



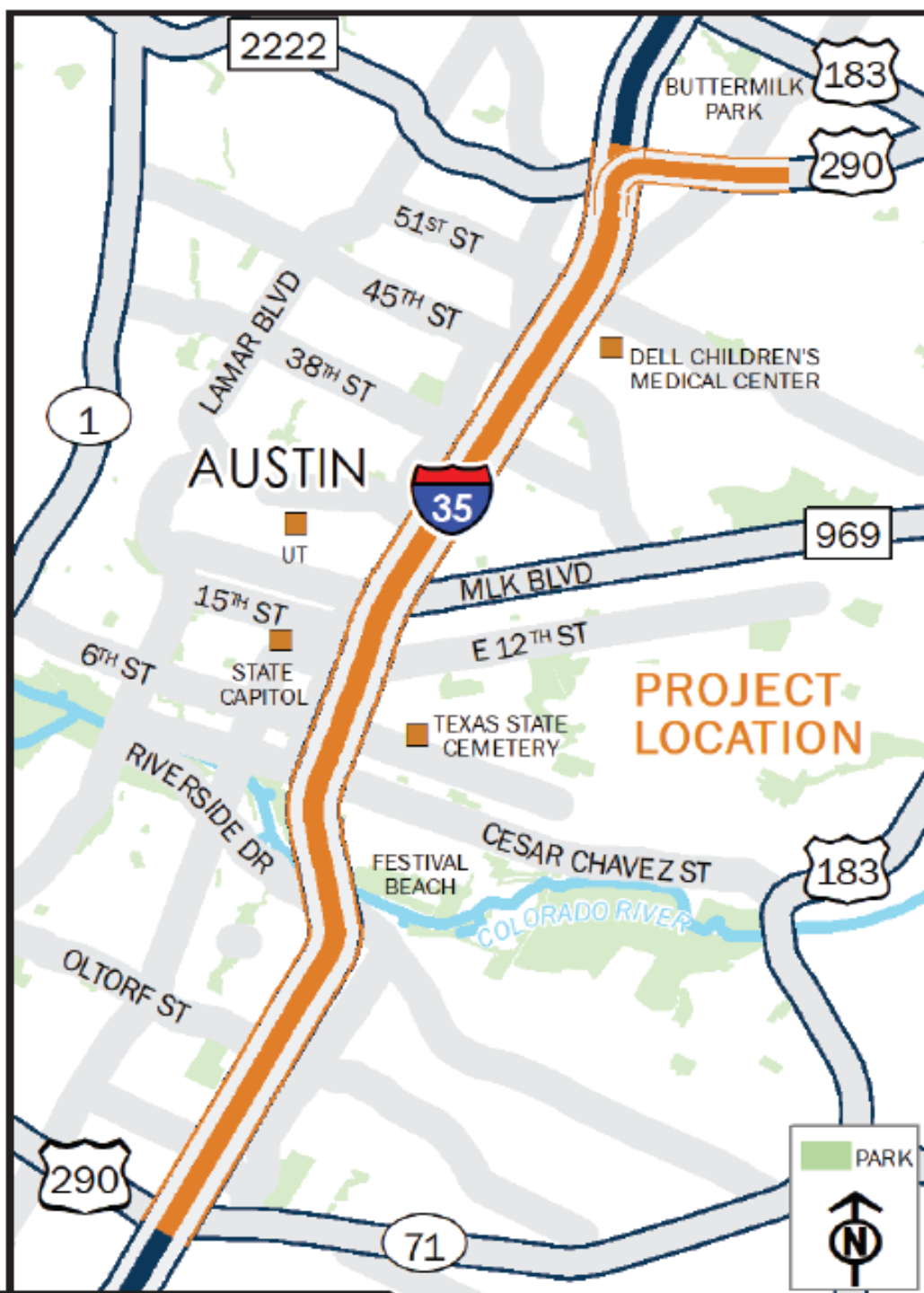
# **IH-35 Capital Express 2<sup>nd</sup> Scoping Process**

**Mar. 11 through Apr. 9, 2021**

# IH35 Capital Express Project – Today's Agenda

- Recap of I-35 Project as proposed by TxDOT
- Key City objectives
- Range of alternatives and evaluation criteria
- Environmental process timeline
- 2nd Project Scoping Timeline





# TxDOT IH35 Capital Express Alternatives

- Add two, non-tolled managed lanes (HOV) in each direction along IH35 from US 290 East to SH 71/Ben White Blvd.
- Flyovers at IH35 and US 290 E
- Various operational and safety enhancements, enhancing bicycle and pedestrian paths
- Could pre-build substructure to support lidding, but lid is not part of current project

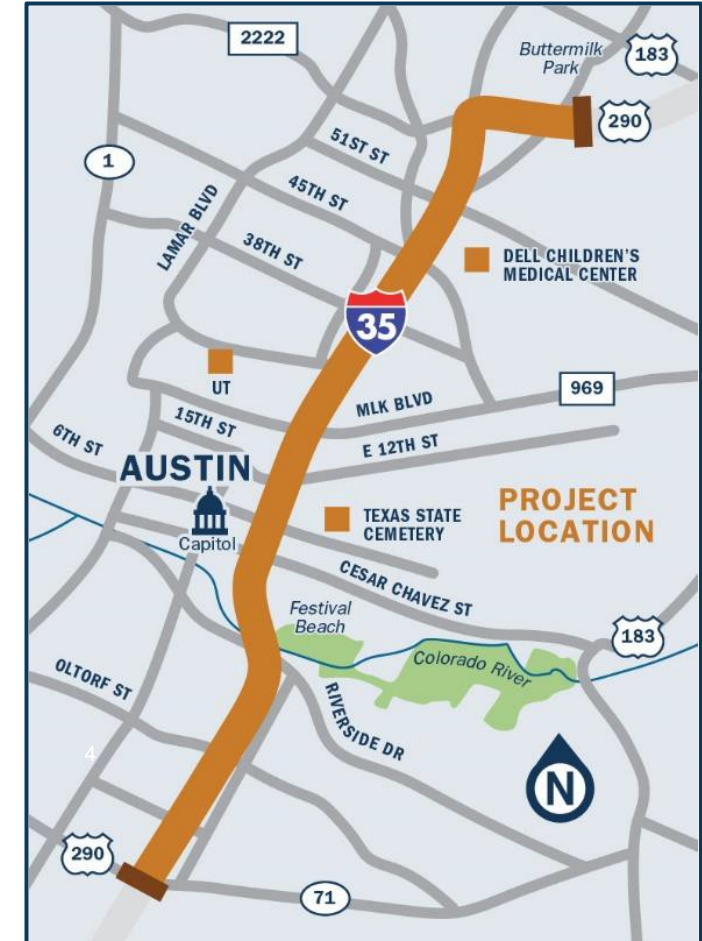
**Project Cost Capital Express:**  
\$4.9 Billion

# 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





# I-35 is Outdated

Annual average daily traffic along I-35 from US 290 East to SH 71/Ben White Boulevard is more than 200,000 vehicles. By 2045, it is expected to reach more than 300,000 vehicles per day, an increase of more than 45%.

**86% OF THE VEHICLES** on I-35 are **LOCAL TRAVELERS**



**Only 1% of the through-traffic on I-35 are trucks.**



Source: Texas A&M Transportation Institute, Incentives for Truck Use of SH 130 (2015)

The **CRASH RATE** is **ABOVE AVERAGE** for similar state roads



In **2018**, the most recent data available, there were **1,120** crashes resulting in **7** fatalities in the project area. Another **37** crashes were severe.

Source: TxDOT Statewide Traffic Crash Rates for Urban Interstates, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018. Data for the I-35 Central project from TxDOT (2020).

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## Key Observations



- I-35 is critical to Austin's economic sustainability & mobility
  - 200,000 to 300,000 vehicles per day indicates that the facility is critical to the success of Austin as a primary travel corridor
  - 86% Local travel indicates these trips are serving places within the region
  - This level of travel cannot be replaced with existing/expanded City arterial capacity
  - This level of travel can be enhanced but likely not replaced with funded transit investments due to diversity of travel origins & destinations

state roads

fatalities

severe.

# I-35 is Outdated

## Key Observations



- The existing I-35 requires replacement
  - City of Austin crash statistics indicate that I-35 is one of our highest crash concerns for serious injury and fatalities
  - Existing I-35 design is inadequate and substandard (one of the State's oldest freeways)
  - Existing I-35 operations create grid congestion, improved access to our primary employment destinations is needed
  - I-35 prevents adequate E/W pedestrian and other travel, leading to congestion and preventable fatalities
  - The existing I-35 is a physical manifestation of racial segregation and needs to be addressed

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VEHICLES

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## Key Observations

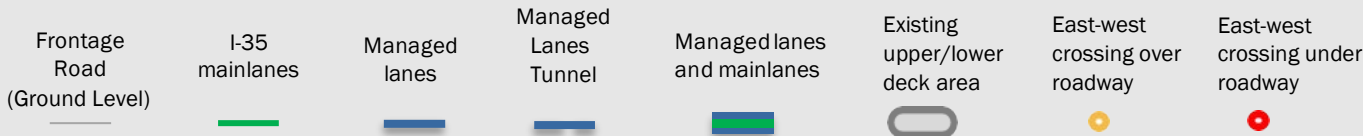
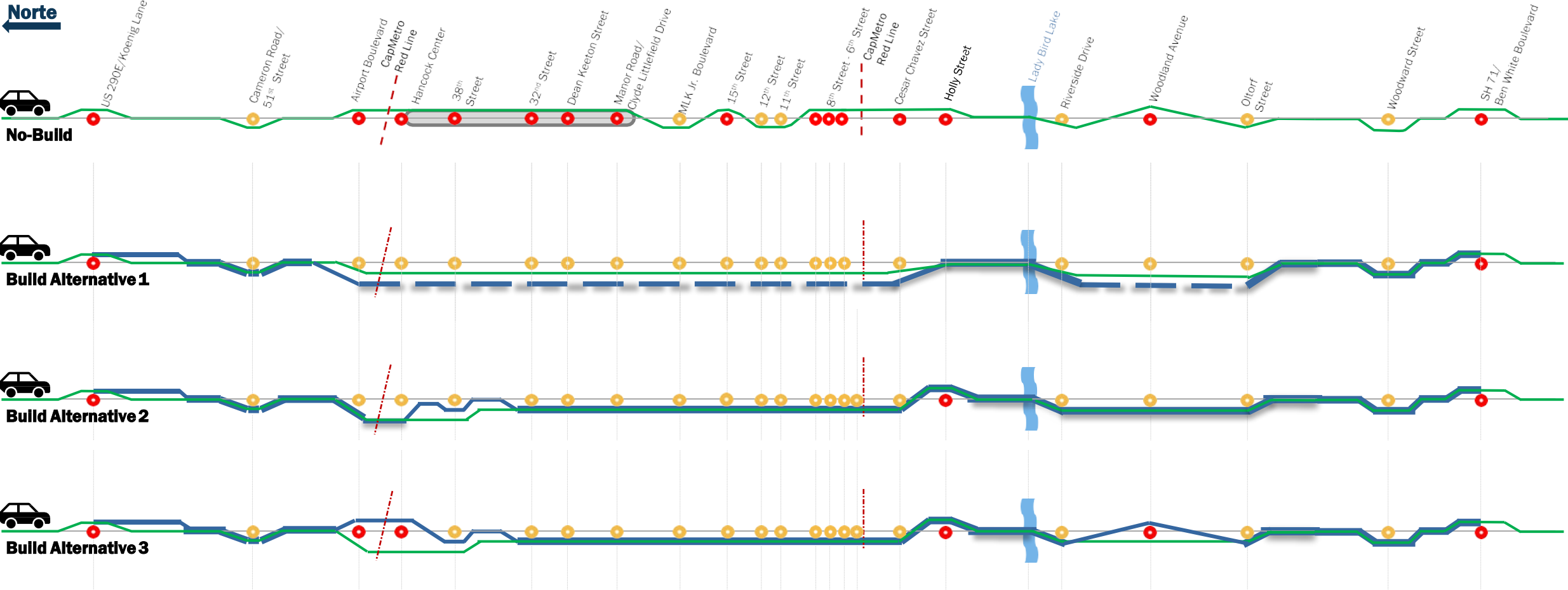


- **Reconstruction of any kind will be impactful, making expansion of I-35 a reasonable proposition.**

- Reconstruction at this scale will likely last a decade and will cause impacts.
- Expanding ability to move people, freight, and goods should be considered.
- Improve N/S and E/W mobility should be part of design.
- Improvements should address access to Capital, State, and Downtown employment centers.
- Project should avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential community & environmental impacts
- Operational concepts need to dictate design, managed express versus HOV.
- Opportunities for lidding should be preserved

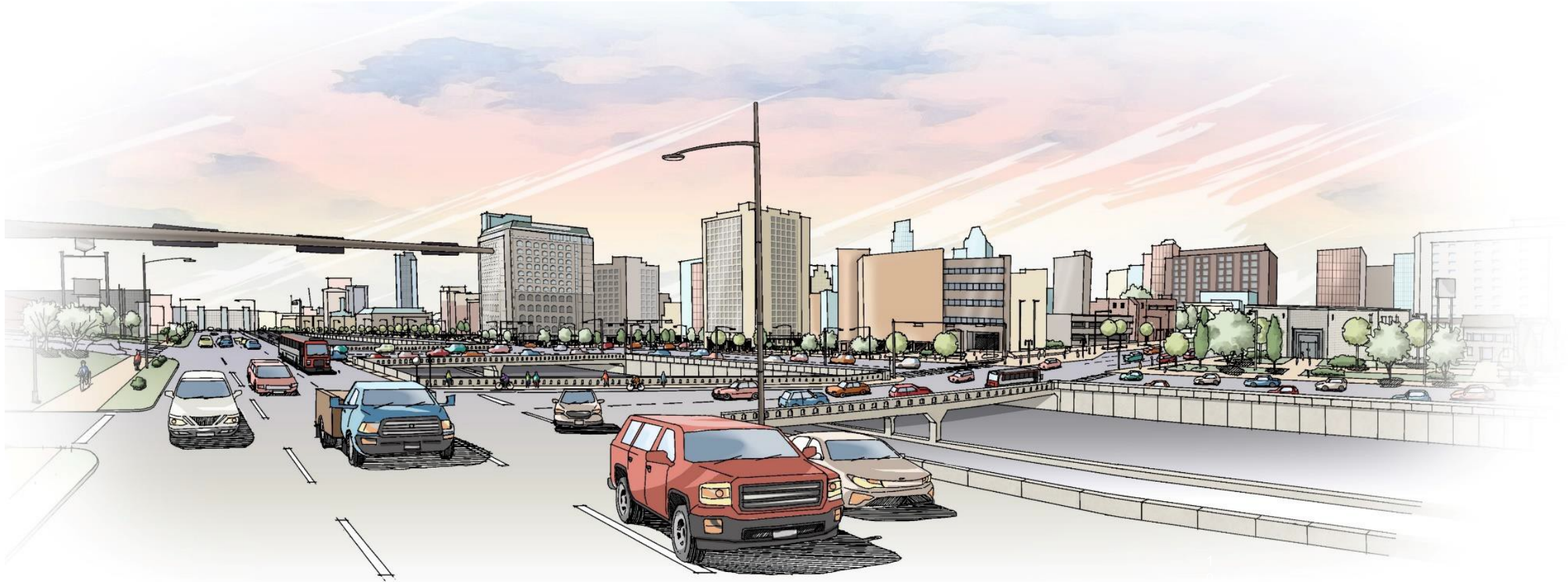


# Three Proposed Build Alternatives vs. No-Build

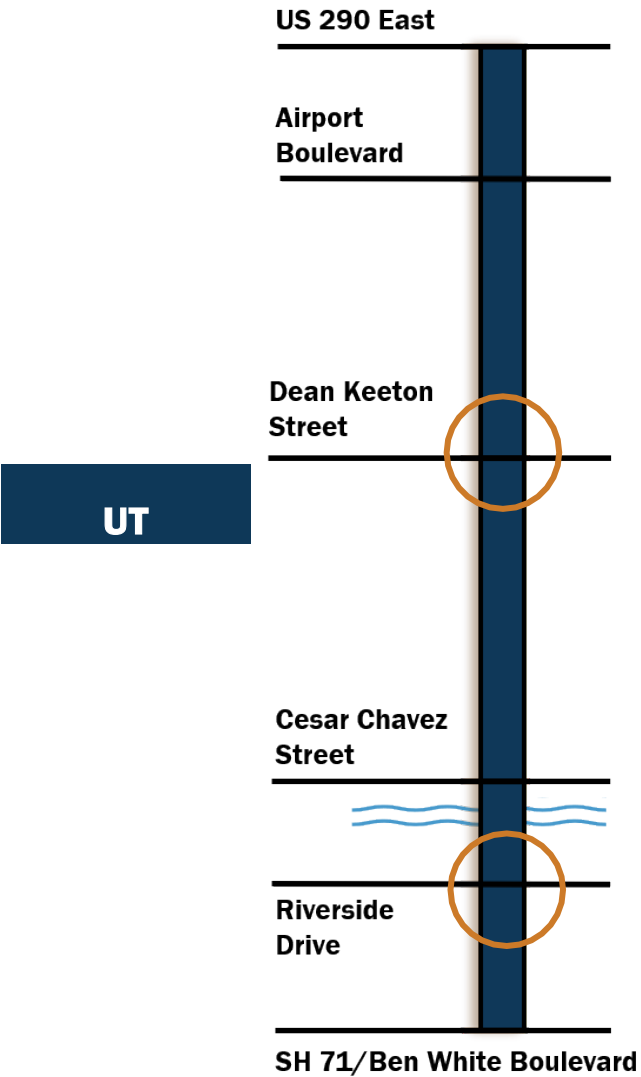


The profiles depicted here are intended to convey the general concepts of the proposed build alternatives. All build alternatives are preliminary and subject to change. Image is not to scale.

## Envision I-35 at 8<sup>th</sup> Street (all build alternatives)



# Design Option: Direct Transit Access



# TxDOT Evaluation Criteria for Build Alternatives

Aligned with TxDOT's Road to Zero Initiative and City of Austin's Vision Zero Initiative
Improves emergency response time for EMS, police, fire, and hospitals
Emergency egress requirements
Reduction in crash rate
General purpose travel time
Managed lane travel time
Reduction in travel demand in adjacent transportation roadway network
Annual cost of delay
Minimize construction cost
Minimize operation and maintenance cost

Improves east-west connectivity
Accommodates CapMetro Project Connect improvements at cross routes
Constructability
Amount of new right of way (ROW) required
Utility conflicts
Drainage infrastructure complexity
Opportunity and complexity of future expansion
Deck Plaza Local Enhancements, accommodation for caps

Minimize residential displacements
Minimize business 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

Highlight = COA influenced criteria



# Key City of Austin Objectives for IH-35

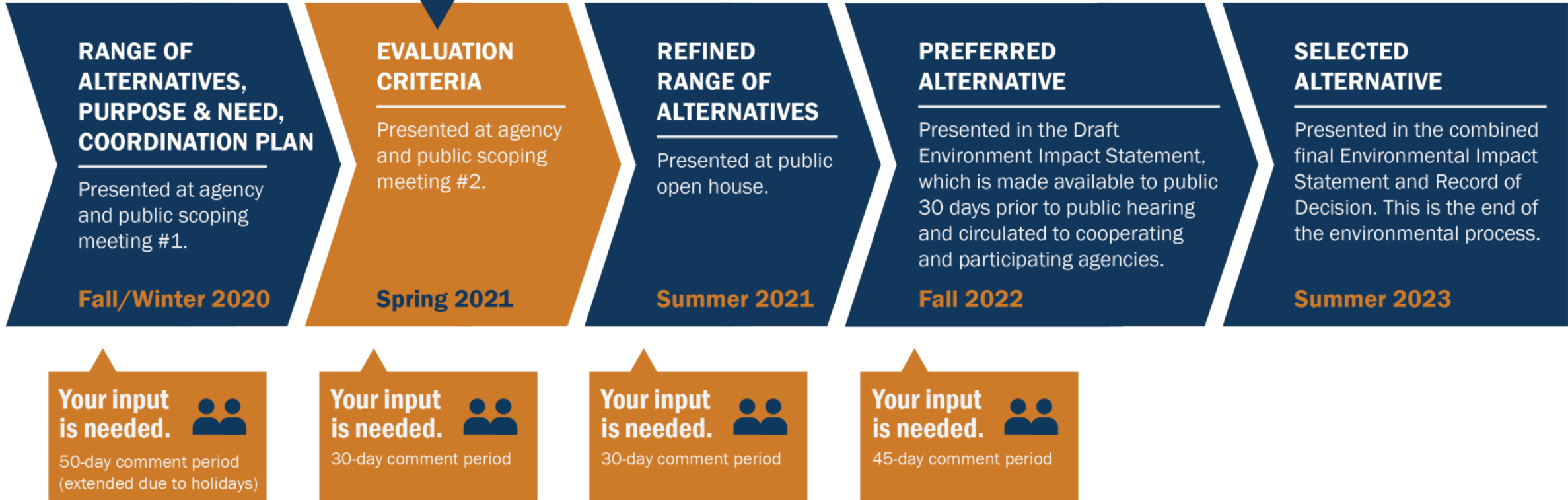
- **Multi-modal mobility, Improve:**
  - Safety along and across corridor
  - Access to central core/DT
  - Ensure direct transit access to facility
  - Pedestrian, Bicycle & Transit access
- **E-W connectivity**
  - Support lowered highway option and construction of lids and/or wide bridges
- **Consider future lid as option to mitigate impacts as part of EIS**
  - Include as part of base construction
  - Mitigation for multitude of impacts
- **Advocate for Tolloed Lanes to Improve Person Carrying Capacity**
  - Supports higher capacity usage
- **Avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts**
  - Parks
  - Historic Features
  - Watershed
  - Environmental Justice
  - Noise, etc.
- **One Voice** from COA departments
- **Advocate for COA adopted policies and plans**
  - SD23, Imagine Austin
  - Austin Strategic Mobility Plan
  - Vision Zero, etc.
- **Amplify Public Engagement**

# Key Mayor and CM Objectives for IH-35

- **Improve Safety**
- **Increase Person Carrying Capacity**
- **Prioritize and Enhance Commuter Transit**
- **Removing I-35 as a Physical and Social Barrier**
- **Compatibility with Local Plans**
- **Consider ULI, Reconnect Austin Design Efforts**
- **Focus on Access and Reducing VMT**
- **Economic Costs of Crashes**
- **Further economic sustainability and reducing socioeconomic and cultural inequities**
  - Opportunities for Value Capture
  - Prevent Displacement
- **Consider Air Quality, Noise, Flooding impacts**

# Next Steps in the Process

WE ARE HERE



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.

# Second I-35 “Capital Express” Scoping Timeline

3/8	ATD Briefed City Departments about 2 <sup>nd</sup> Scoping for Evaluation Criteria
3/9	Briefed Urban Transportation Commission
3/10	Participated in TxDOT Agency Scoping Meeting
3/11	Learned TxDOT will “environmentally clear” the caps with their Environmental Impact Statement but still rely on COA to pay for it. (Mobility Committee)
3/11	Briefed DAA and OurFuture35 groups on I-35 Alternatives
3/15 – 17	Conducted 4 resource sessions for COA departments on TxDOT Evaluation Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environmental and Cultural Resources</li><li>• Public Safety</li><li>• Utilities, Operations and Maintenance</li><li>• East-West Access, Cap &amp; Stitch</li></ul>
3/22 -24	Facilitated University of Texas NEPA crash course for 20 COA employees
3/24	Brief CMO
3/24	Brief CM’s Kitchen, Fuentes, Harper-Madison, Renteria re: TxDOT I-35 Alternatives
3/25	Council resolution
3/26	Target one-on-one briefings to other Council Members
3/27	UTC Presentation
3/26	COA Department comments due to ATD, compile and create master narrative
4/6	CMO final review of COA 2 <sup>nd</sup> Scoping comments
4/9	<b>COA 2<sup>nd</sup> Scoping comments due to TxDOT</b>