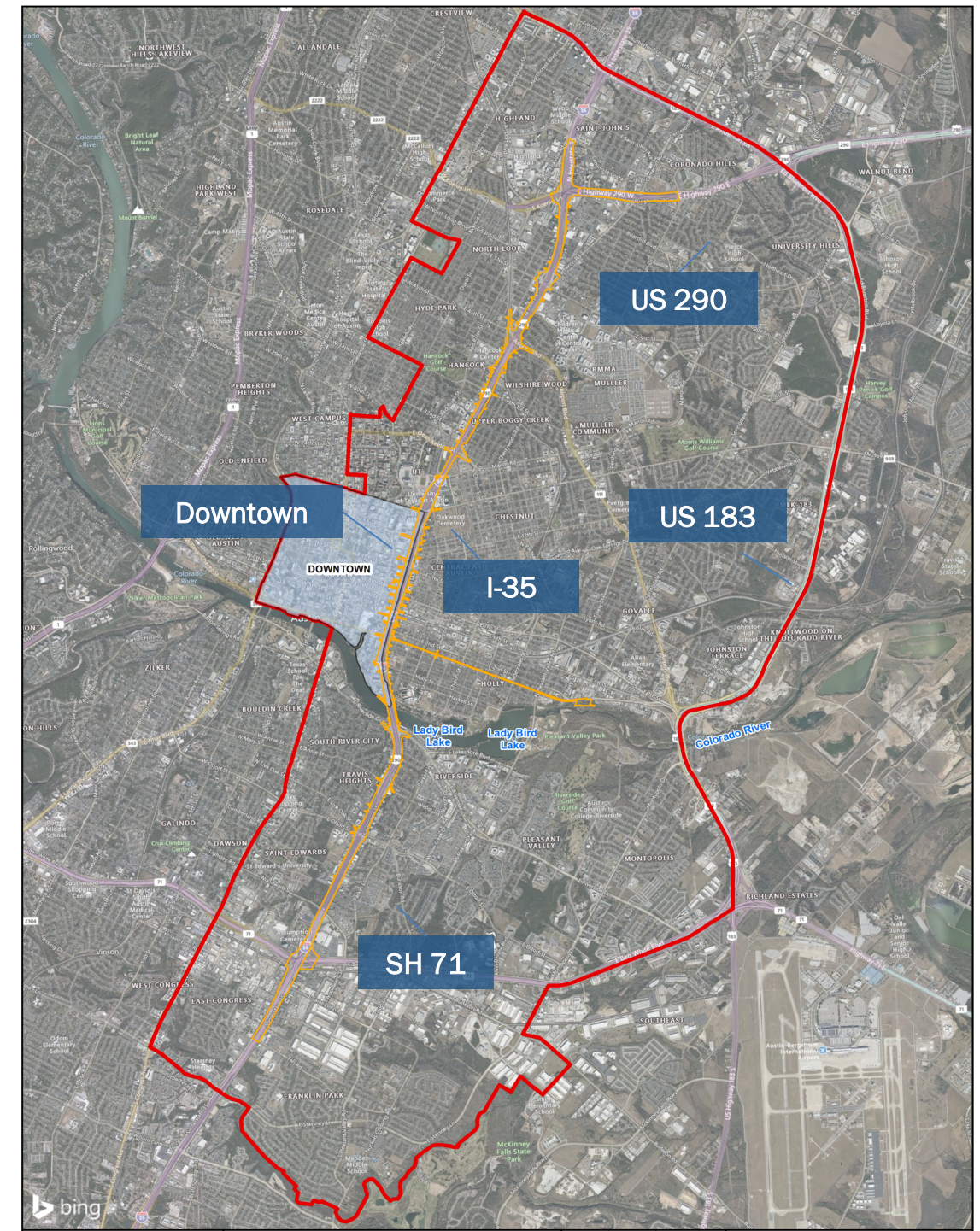


# Community Study Area & Approach

This area was selected to assess the population most likely directly and indirectly impacted by the proposed project, with special attention to East Austin where residents face the greatest challenges accessing opportunities downtown. This is also an area that has undergone significant demographic shifts, largely due to due to gentrification and other pressures on affordability.

I-35 in Austin was built along East Avenue, which was seen effectively as a racial divide in Austin's early history, and later evolved as a regional highway corridor throughout the 1930s, 40s and 50s. TxDOT understands the significance of I-35 to the local community and the present chance to address local concerns with development and implementation of the Capital Express Central Project.

The Community Impacts Assessment (Section 3.6 of the DEIS) considered the potential for impacts to access and travel patterns, community cohesion, and displacements and their impact on the broader community, as well as identify Environmental Justice, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and Limited English Proficiency issues to comply with numerous nondiscrimination laws, regulations, and executive orders.



## Limited English Proficiency (LEP) & Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (Title VI)

The public involvement process included extensive efforts to engage with and reach out to underserved populations, including elderly, minority, geographically dispersed/transient populations, people with disabilities, and LEP populations – those with limited ability to read, write, speak, or otherwise understand English. TxDOT will continue to encourage the participation of minority, low-income, and underserved populations in the project decision-making process through various strategies.

## Transportation Equity

TxDOT included additional transportation equity and access studies to better understand the community study area from a transportation equity perspective, and to account for rapid demographic changes and affordability challenges specific to Austin. Equity in transportation includes benefits to all users of the transportation system to facilitate essential social needs, connecting people to opportunities such as education and employment centers, and health and human services.

## Environmental Justice (EJ)

In addition to studying the community impacts from displacements, changes in access and travel patterns, and potential impacts to community cohesion, TxDOT identifies and addresses impacts that are expected to be disproportionately high and adverse to minority and low-income populations. These two populations are considered specifically under Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*.

Low-income areas were considered census block groups where the median household income is below the 2022 poverty guideline, or census tracts where the percentage of people in poverty was meaningfully greater than the percentage of people in poverty for Travis County overall.

Minority populations were considered wherever a census block or block group where 50% or more of households are minorities (combination of all non-white racial groups, including Hispanic ethnicity).

Within the study area, minority populations were present in ~52% of census blocks, and low-income populations were present in ~36% of census blocks

- 69 commercial displacements include 65 within EJ areas.
- 26 residential displacements include 25 within EJ areas, would result in a “**disproportionately high and adverse effect**” to minority and low-income populations.
- The Preferred Alternative has 13% fewer EJ commercial displacements and 74% fewer EJ residential displacements than Build Alternative 2 (\*Not all individuals or businesses located within a minority or low-income area are necessarily EJ individuals or businesses specifically serving EJ communities).

# Displacement Impacts - Commercial



**Draft EIS Table 3.6-3. Types of Businesses that may be Lost with Modified Build Alternative 3**

Type of Displacement	Total	Number that Serve a Specific Population*
Healthcare	6	4
Auto Sales/Service	9	0
Gas Station/Convenience Store/Liquor Store	10	0
Daycare	1	1
Motel	2	0
Barbershop/Salon	4	3
Entertainment-Arcade, Gym, Adult Entertainment	4	0
News/Media/Printing Company	2	0
Storage Facilities	2	0
Restaurant	9	0
Office	3	0
Retail	9	0
Parking Services	1	0
Various (Tattoo Shop, Bank, Bail Bonds, and Other)	7	0

*Due to the issues affecting Austin’s housing and real estate prices, it may be difficult for those who are displaced to relocate within the same area. This could force businesses and residents out of the area and leave a gap in services, especially for those unique businesses or those that serve a particular or underserved population*

\*Specific populations may include minorities, low-income individuals, children, the elderly, the disabled or any other specific group.

# Displacement Impacts – Underserved Communities

Community Facilities	Healthcare Facilities	Racial/Ethnically – Specific Businesses
<p><u>Escuelita del Alma</u> Spanish-immersion early childhood center.</p>	<p><u>Dr. Torrez</u> - Obstetrics and Gynecology</p>	<p><u>Hector’s Barbershop</u></p>
<p>Two Federally Qualified Health Centers run by CommUnityCare, a nonprofit that provides healthcare regardless of ability to pay.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hancock Walk-In Clinic Offers same day acute care, including after-hours.</li> <li>David Powell Health Center Specializes in the treatment, management, and prevention of HIV and AIDS, and other services.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Austin Medical Building</u> Austin Eye Clinic – Optometry &amp; Ophthalmology Pediatric Care of Austin Dr. Gutierrez – Family Medicine</p>	<p><u>Jimmy’s Barbershop</u></p>
		<p><u>BL Barbershop</u></p>

## Proposed Mitigation

In addition to the required mitigation measures listed in Table 3.25-2, TxDOT would continue to work with these community facilities and businesses serving specific populations throughout the acquisition process. TxDOT is committed to working with these critical facilities to find alternate locations near their current locations where possible, and offering advanced relocation assistance for these selected properties to minimize impacts to underserved communities.

- Federal regulations allow rental assistance supplement to residential tenants, but not for business tenants. As mitigation to the eight businesses within EJ areas who are tenants, TxDOT is offering rental assistance supplement to these businesses that serve a specific community. Rental assistance supplement includes finding a comparable business location and opportunity for additional rental price differential over what they are currently paying, within limits, for 42 months.
- Allow occupants, during the relocation process, to remain in the existing facility for an agreed amount of time negotiated between the property owner and TxDOT to allow for the continuation of healthcare of services to the community.
- Offer assistance (for example, shuttle service, CapMetro passes) to commute to medical appointments.

*For a complete list of required and proposed mitigation, please refer to Section 3.25 in the DEIS, or review the printed tables available at this station*

# Displacement Impacts - Residential

## Avalon Apartments – 24 Rental Units

- Renters generally have less access to the level of financial security that property ownership entails. Those with low incomes could experience challenges in finding replacement rental or purchased housing within or near the Community Study Area.

## Two Single Family Residences

- The dramatic rise in housing costs (from an average housing price of approximately \$72,000 in 1990 to almost \$440,000 in 2021) has created a highly competitive housing market indicating those residents displaced by the proposed project, especially with homes valued under \$576,000 (the median home sales price), would enter into a highly competitive housing market.

## Proposed Mitigation

- For owner and tenant occupants: Compensate any person(s) whose property needs to be acquired, in accordance with the Uniform Act of 1970; Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Act); HUD Amendment Act of 1974, and TxDOT policies and procedures. Provide reimbursement of moving costs and certain related expenses incurred in moving and related incidental expenses, not to exceed the amount of the approved rental assistance supplement. Incidental expenses for replacement housing include the reasonable costs of loan applications, recording fees, and certain other closing costs.
- For owner and tenant occupants: Provide Replacement Housing Payments as Purchase Supplements or Down Payment Assistance to purchase comparable decent, safe, and sanitary replacement dwelling.
- For owner and tenant occupants: Provide reimbursement of moving costs and certain related expenses incurred in moving.
- Owner occupants of less than 90 days and tenant occupants: Provide compensation for comparable replacement dwelling that is decent, safe, and sanitary.
- For owner and tenant occupants: Provide Rental Assistance Supplement to eligible persons for the increased cost of renting and occupying a decent, safe, and sanitary replacement dwelling.
- Assist residents at public housing, as defined by the Uniform Act of 1970, as amended; 49 CFR Part 24, Subparts C through F, to find comparable replacement housing.
- Ensure tenant occupant would not be required to move unless at least one comparable replacement dwelling is available within their financial means.
  - For a complete list of required and proposed mitigation, please refer to Section 3.25 in the DEIS, or review the printed tables available at this station

# Community Cohesion

The Upper Boggy Creek, North Loop, Windsor Park, and Hancock Neighborhood Planning Areas north of the river would experience the majority of the displacements. Removing businesses, community facilities, healthcare centers, daycare facilities, and residences with these NPAs may serve to disrupt the identity of the area.

The enhanced bridges would include 30 feet of buffer and SUP facilities separated from roadway traffic to encourage the use of active transportation. The facility would be designed so that in the future, the COA and/or UT could provide deck plazas(s) and/or stitches to further unite east and west Austin and foster a sense of community cohesion. The SUP along the east west frontage of the facility would serve to encourage the use of active transportation and provide connectivity within the Community Study Area. This connectivity would improve access to community facilities within the project area.

In the future, the SUP could be connected to other bikeway and trail projects within the greater Austin area providing access to/from the I-35 corridor. In addition to the COA, CapMetro has also been involved with the project and will help to ensure the project will accommodate all modes of transit in the Community Study Area.

Specifically, TxDOT is allocating \$10 million to CapMetro to maintain bus service during the project construction phase. Additionally, the CapMetro Red Line crossings at Airport Boulevard and 4th Street, and the MLK Jr. Boulevard pedestrian crossing would be constructed before project construction is planned to begin so that east-west crossings are maintained during construction of I-35.

**Draft EIS Table 3.67: Modified Build Alternative 3  
Displacements per NPA\***

Neighborhood Planning Area	Number of Commercial Displacements	Number of Residential Displacements
Windsor Park	11	0
North Loop	13	0
Hancock	10	1
Upper Boggy Creek	23	24
Downtown	2	0
East Cesar Chavez	4	1
South River City	6	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>26</b>

\*Utilizing the schematic dated April 8, 2022. No potential displacements were identified in any other NPAs within the Community Study Area.

*Today, I-35 still functions as a barrier to movement and reduces community cohesion between the east and west sides of the facility.*