

Visual Impacts of Preferred Alternative

Three sections were analyzed to determine the visual effects of the proposed project:

Section 1: US 290 East to Holly Street

This section represents the northern project terminus at US 290 East to Holly Street in downtown, which includes the I-35 upper decks and an elevated section through downtown Austin.

The upper decks provide views of the State Capitol Building, as well as views of downtown Austin.

Modified Build Alternative 3 would remove a physical, visual, audio and psychological barrier represented by the current structure and make the views across Austin more accessible.

Section 2: Holly Street to Riverside Drive

This section represents views of downtown Austin, Lady Bird Lake and south Austin.

With Modified Build Alternative 3, views would largely remain unchanged from the existing facility.



Section 3: From Riverside Drive to SH 71

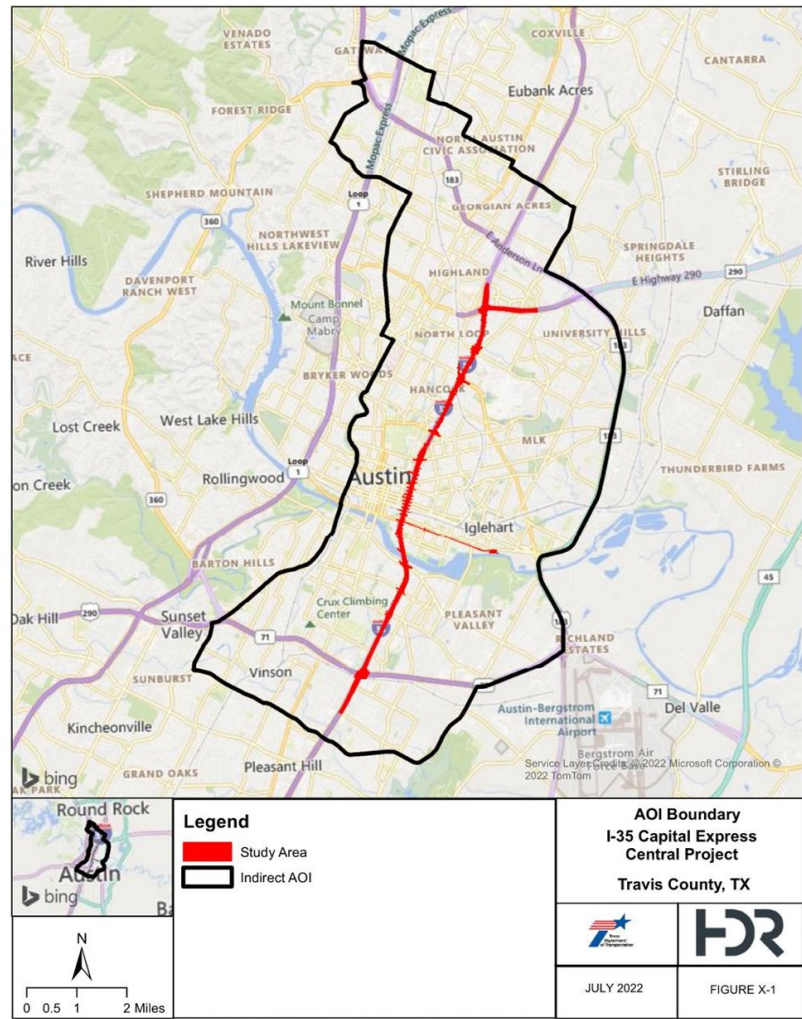
This section represents views across Austin from a currently at-grade section. Views across the proposed project would no longer include the visual barriers presented by the mainlanes when looking across I-35.

However, views from the lowered mainlanes would be limited.

It is anticipated that some views of downtown Austin, when traveling northbound would be possible, from select viewpoints.

Section 136 of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-605) requires consideration of aesthetic values in the highway planning process. Aerial imagery and virtual field visits were used to assess visual and aesthetics impacts within the project area.

Additional Studies for the Preferred Alternative



Area of Influence (AOI):

This geographic boundary measures ~59.63 square miles and was studied closely to better understand indirect impacts of the project on demographic shifts, land use patterns, future development demand, employment growth and other factors.

Study	Study Description	Process	Conclusion
Induced Growth Study	Looks at the indirect effects of the project on potential development and land use in the AOI, where these changes are most likely to occur.	Reviews a variety of data and information on land use, travel patterns, and areas near the project that are likely to be developed or urbanized.	Since the areas within 1-5 miles of the project are mostly urbanized and nearly built out: the project would not significantly induce additional growth.
Delphi Panel	Helps to understand the potential impact of a project on population and employment growth.	Surveyed 45 experts from a variety of fields to receive their input on the project to impact growth in population, employment or redevelopment.	The majority of the panel (58%) concluded that the proposed I-35 Capital Express Central Project is not likely to induce redevelopment at a faster pace than Austin is currently experiencing
Cumulative Effects	Looks at potential effects of a project on the environment and community resources when added to the effects of other projects, environmental factors and activities already occurring.	Analyzes the potential effects of a project to ecological, historical, and community resources in the context of past, current and future activities in the study area.	Current trends and impacts of existing projects in the area have resulted in adverse impacts, which will be addressed through mitigation efforts. The combination of the future impacts and mitigation would play a substantial role in cumulative effects.