



City Council Briefing
Reconnecting Communities Grant Application
September 2023



Grant Opportunity for an I-35 Cap Project

TxDOT's Capital Express Project lowers the main lanes of I-35.

- Lowering the main lanes provides an opportunity to deck over the highway with "Caps"
- Constructing Caps could provide up to 30 acres of new urban real estate

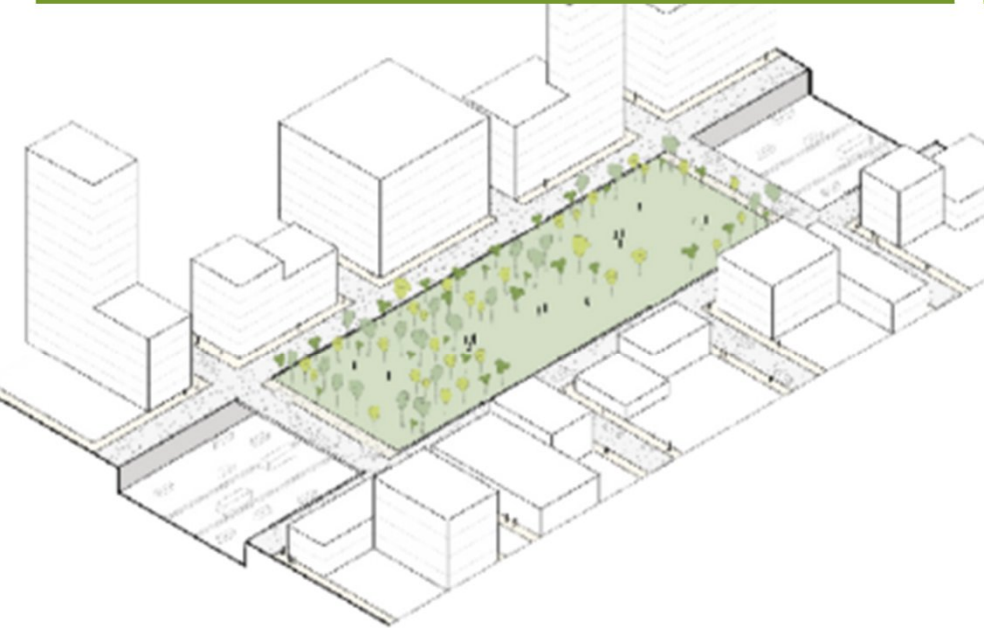


IMAGE:
Klyde Warren Park, Dallas

Caps and Stitches

HIGHWAY CAP

A cap is a large deck greater than 300 ft. in length over a highway to accommodate new programming such as structures or green space. Caps are also referred to as a deck, land bridge or lid.



HIGHWAY STITCH

A stitch is a widened bridge under 300 ft. in length over a highway, connecting one side of the highway to the other. Amenities include landscaping, shade, and multi-modal enhancements.



TxDOT's Capital Express Central Project Timeline



Construction Lettings (bids opened):

2024

- Ben White to Holly
- MLK bike/ped bridge
- Drainage tunnels

2025

- 4th Street rail bridge, and Upper deck retrofit

2026

- Downtown Segment (Holly–15th),
University Segment (15th– 51st), and
Capital Plaza (51st – HWY 290)



IMAGE:

Construction of Southern Gateway Phase I Cap Project, Dallas, Texas

Cap/Stitch timing to mesh with TxDOT's schedule



Construction Lettings - (Cap/Stitch opportunity):

2024

- Ladybird Lake Segment (Ben White to Holly)
 - Woodland Avenue Stitch
- MLK bike/ped bridge
- Drainage tunnels

2025

- 4th Street rail bridge and Upper deck retrofit

2026

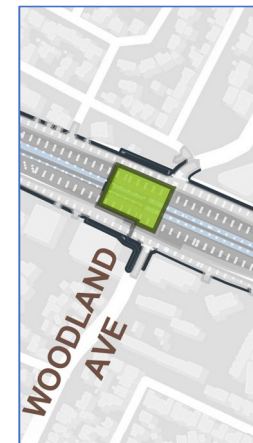
- Downtown Segment (Holly–15th)
 - Holly Street Stitch; E. Cesar Chavez Cap; Cesar Chavez-4th Street Cap; 4th-5th Street Cap; 5th-6th Street Cap; 6th-7th Street Cap; 8th-9th Street Cap; 11th Street Stitch; 12th Street Stitch
- University Segment (15th– 51st)
 - 32nd Street Stitch; 38th ½ Street – 41st Cap; 41st Street – Airport Blvd Cap
- Capital Plaza Segment (51st – HWY 290) – 51st Street Stitch



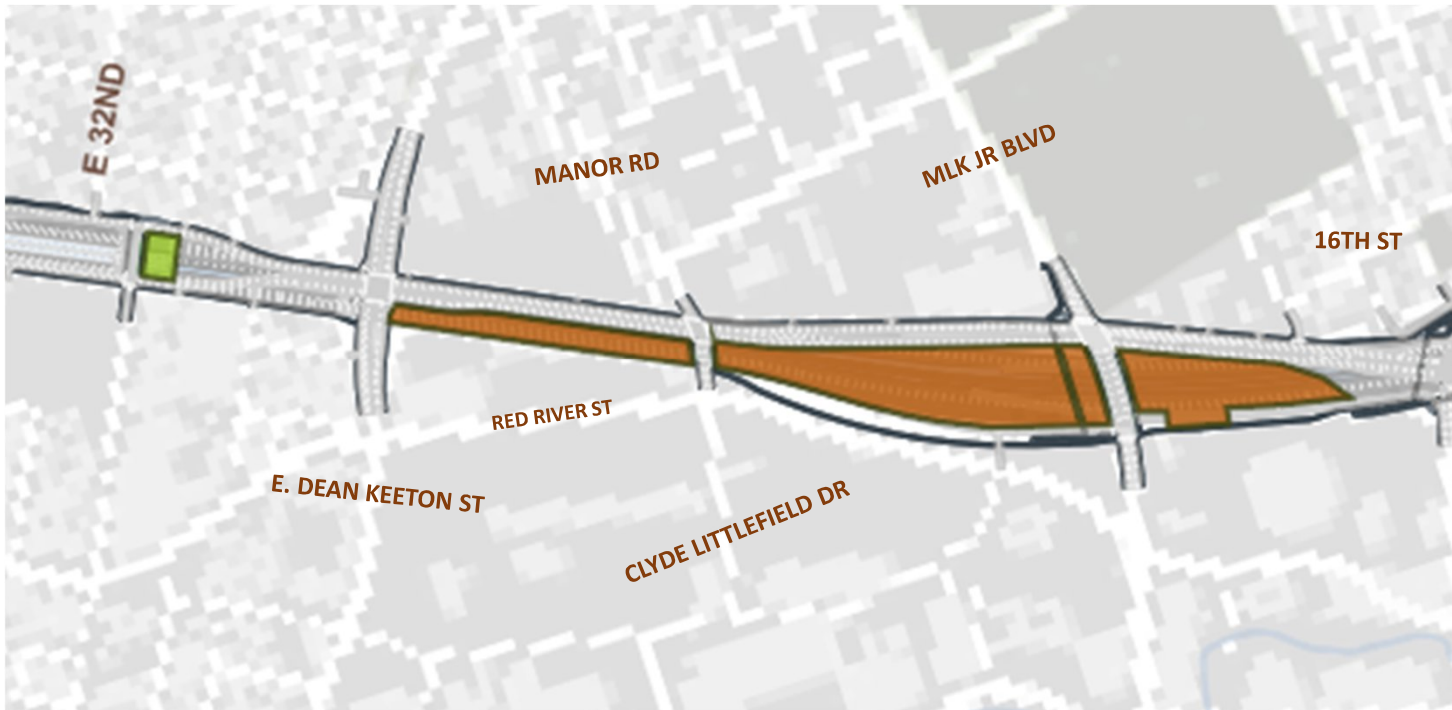
City of
Austin



CAPPING OPPORTUNITIES



University of Texas Cap Section *15th St. to Dean Keeton*



Funding Opportunity - Available Federal Funding ***Grant Opportunities***



- Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (2021) provides large cap grant opportunities
- Immediate grant opportunity:
 - Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Programs
 - Applications are due Sept 28, 2023

IMAGE:
Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston



Key Grant Criteria Considerations for a Successful Application



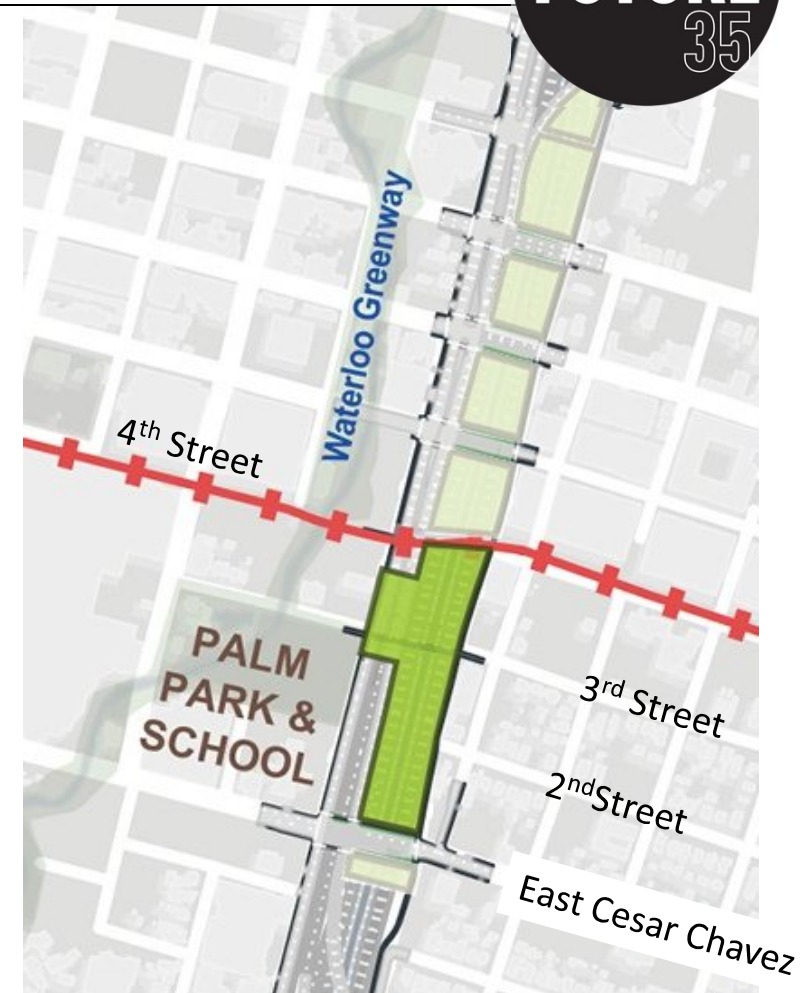
- Project should:
 - Be within disadvantaged census tracts, as identified by USDOT's "Justice 40" initiative
 - Enhance transit availability
 - Increase density and mix of surrounding land uses
 - Engage with community members and area stakeholders
 - Improve bike/pedestrian access
 - Synergize with surrounding City projects and initiatives
 - Mitigate displacement concerns
 - Encourage public and private investment

USDOT Justice 40 Initiative Map



Capital Grant Funding for Caps Proposed Strategy

- Submit cap proposal that best meets federal grant criteria - a complete “start-to-finish” green space project
- Seek federal funds to construct base and deck, COA contributes to amenities on top
- Most Competitive Grant Project Identified:
Cesar Chavez - 4th St. Cap (5.3 +/- acres)
- Pursue \$105M of federal grant funding
- Proposed City match: \$45M, if awarded grant
Source: Certificates of Obligation or other funds
Match not needed unless grant application is successful



Why *Cesar Chavez* – 4th St. Cap?

OUR
FUTURE
35

- 5.3 acre section is only land bridge where pedestrians don't have to cross I-35 frontage road
- Cap section is adjacent to
 - Justice 40 environmental justice tracts
 - Redline/Greenline rail and LA Bikeway facilities
 - Palm Park and Palm School redevelopment
 - Waterloo Greenway
 - Walking distance to Convention Center
 - Walking distance to MACC
- Most competitive, most points on grant criteria



Cesar Chavez to 4th Street Cap Opportunity



- Federal grant dollars – cap structural elements & deck
- City match – park-like open space and amenities, including restrooms, pavilions, and shade trees.
- Future flexibility for additional amenities/partnerships for additional enhancements (ex., buildings). **Funding not identified for enhancements.**



Strategies to Implement Additional Caps and Stitches



- TxDOT has indicated a Dec. 2024 date for COA to provide funding for all for support structures and concrete caps for ~30 acres: \$600M estimated
- We are continuing to work with TxDOT to include future caps and stitches into the highway design
- Primary challenge is the timing for financing. We continue to work through potential funding sources.

Strategies to Implement Additional Caps and Stitches

- Explore funding strategies including
 - Future grants
 - Philanthropy
 - Private/Public Partnerships (P3)
 - TIF/PID
 - Capital debt
- Work with TxDOT on when funds need to be delivered for construction



Grant Opportunity - Request to Submit On the September 21st Council Agenda



1. Consider the request to submit for a 2023 capital grant application to USDOT Reconnecting Communities Program
 - \$105m Federal funding ask (structures)
 - \$45m proposed City match (amenities + construction contingency)
 - Potential for additional amenities
 - City match only needed if grant is awarded
 - Award announcements expected February 2024
2. Consider AFA with USDOT for Reconnecting Communities Pilot Planning Grant along I-35 between SR 71 and US 290E for \$1.12 M



OURFUTURE35

Austin's Cap and Stitch Program

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