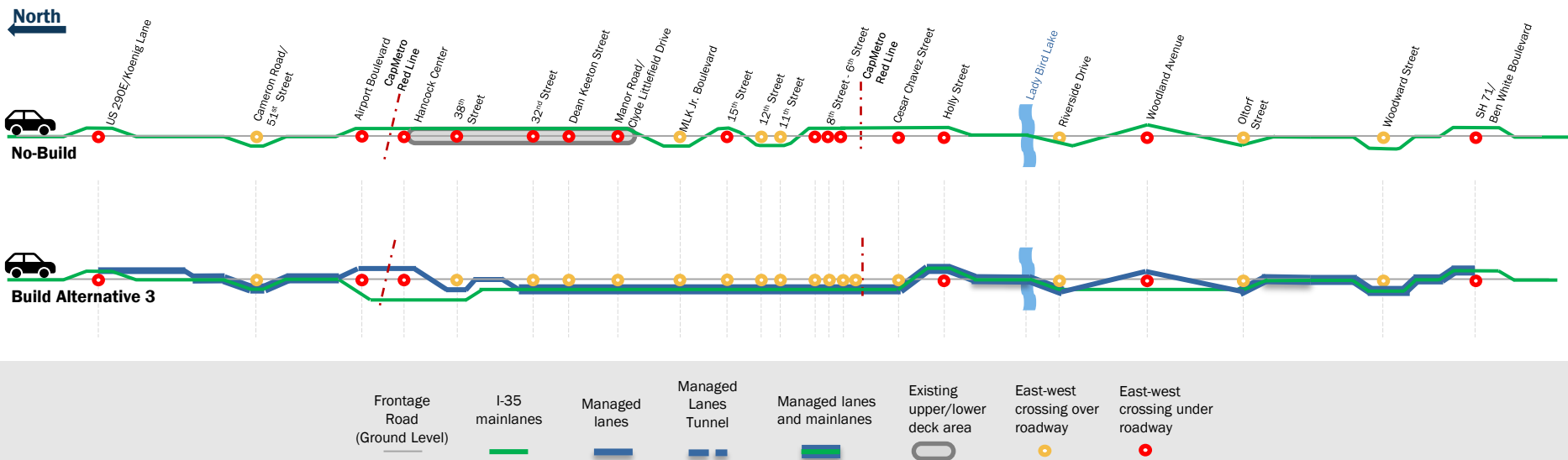
The profiles depicted here are intended to convey the general concepts of the proposed build alternatives. All build alternatives are preliminary and subject to change. Image is not to scale.

Build Alternative 2: Side-View Elevation Looking East



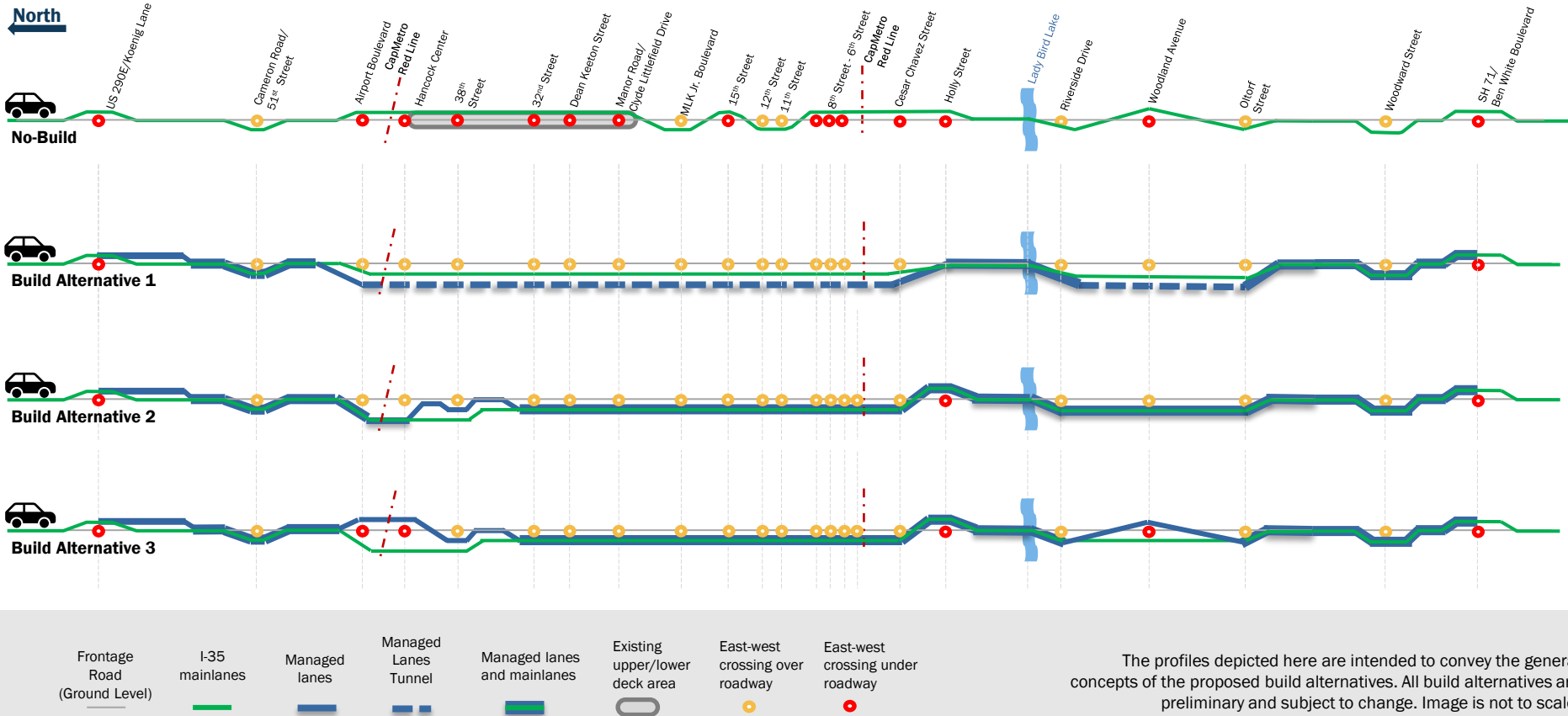
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Build Alternative 3: Side-View Elevation Looking East



The profiles depicted here are intended to convey the general concepts of the proposed build alternatives. All build alternatives are preliminary and subject to change. Image is not to scale.

Alternatives: Side-View Elevation Looking East



The profiles depicted here are intended to convey the general concepts of the proposed build alternatives. All build alternatives are preliminary and subject to change. Image is not to scale.



- TxDOT is evaluating four design options. Potential design options currently being considered for all build alternatives include:
 - Downtown bypass system
 - Downtown access-controlled frontage road system
 - Local enhancements, including a downtown boulevard concept
 - Direct transit access at Riverside Drive and Dean Keeton Street



Design Option: Local Enhancements

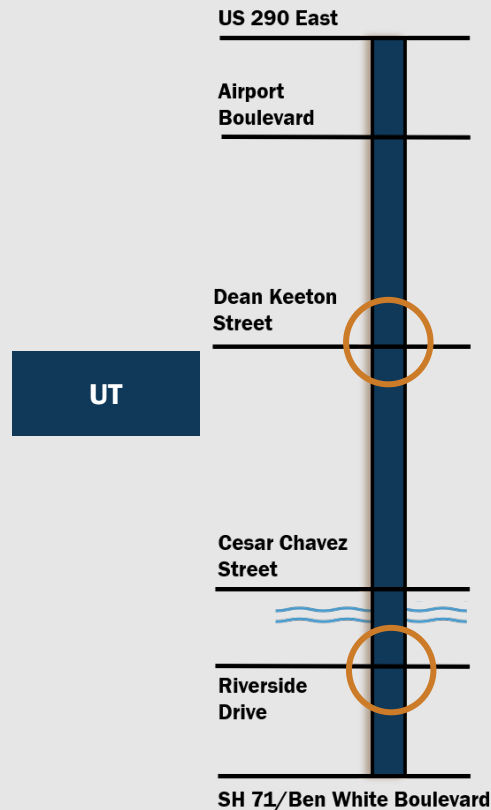


All the build alternatives are being evaluated for their ability to accommodate locally funded enhancements, which could include deck plazas, or caps.



Images Source: Downtown Stakeholder Working Group Report

Design Option: Direct Transit Access





PURPOSE AND NEED

We're listening.

The proposed project is needed because I-35 between US 290 East and US 290 West/SH 71 does not adequately accommodate current and future travel demand and does not meet current federal and state design standards, which has resulted in safety and operational deficiencies, which can impact crash rates and peak period travel times for all users, including emergency response vehicles and transit.

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve this critical local, regional, national and international thoroughfare by enhancing safety within the corridor, addressing demand by prioritizing the movement of people, goods and services through and across the corridor; improving operational efficiency; and creating a more dependable and consistent route for the traveling public, including bicyclists, pedestrians, emergency responders and transit.



ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION CRITERIA



Purpose and Need
Aligned with TxDOT's Road to Zero and the City's Vision Zero initiatives
Improves emergency response times
Emergency egress requirements
Reduction in crash rate
Travel time
Reduction in travel demand in adjacent roadway network
Annual cost of delay
Improve east-west connectivity
Accommodates Project Connect

Engineering
Constructability
Amount of new right of way required
Utility conflicts
Drainage infrastructure complexity
Opportunity and complexity of future expansion



Environmental
Minimize displacements
Minimize minority and low-income property displacements
Minimize visual impacts
Archeological sites and cemeteries
Historic properties
Hazardous materials
Traffic noise
Parks purchased with Land and Water Conservation funds
Park impacts

Local Enhancements and Cost
Deck plaza (caps) local enhancements
Minimize construction cost
Minimize operation and maintenance cost



ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS



ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS



Scoping

Identify the problem we are trying to solve, and review proposed alternatives and method for analyzing the alternatives.

(Fall 2020-Spring 2021)

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Environmental Analysis of Alternatives

Thoroughly analyze the build and no-build alternatives for potential impacts to the human and natural environment.

(Spring 2021-Fall 2022)



Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Public Hearing

The draft Environmental Impact Statement is prepared and reviewed by the public and agencies. The draft Environmental Impact Statement identifies the preferred alternative.

(Fall 2022)



Combined Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision

The combined final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision is completed and reviewed by the public and agencies. It identifies the selected alternative. This milestone signifies the completion of the environmental review process.

(Summer 2023)

STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC OUTREACH



The analysis presented in the Environmental Impact Statement evaluates impacts to the human and natural environment, including:



**WATER
RESOURCES**



AIR QUALITY



TRAFFIC NOISE



**COMMUNITY
IMPACTS**



**VEGETATION &
WILDLIFE**



**THREATENED &
ENDANGERED
SPECIES**



**INDIRECT &
CUMULATIVE
IMPACTS**



**HISTORICAL &
ARCHEOLOGICAL
RESOURCES**



**HAZARDOUS
MATERIAL SITES**



**LAND USE &
PARKLAND**



We're listening.

COMMUNITY IMPACTS ASSESSMENT

- Focus on impacts to people of color, minority, low-income, limited English proficiency populations, the elderly, children and people with disabilities
- Analysis of displacements, relocations and availability of affordable housing
- Analysis of bicycle and pedestrian improvements
- Will include additional community outreach

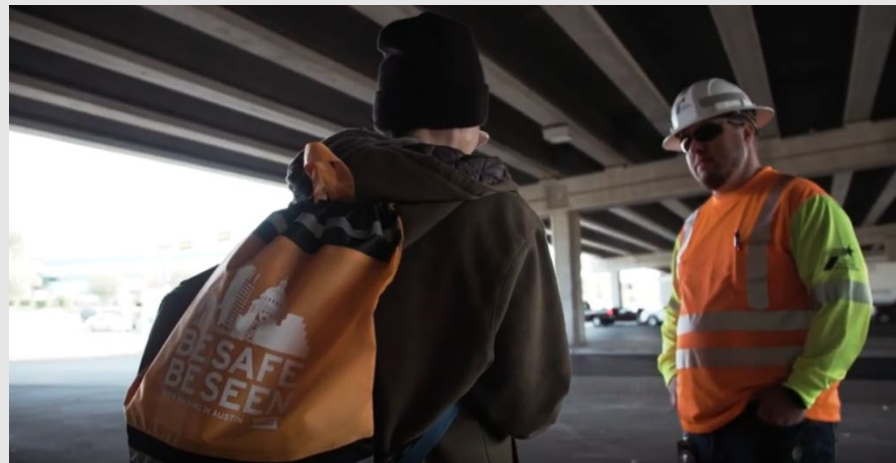
PARKLAND IMPACT ANALYSIS

- Identifies parks, recreational areas, and historic sites and consult with the owners, including the City of Austin, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Historical Commission
- Considers improving the bicycle and pedestrian trail and connections from the proposed Lady Bird Lake bridge to the parks on the north and south side of Lady Bird Lake

INDIRECT & CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ANALYSIS

- Analysis of induced growth potential to occur disproportionately in or adjacent to communities of color and minority and low-income communities
- Includes past, present, and future actions by TxDOT and others

- Outreach through TxDOT's Initiative to Address Homelessness network
- Focused engagement of agencies and nonprofit providers supporting people experiencing homelessness as part of community impacts analysis



TxDOT distributes highly visible Be Safe Be Seen bags to people experiencing homelessness to store belongings and documents.



Enhanced Engagement and Approach to Other Vulnerable Populations



- Variety of notifications about public input opportunities
- Presentations and meetings with neighborhood and civic organizations
- Workshops and targeted outreach
 - Organizations and direct representatives will include but are not limited to:
 - People of color
 - Minority populations
 - Low-income populations
 - People with limited English proficiency
 - Elderly
 - Children
 - People with disabilities



Community Engagement and Outreach



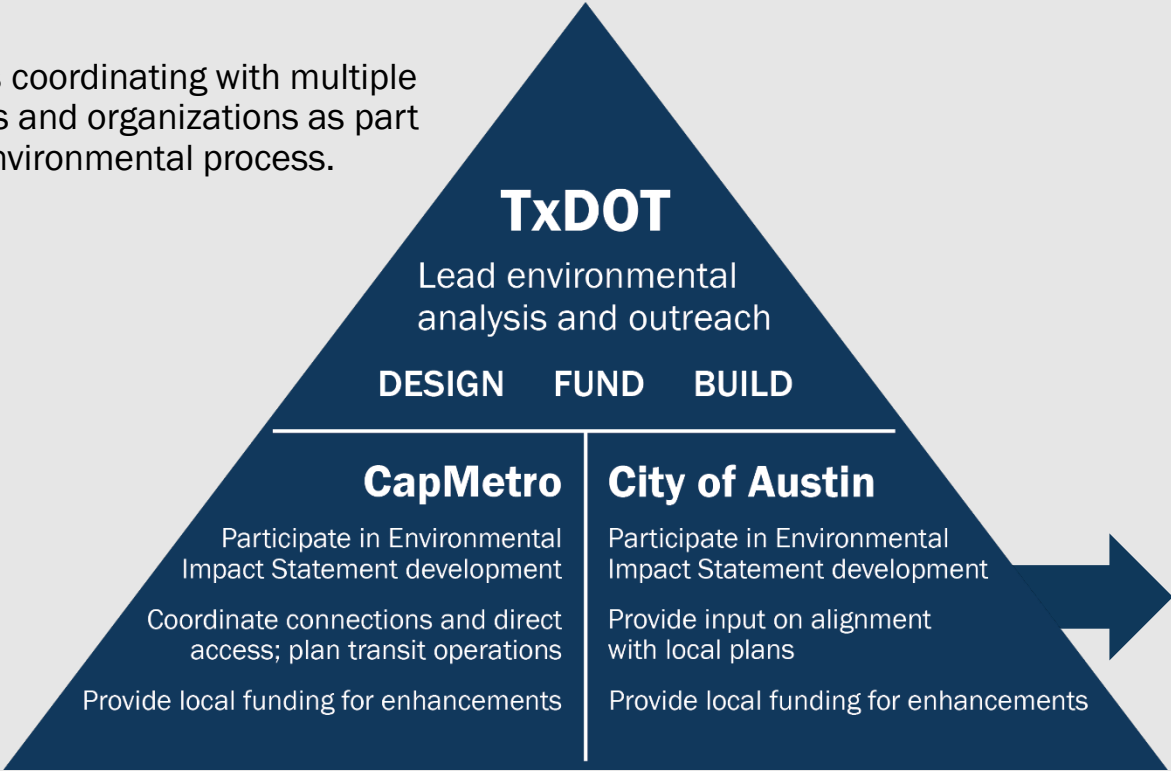
Since late 2019, TxDOT has met with organizations and agencies and continues to meet with stakeholders and community groups. If your civic organization or neighborhood association would like to have TxDOT present at your meeting, call (512) 832-7357 or email My35CapEx@txdot.gov.

We're listening.

- Active Mobility Working Group
- Advancing Women in Transportation
- Association of Corridor Engineers
- AURA
- Austin Area Research Organization (AARO)
- Austin Neighborhoods Council East Sector
- Blackland Community Development Corporation
- Central Austin Neighborhood Association
- Cherrywood Neighborhood Association
- City of Austin Bicycle Advisory Council
- City of Austin Pedestrian Advisory Council
- East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood Plan Contact Team
- East Riverside/Oltorf Neighborhood Contact Team
- East Town Lake Citizens Neighborhood Association
- Farm & City
- Geological Society
- Guadalupe Neighborhood Development Corporation
- Hancock Neighborhood Association
- Holy Cross Neighborhood Association
- Montopolis Neighborhood Association
- Movability
- Mueller Neighborhood Association
- North Central I-35 Neighborhood Coalition
- North Loop Neighborhood Contact Team
- Park35
- People United for Mobility Action
- Reconnect Austin
- Red Line Parkway Initiative
- South Austin Neighborhood Alliance
- Texas Society of Professional Engineers
- The University of Texas Financial and Administrative Services
- Waterloo Greenway
- Wells Branch Neighborhood Association
- Windsor Park Neighborhood Association



TxDOT is coordinating with multiple agencies and organizations as part of the environmental process.

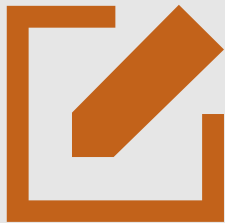


Local Enhancements
In coordination with the Downtown Austin Alliance, the City of Austin is analyzing the potential to design, fund and build caps over some sections of the project.



HOW TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK

All feedback must be provided by Friday, April 9, 2021 to be included in the official meeting record.



EMAIL

capexcentral@txdot.gov



MAIL

I-35 Capital Express Central
Project Team
1608 W. 6th Street
Austin, TX 78703



ONLINE

My35CapEx.com
• Fill out an online
comment form



VERBAL COMMENT BY VOICEMAIL

(512) 651-2948



- Questions about the project development process may be directed to the following project contact between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday:
 - Michelle Cooper, P.E., I-35 Capital Express Central Project Manager, TxDOT Austin District, 7901 N I-35, Austin, TX 78753
 - Phone: (512) 832-7357
 - Email: michelle.cooper@txdot.gov



THANK YOU