

I-35 CAPITAL EXPRESS SOUTH PROJECT



INFORMATION SHEET



Why improvements are needed

I-35 is a key gateway to downtown Austin and an important corridor serving as the backbone for local and regional travel, as well as a national transportation network that runs from Minnesota to Texas. Population growth trends show that the region has nearly doubled since 1990, with drivers currently experiencing a noticeable lack of mobility on I-35. The 2045 Plan by the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) estimates that the Capital Area will reach nearly 4.7 million residents by 2045 and it is expected that the existing congestion will worsen in the future.

The I-35 Capital Express South project limits are from SH 71/Ben White Boulevard to SH 45 Southeast. The segment from Slaughter Lane to SH 45 Southeast ranks #45 on the list of [most congested highways in Texas](#). There is an average of 330 crashes per year in the project area. The University of Texas Center for Transportation Research (CTR) recently studied the option of elevated lanes and found these crashes cost local taxpayers more than \$65 million each year in emergency services.

The Mission

The I-35 Capital Express South project was deemed a priority project in the 2045 CAMPO Regional Plan and funding was allocated for construction by the Texas Transportation Commission through the 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP). The Texas Department of Transportation is moving forward with plans to implement safety and mobility improvements throughout the project corridor. TxDOT is working with the City of Austin, CAMPO, CapMetro, as well as other local organizations to move this project forward. Current growth requires improvements to our infrastructure that will keep pace with the increased population and roadway users. It is TxDOT's responsibility to plan for and address the safety and mobility needs of our community now and in the future, and to better protect the quality of life for residents.

What We Heard

A comprehensive environmental study has been initiated to thoroughly analyze the corridor and determine the best approach for enhancing safety and improving mobility. TxDOT hosted open house meetings in 2016, 2017 and 2019 to identify a full range of alternatives, incorporate analyses, and through extensive community outreach, identify a recommended solution. Comments received at the open houses included support for variable-priced toll lanes and HOV lanes, requests for bicycle and pedestrian access, safety and connectivity improvements to area entrance and exit ramps, and the integration of multi-modal/transit elements throughout the corridor.

The proposed project would provide crash reduction benefits to I-35 within the project limits. The design avoids widening I-35 through this constrained corridor, which minimizes impacts to local businesses. TxDOT is proposing 2 miles of elevated managed lanes and intersection bypass lanes from SH 71/Ben White Boulevard to south of William Cannon Drive. CTR conducted a study to compare alternatives with the existing condition. The study found that annually, the proposed design will:



- Reduce conflict points by 81%
- Reduce total crashes by 28%
- Result in 23 less severe crashes
- Save more than \$20 million in property damage and medical costs associated with crashes

The intersection bypass lanes prevent entering and exiting vehicles from merging and weaving in the mainlanes and allow traffic to bypass frontage road traffic signals at cross streets, while maintaining local access. This project is expected to not only help with congestion on the interstate, but also on the local streets such as South Congress Avenue and South First Street.

Public comments have been reflected in the proposed safety and mobility improvements in multiple ways, including:

- Installing 13 miles of new shared-use paths for enhanced bicycle and pedestrian access.
- Reversing and relocating several ramps to improve safety and access.
- Reconstructing bridges throughout the corridor for improved mobility.
- Working with CapMetro to plan for future transit access to a south I-35 Park and Ride.
- Constructing wider travel lanes and shoulders to reduce crashes by 10-50%.

For more information on the I-35 Capital Express South project, please visit <https://my35capex.com/projects/i-35-capital-express-south/>.

Community input and anticipated timeline*

The development process will incorporate public input from a series of public involvement opportunities, including stakeholder and open house meetings.

- Environmental study and schematic design: Completed
- Open house: Fall 2019
- Public hearing: 2021
- Final design: 2019–2022
- Construction: 2022

**Timeline is subject to change.*

Estimated construction cost: \$350 million

Contact information and updates

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For additional information visit: www.My35.org/Capital.

Program overview

The I-35 Capital Express Program comprises three projects (North, Central and South). The North project proposes to add one managed lane in each direction along I-35 from SH 45 North to US 290 East. The Central project proposes to add two managed lanes in each direction along I-35 from US 290 East to SH 71/Ben White Boulevard. The South project proposes to add two managed lanes in each direction along I-35 from SH 71/Ben White Boulevard to SH 45 Southeast.