



October 20, 2026

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

We are writing in support of Item 44 on the October 22 agenda, a resolution directing staff to provide input on the CAMPO and TxDOT Parmer Lane Corridor Study. The resolution's recommendations include safety improvements, alignment with City mobility goals, and a requirement that any project on Parmer reduce, or at minimum not increase, vehicle miles traveled. It also asks CAMPO and TxDOT to evaluate a complete-street alternative.

Parmer Lane is lined with apartments, offices, shops and child care centers, with neighborhoods and schools within walking and biking distance. Yet CAMPO and TxDOT's Parmer Lane Corridor Study recommends turning Parmer Lane between RM 1431 and MoPac into a highway: 4 highway lanes plus 4 frontage-road lanes north of SH 45, and 2 highway lanes plus 6 frontage-road lanes south of it. By our estimate, using RMI's SHIFT calculator, the new lanes would bring about 40–75 million more vehicle-miles of driving a year. This is the wrong direction for Parmer and the wrong direction for Austin.

We urge Council and City staff to support the resolution and advocate for a project in line with City goals: a complete street that makes it safer to walk, bike, cross and drive. The attached report provides details about both CAMPO's project and a boulevard alternative. Here is a quick summary:

- **The study's highway plan mainly serves trips through, not trips to.** Its new highway lanes would primarily serve people making longer trips, but people driving through the area already have highway options like 183A/US 183 and MoPac/SH 45.
- **Turning an urban arterial lined with homes, schools and businesses into a limited-access highway repeats a mistake of the past.** It would come at a high cost to the many people living, working and going to school along Parmer: less safety and access, more noise and pollution, a facility that is harder to walk, bike and take transit on, and an unpleasant environment.
- **Little or no time savings on frontage roads.** Those making shorter local trips to homes, jobs and schools along Parmer would be using the frontage roads, which in 2044 would take about as long as the existing road, assuming CAMPO's 50/50 traffic split between the highway and frontage lanes and growth in line with recent traffic counts. Even if more drivers used the highway lanes, frontage-road trips would only be about as fast as today's rush hour. (See the report for the analysis.)

- **Frontage roads are among Austin’s most dangerous roads.** A preliminary analysis of City crash records finds they have about twice the rate of fatal and serious-injury crashes per mile driven as state-maintained arterials like Parmer.
- **The recommendation came before the analysis.** CAMPO has confirmed that no travel times or traffic projections were developed for each concept, and it has not identified ramp locations. The presentation at the Transportation Policy Board advertised time savings, but a follow-up exchange with Council Member Laine revealed that no travel-time modeling has been done; CAMPO says only that the highway lanes would be expected to be faster because they bypass signals.
- **A complete street would serve the corridor better.** With redesigned intersections, safe crossings every quarter mile, protected bikeways and a 40 mph speed limit, a full-corridor trip in 2044 would take only a minute or two longer for drivers than leaving the roadway as is, and about two minutes longer than on the frontage roads of the study’s highway plan. A couple of extra minutes is a small price to pay for a street where people can safely walk and bike to the shops, schools and jobs along it, and where fewer people are killed or seriously injured.

The attached report lays out evidence supporting these points. Most of it is common sense: frequent safe crossings, lower speeds, protected bikeways and redesigned intersections are well-established safety tools with strong evidence behind them, and both the dangers of frontage roads and the extra driving that new highway lanes attract are well documented. What has been missing is numbers for this corridor; CAMPO has confirmed that it did not model travel times or traffic for the individual concepts. We are community advocates, not traffic engineers, so to fill that gap we did our own preliminary calculations using the study’s data, TxDOT and City records, Google Maps travel-time estimates, and standard planning assumptions, with modeling help from AI tools. The figures we present are estimates, and every assumption and source is listed in Appendix B so they can be checked and refined.

We are grateful to Council Member Laine for her leadership on this resolution, and to Council Members Fuentes, Qadri, Siegel, and Ellis for co-sponsoring it.

Sincerely,

Miriam Schoenfield



Board President  
Connected Central Texas (formerly Rethink35)

# A Better Long-Term Plan for Parmer Lane

*Connected Central Texas · October 2026*

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Our key finding is that in 2044, a rush-hour drive the length of Parmer would take about the same time on today's road, on a complete street, or on the highway plan's frontage roads: within about two minutes at our middle estimates. Even if more drivers use the highway lanes than CAMPO assumes, frontage-road trips would only be about as fast as today's rush hour, and in the south segment, the single highway lane would be near or above capacity (see Appendix A). Those taking long-distance trips on the new highway lanes would have shorter travel times, but there are already options for high-speed long-distance travel in the area; a road with homes, businesses and nearby schools is not the appropriate place to be optimizing high-speed long-distance trips. These are sketch estimates prepared by community advocates, not a traffic model; Appendix A explains how we made them and where they may fall short.

## 1. What Has and Hasn't Been Studied

CAMPO and TxDOT's Parmer Lane (FM 734) Corridor Study covers the 9.7 miles from RM 1431 in Cedar Park to MoPac and was presented to the CAMPO Transportation Policy Board in September 2026. It pairs short-term fixes with a long-term recommendation to rebuild Parmer as a highway with frontage roads:

- **North segment, RM 1431 to SH 45:** 4 highway lanes plus 4 frontage-road lanes, up from 4 lanes today.
- **South segment, SH 45 to MoPac:** 2 highway lanes plus 6 frontage-road lanes, up from 6 lanes today.

In written responses to Council Member Laine in October 2026, CAMPO staff described how the recommendation was reached. Their answers show that the analysis needed to support what the consultant described at CAMPO's Transportation Policy Board meeting as an "aggressive" recommendation has not been done.

- **No travel-time or traffic analysis for each concept.** The concepts were compared using high-level criteria rather than traffic models. No traffic projections or travel times were developed for individual concepts.
- **Ramp locations not set.** The study assumed a basic 50/50 split between highway lanes and frontage roads, but the actual split depends on ramp locations that have not been identified.
- **No induced demand calculation.** Without traffic projections for each concept, the extra driving a highway would attract has not been considered.
- **A forecast that doesn't match recent counts.** The 2044 forecast of 66,042 vehicles a day comes from CAMPO's regional travel model and assumes traffic grows about 1.7% a year for 20 years. But traffic on Parmer has been essentially flat for a decade, even as the Austin metro area added about 340,000 people between the 2020 Census and 2025 (see

section 2). CAMPO has told us the forecast is an average across the study limits and that no projections were made for individual concepts, so we can't see where the model expects growth or why it differs from the trend.

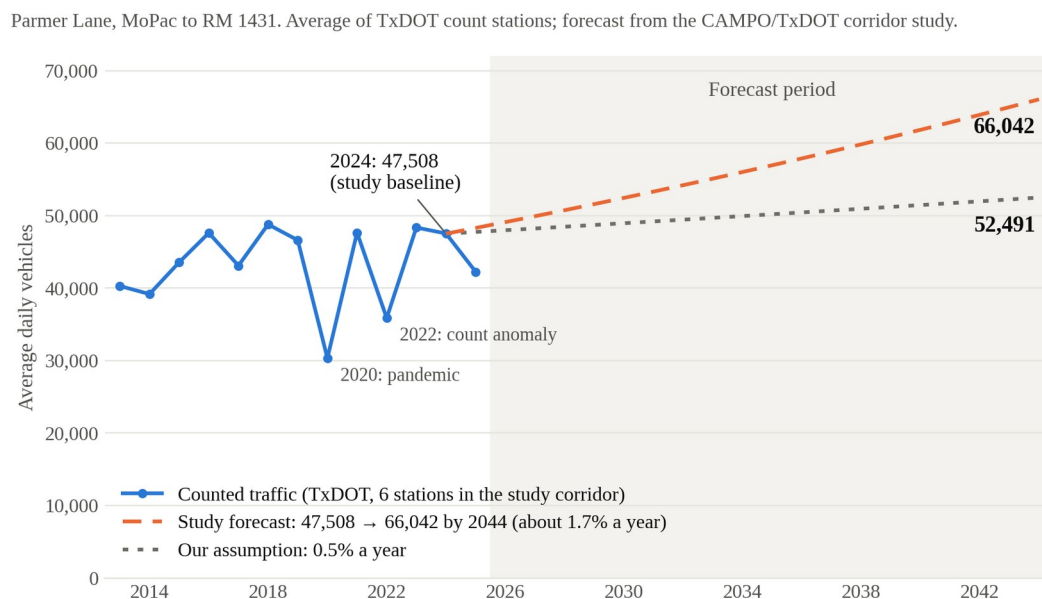
- **A safety estimate that likely misses the key risks.** CAMPO's high-level analysis used FHWA's Highway Safety Software, whose facility types, as TxDOT lists them, do not include frontage roads, and it had no traffic projections for each concept, so it misses both induced traffic and frontage roads' higher crash rates. It also counts all injury crashes rather than deaths and serious injuries.

This report fills some of those gaps with sketch estimates, comparing the highway with doing nothing and with a complete street, or boulevard, that keeps Parmer's current lanes while improving intersections and safety. Although the City's Strategic Mobility Plan aims for half of commutes to be made by something other than driving alone by 2039, we err on the conservative side and assume no shift to transit, walking or biking. We include travel times because faster trips are the main argument for the highway plan, but what matters most is whether people can safely and comfortably reach the things they need, however they travel, rather than how fast they can cover long distances.

## 2. Traffic Growth: 0.5% a Year Instead of 1.7%

Traffic on Parmer has been essentially flat for the last decade. Trends ending with the latest counts (2025) range from 0.09% a year starting in 2015 to 0.95% starting in 2013, the earliest year with exact counts at all six stations. (Both leave out 2020, the pandemic dip, and 2022, which had an apparent counting problem.) We use 0.5%, about halfway between.

**Figure 1. Parmer traffic has been essentially flat for a decade. The study forecasts 1.7% a year.**



Source: TxDOT AADT counts (stations 227H197B, 227H197C, 227H207B, 246H36B, 246H36C, 246H36D). Trends to 2025, excluding 2020 and 2022: about 0.1% a year from 2015 (the last decade) and about 1% from 2013. Our assumption of 0.5% is about halfway between.

CAMPO's study assumes 1.7% a year, more than three times our estimate and nearly twice even the highest of these trends. CAMPO has said the forecast comes from its regional travel model, but has not explained why it differs so much from recent counts.

Nearly all the growth of the last dozen years came between 2014 and 2016; since then, traffic has averaged about 46,500 in 2016–19 and 46,000 in 2023–25. At 0.5% a year, Parmer would carry about 52,500 vehicles a day by 2044, roughly 13,500 fewer than the study assumes.

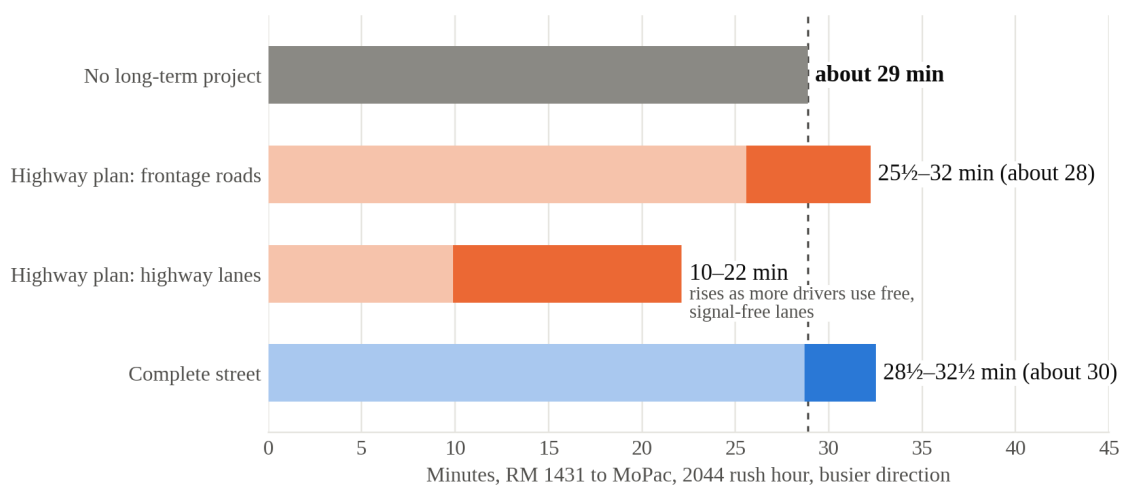
### 3. Driver Travel Times for Different Options

The highway plan would give drivers making longer trips an additional high-speed limited-access option through this area. But people making shorter trips to and from places along Parmer, rather than through it, would use the frontage roads at least for segments of the trip. (The details will depend on ramp locations that CAMPO has not decided on.) At 0.5% annual growth, our estimates, which include the traffic the SHIFT calculator predicts the new lanes would bring, show frontage-road travel times about the same as leaving Parmer as it is at rush hour. The exact number depends on how many drivers use frontage-road lanes versus highway lanes.

The boulevard option we propose would make Parmer significantly safer to walk, bike, cross and drive. By 2044, with a 40 mph speed limit and redesigned intersections, a full-length rush-hour trip would take about 30 minutes (28½ to 32½), compared with about 28 minutes (25½ to 32) on the frontage roads if the study's highway plan is built. Two minutes is a small price for a street where fewer people are killed or seriously injured, and where people can safely and pleasantly walk and bike to the shops, schools and jobs along it. The ranges overlap, and the differences between the options are smaller than the uncertainty in any estimate, so travel time should not decide this choice; safety and access should. See Appendix A for details on how we derived these numbers.

**Figure 2. Travel times under different scenarios**

Sketch estimate assuming traffic grows 0.5% a year, calibrated to Google's estimates of today's rush-hour trip (about 25–27 minutes). Dashed line: no long-term project. Boulevard and frontage roads posted at 40 mph. No shift to transit, walking or biking.

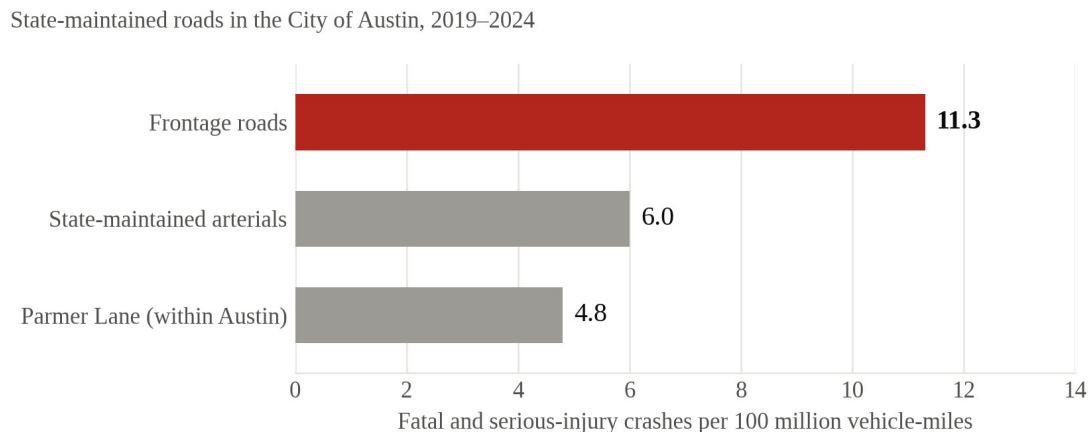


Includes the extra traffic new lanes induce (SHIFT method). Darker sections show each range; "about" figures are middle estimates. Frontage roads and highway lanes: 40% to 60% of drivers using the highway lanes; the highway lanes' high end also adds drivers drawn from US 183 and MoPac. Complete street: 10% to 30% more capacity from redesigned intersections. Not modeled: ramp merging, bottlenecks where the highway lanes end, the frontage roads' paired signals and U-turns.

#### 4. Why Frontage Roads Are a Poor Fit for Parmer

Under the highway plan, frontage roads would carry about half of Parmer’s traffic, by CAMPO’s own assumption, and they bring problems of their own.

**Figure 3. Frontage roads have far higher serious-crash rates than state-maintained arterials like Parmer**



Analysis of City of Austin crash records matched to TxDOT Roadway Inventory traffic volumes. Crashes assigned by street name on the police report or, if not named, by nearest road. Each road type includes crashes at its intersections. Preliminary: not yet verified by city staff.

- **Dangerous.** In Austin, frontage roads have about twice the rate of fatal and serious-injury crashes per mile driven as state-maintained arterials like Parmer, according to a preliminary analysis of City crash records. Drivers leave the ramps at highway speed onto a street with driveways, crosswalks and turning traffic, and a University of Texas study for TxDOT found that frontage-road segments with more access points and more variable speeds had more crashes and injuries. People on foot must cross two frontage roads and pass ramp traffic and the highway structure at every intersection, with no crossings in between.
- **Inefficient.** Frontage roads are one-way. Reaching a business on the other side, or turning around, means driving to the next intersection and making a U-turn under the highway. Each crossing becomes two signalized intersections, and traffic entering and leaving the ramps between them has to weave across lanes. The same study found that closely spaced ramps can create serious merging and diverging problems.
- **Associated with weaker local economies.** The study found that Texas corridors with frontage roads had lower household incomes, lower population and employment densities, and higher unemployment than comparable corridors without them. Frontage roads tend to produce car-oriented strip development, not the housing and mixed-use development Council wants at Lakeline.
- **Not the cheap option, and they must be justified.** The study found that frontage roads’ reputation as an inexpensive way to provide access does not hold up. TxDOT’s own design manual requires a Frontage Road Briefing Document justifying any frontage road where none exists today, approved by the TxDOT district and submitted to its Design Division.

## 5. The Boulevard Alternative: Safety and Other Benefits

The boulevard option we describe below keeps Parmer's current car lanes and adds shared-use paths, shade, and safer designs. This is a conservative version of a complete street that assumes no one switches to transit, walking or biking. The best version of the boulevard would use some of the roadway as dedicated transit lanes, as the City's mobility plan envisions and the resolution asks staff to explore with CapMetro. We did not analyze that option here because it depends on future bus service that CapMetro would need to plan, and because estimating its effect would require assumptions about bus ridership that we could not make reliably.

The boulevard we propose would include:

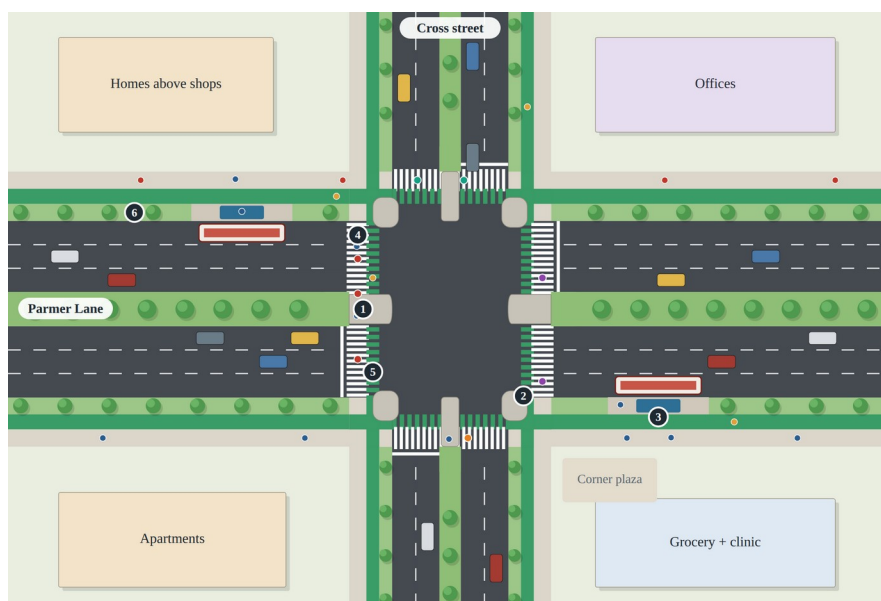
- **Today's lanes.** Two general traffic lanes in each direction north of SH 45 and three south of it, as today, with no highway lanes or frontage roads.
- **Redesigned intersections.** Where the median is wide enough, drivers turning left would make a U-turn just past the intersection instead of waiting for a left-turn arrow, which gives the main signal more green time. Intersections would also get corner islands, high-visibility crosswalks, and signals that give people walking a head start.
- **Safe crossings at least every quarter mile.** New signals or pedestrian hybrid beacons where crossings are far apart, with median refuges so people can cross half the road at a time, starting with routes to McNeil High School and Jollyville Elementary.
- **Lower speeds.** A 40 mph limit, with about 2 miles of 35 mph zones near schools and busy areas.
- **Protected bikeways and shared-use paths** on both sides, separated from traffic and continuous through intersections.
- **Shade, lighting and bus stops.** Street trees along the sidewalks and median, pedestrian-scale lighting, and sheltered bus stops near intersections.

The most significant advantage of the boulevard we propose is safety: it targets where Parmer's crashes happen, using treatments the City has already shown work.

**Figure 4. Parmer Lane as a boulevard (south segment, SH 45 to MoPac).** Illustrative.



**Figure 5. A Parmer intersection, rebuilt without adding a general-traffic lane**



(1) Median refuge: cross half the road at a time. (2) Corner islands slow turning cars; bikes wait in front of them. (3) Far-side bus stop with shelter, reached by a short crossing. (4) Crosswalks with leading pedestrian signals: walkers get a head start. (5) Continuous protected bikeways and marked bike crossings. (6) Shade trees buffer sidewalks from traffic. Illustrative concept shown with the south segment's six lanes; buses share the outside lane.

### *Safety*

- **Parmer's crashes are concentrated at intersections:** about two-thirds of them, according to CAMPO. City crash records show six fatal crashes on the Austin part of the corridor since 2016, four of them at intersections, including two at Ganymede Drive and one at McNeil Drive. The boulevard we're proposing is built around fixing intersections; the highway builds new ramps and frontage-road intersections.
- **Proven treatments:** in Austin, protected left turns have cut severe crashes 51%, protected intersections 42%, and the City's major intersection projects 38%, according to Vision Zero's 10-year report. FHWA credits median refuge islands with a 56% reduction in pedestrian crashes and pedestrian hybrid beacons with 55%.
- **Lower speeds:** Parmer is posted at 55–60 mph today. Slower speeds make crashes less likely and less severe, especially for people walking and biking.
- **State roads are where Austinites die.** State-owned roads account for 65–75% of Austin's traffic deaths. The boulevard brings the City's proven treatments to one of them.

### *Other benefits*

- **It supports Council's Lakeline Station resolution.** A planned Red Line Trail segment will connect Lakeline Station to West Parmer Lane, and housing near the station needs a street people can walk to and across.
- **Businesses keep direct access.** Driveways connect directly to Parmer, with no one-way frontage roads or detours under a highway to reach the other side.
- **It adds far less capacity, so it brings far less of the extra driving** that new highway lanes attract, and less of the congestion that driving pushes onto neighboring roads.

## 6. Summary

Turning Parmer into a highway would do little for many of the people who use it, and at high cost: it would make Parmer harder to cross and less safe, bring more noise and pollution to the neighborhoods along it, and spend public money on a faster trip for drivers making longer trips, who already have MoPac, 183, 183A and SH 45. It would also add traffic to surrounding roads, bring years of construction to the businesses along Parmer, and make it harder to connect the City's planned housing and trail at Lakeline to the jobs and neighborhoods along Parmer.

The resolution before Council responds in four main ways:

1. **Aligns any proposal with the City's mobility plan**, short-term and long-term: continuous walking and biking routes; new signals or pedestrian beacons where crossings are far apart, prioritizing routes to McNeil High School and Jollyville Elementary; protected intersections, refuge islands, high-visibility crosswalks, leading pedestrian intervals and lighting; lower speed limits; and no increase in driving or emissions.
2. **Sets standards for any long-term proposal**, including safe crossings at least every quarter mile, no free-flowing turns or ramps across crosswalks, no increase in VMT or emissions, speeds no higher than 40 mph where the corridor serves driveways, crossings, homes and businesses, a demonstrated reduction in deaths and serious injuries, and no added traffic noise at homes. It also asks that proposals be judged on travel times for trips that start or end in the corridor, not just through trips.
3. **Asks CAMPO and TxDOT to evaluate a complete-street alternative** to the same level of detail as the recommended concepts before any concept advances to schematic design, and to share the technical basis of the study: ramp locations, the 2044 forecast, modeled travel times, speed assumptions and the safety analysis.
4. **Calls for full environmental review**, including an Environmental Impact Statement, with meaningful public engagement throughout.

We don't need another highway in northwest Austin. We need Parmer to work as a street for the people who use it every day.

## Appendix A: Calculating Travel Times

We start with TxDOT counts, grown at 0.5% a year, and use the common planning defaults of 9% of daily traffic in the peak hour and 55% in the busier direction. That gives about 2,600 vehicles an hour in the peak direction in 2044 without any new lanes. For the highway plan, we add the extra vehicles an hour the new lanes would bring in the peak direction, using the SHIFT calculator's method.<sup>1</sup> To calculate travel time from the vehicles per hour, we use Google's estimates of today's trip time with no congestion, the number of lanes in each design (from the study for the highway plan), and standard per-lane capacities adjusted so that today's rush-hour trip matches Google's estimates. We then apply the standard delay formula<sup>2</sup> used in regional travel models, which calculates how much a road slows down as it fills up. The boulevard and the frontage roads are both assumed to be posted at 40 mph<sup>3</sup>, and the boulevard also includes about 2 miles of 35 mph zones near schools and busy areas, plus new pedestrian crossings. These are sketch estimates for comparing the options; exact trip times would need a full traffic model.

**The range for the highway lanes.** The Parmer highway lanes would provide an alternative to existing highways (183A/US 183 and SH 45/MoPac) for longer trips. Under optimistic assumptions, in which the Parmer lanes attract none of the drivers now using those routes, and with CAMPO's assumption that 50% of the drivers on Parmer would use the highway lanes, the full trip would take about 10 minutes (the low end of the range in the bar graph). However, the new Parmer highway lanes would be free, while the nearby alternatives are tolled at least in part. A free, faster route would almost certainly draw drivers from those roads and from other times of day. Without CAMPO's regional model, we cannot say how many drivers would switch; more would mean slower trips. If the highway lanes drew 5% of the traffic on US 183 and on MoPac north of Parmer (about 11,000 vehicles a day), the trip would take about 16 minutes at CAMPO's 50/50 split, and about 22 minutes if 60% of Parmer's drivers used the highway lanes (the high end of the range in the bar graph).

**The range for the frontage roads.** CAMPO assumes half of Parmer's traffic would use the highway lanes. Under that assumption, a full-length frontage-road trip would take about 28 minutes, about the same as leaving Parmer as it is (about 29). Our range covers 40% to 60% of drivers using the highway lanes, giving 25½ to 32 minutes. If even more drivers used the highway lanes, the frontage roads would speed up further, but only to about 24–25 minutes at best, roughly today's rush-hour trip, largely because they would still have signals at every cross street. Most of that gain would come from the north segment, which has two highway lanes in each direction. On the south segment, the single highway lane would already be about 85% full under CAMPO's split, and any more traffic, whether a higher share of Parmer's drivers or

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<sup>1</sup> Extra vehicle-miles a year =  $0.75 \times (\text{county vehicle-miles a year} \div \text{county lane-miles}) \times \text{new lane-miles}$ . SHIFT estimates that the added lanes would generate about 40–75 million extra vehicle-miles a year. This comes to about 1,020 extra vehicles an hour at rush hour in the busier direction on the north segment, and about 630 on the south segment.

<sup>2</sup> Trip time = time with no congestion  $\times (1 + 0.15 \times (\text{traffic} \div \text{capacity})^4)$

<sup>3</sup> 40 mph matches the resolution's standard for corridors serving driveways, crossings, homes and businesses. It is also in line with TxDOT's current practice in Austin: on I-35 Capital Express Central, the most recent frontage-road project being designed in Austin, TxDOT is lowering frontage-road design speeds from today's posted 40–50 mph to 35–40 mph.

drivers drawn from US 183 and MoPac, would push it over capacity. Shifting more traffic onto it would barely help the frontage roads, while slowing the highway lanes to 20 minutes or more. Our estimate does not include the frontage roads' paired signals at cross streets, ramp merging or U-turn detours, which would likely add time.

**The range for the boulevard.** The boulevard keeps today's lanes but redesigns intersections. With redesigned intersections, the trip takes about 30 minutes ( $28\frac{1}{2}$  to  $32\frac{1}{2}$ ), only about two minutes longer than on the frontage roads. The range depends on how much capacity the intersection redesigns add (10–30%).

**What “more intersection capacity” means:** Median U-turns move left turns off the main signal, so it needs fewer phases. The freed time goes to Parmer's through traffic, while cross streets keep their green. The net gain is roughly 20–30% at a typical busy intersection, and smaller averaged over the corridor. Parmer's existing median, 26–36 feet wide, has room for these designs.

## Appendix B: Assumptions and Sources

The estimates in this report are sketch estimates to show direction and rough size; they are not a traffic model. Below is every assumption behind the growth, travel-time and crash-rate charts, with where each one comes from. The **Basis** column says whether a value is taken from a published source, is a standard planning default, or is our own judgment. Travel times are for the evening peak hour, peak direction, over the full 9.7 miles from RM 1431 to MoPac, in 2044.

### Traffic volumes and growth

| Assumption                             | Value                                           | Source                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Basis                                    |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Daily traffic today                    | 47,508 vehicles a day (2024)                    | <u>Study open house exhibits</u> , p. 6. TxDOT's six count stations in the corridor average 47,531 for 2024.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Published                                |
| Study's 2044 forecast                  | 66,042 vehicles a day (+39%, about 1.7% a year) | Study exhibits, p. 6; CAMPO says it comes from its regional model, averaged across the study limits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Published                                |
| Growth rate we use                     | 0.5% a year                                     | About halfway between trends fitted to TxDOT counts at stations 36B, 36C, 36D, 197B, 197C and 207B through 2025: 0.09% a year from 2015 (the last decade) and 0.95% from 2013 (the earliest year with exact counts at all six stations), leaving out 2020 (pandemic) and 2022, when counts at several stations dropped by 11–51% for one year and then returned to normal, which points to counting problems rather than a real change in traffic. Including 2022 would lower each trend by about half a percentage point. | Our calculation from <u>TxDOT counts</u> |
| 2044 daily traffic we use              | 52,500 vehicles a day                           | 47,508 grown at 0.5% a year for 20 years                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Our calculation                          |
| One volume for the whole corridor      | Same daily traffic on both segments             | The study reports only a corridor average                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Simplification                           |
| No shift to transit, walking or biking | 0%                                              | Chosen to be conservative                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Our judgment                             |

## Road layout and rush-hour traffic

| Assumption                                         | Value                                                                                         | Source                                                          | Basis            |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Segment lengths                                    | North (RM 1431 to SH 45) 4.2 mi; south (SH 45 to MoPac) 5.5 mi; total 9.7 mi                  | Measured along Parmer on a map                                  | Our measurement  |
| Lanes today                                        | North: 2 each way. South: 3 each way                                                          | Study exhibits, p. 8                                            | Published        |
| Highway concept                                    | North: 2 highway + 2 frontage lanes each way.<br>South: 1 highway + 3 frontage lanes each way | Study exhibits, p. 12 (4+4 north, 2+6 south)                    | Published        |
| Boulevard lanes                                    | Same as today                                                                                 | Our proposal                                                    | Design choice    |
| Share of daily traffic in the peak hour            | 9%                                                                                            | Common planning default for urban roads; not measured on Parmer | Standard default |
| Share of peak-hour traffic in the busier direction | 55%                                                                                           | Common planning default; not measured on Parmer                 | Standard default |
| Resulting peak-direction volume                    | About 2,600 vehicles an hour in 2044 ( $52,500 \times 9\% \times 55\%$ )                      | Calculation                                                     | Our calculation  |

## Capacity and delay

| Assumption                                  | Value                | Source                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Basis                                           |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Signalized lane (today's Parmer, boulevard) | 835 vehicles an hour | Set so the method matches Google's rush-hour estimates for today's trip (about 25–27 minutes). That is about 44% of the Highway Capacity Manual's base saturation flow of 1,900 per lane, consistent with through traffic getting green a little less than half the time | Standard method, calibrated to Google estimates |

| Assumption                         | Value                                                                                        | Source                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Basis                           |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Frontage-road lane                 | About 740 vehicles an hour                                                                   | Roughly 10% lower than a signalized arterial lane (our judgment). Frontage-road signals at interchanges share green time with cross-street and turning traffic, and exiting ramp traffic weaves across lanes just before them. With the same capacity as today's Parmer, the frontage-road trip would be about 26½ minutes; at 20% lower, about 30. Using the standard formula from TTI Report 1393-4F (saturation flow × green share), our estimate corresponds to frontage-road traffic getting a green light about 41% of the time.    | Our judgment                    |
| Highway lane                       | 1,900 vehicles an hour                                                                       | Federal guidance puts base capacity at about 2,300 passenger cars an hour per lane at 60 mph (FHWA HPMS manual, Appendix N). Standard adjustments for trucks and for traffic arriving in surges during the peak hour, which apply to any highway, typically bring that to roughly 2,000 vehicles an hour. We use 1,900 because the south segment would have a single lane with no room to pass, so traffic moves at the pace of the slowest vehicles. At 2,000, the highway lanes' high estimate would be about 20 minutes instead of 22. | Standard source, adjusted by us |
| How roads slow as they fill        | Time = free-flow time × (1 + 0.15 × (volume ÷ capacity) <sup>4</sup> )                       | The Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) curve, the standard formula in regional travel models                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Standard method                 |
| Queue when demand exceeds capacity | Adds 30 minutes × the share over capacity (about 1.5 minutes at 5% over); highway lanes only | Average wait in a queue that builds steadily through a one-hour peak. Not applied to roads with signals: there, the delay formula alone already reproduces Google's estimated rush-hour times for today, even though today's traffic exceeds the nominal lane capacity.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Standard approximation          |

The highway-lane capacity matters most for the south segment. At 1,900 vehicles an hour, its single highway lane is about 85% full at CAMPO's 50/50 split with only Parmer's own traffic, and about 16% over capacity once about 11,000 vehicles a day are drawn from other routes. At a 60% share, it would be about 2% over capacity even with only Parmer's own traffic.

## Speeds and signal time

| Assumption                                                           | Value                                                                                   | Source                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Basis                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Posted speed today                                                   | 55 mph (RM 1431 to SH 45), 60 (SH 45 to county line), 55 (to MoPac); about 57.5 average | Posted limits along the corridor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Published                      |
| Today's average speed with no congestion, including stops at signals | About 30 mph (about 19.5 minutes end to end)                                            | Google's no-traffic travel-time estimates for Parmer (Routes API, October 20–22, 2026), scaled to 9.7 miles: about 18–21 minutes                                                                                                                                                                          | Calibrated to Google estimates |
| Time spent at signals                                                | About 9.4 minutes end to end, held at today's level in every option with signals        | The gap between the light-traffic trip and driving 9.7 miles at the posted 57.5 mph                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Our calculation                |
| Today's peak trip                                                    | 25.8 minutes                                                                            | Result of the method at today's traffic, with lane capacity set to match Google's rush-hour estimates for the same days, scaled to 9.7 miles: about 25–27 minutes                                                                                                                                         | Our calculation                |
| Boulevard and frontage roads                                         | Posted 40 mph, about 24.3 mph average including signals                                 | Our proposal for the boulevard; frontage roads assumed the same. 40 mph matches the resolution's standard for corridors serving driveways, crossings, homes and businesses, and TxDOT is lowering frontage-road design speeds on I-35 Capital Express Central from today's posted 40–50 mph to 35–40 mph. | Design choice                  |
| Highway lanes                                                        | 60 mph with no congestion                                                               | Design speed not set by the study                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Our judgment                   |

## Highway option: highway-lane share and induced traffic

| Assumption                        | Value              | Source                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Basis                                    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Share of traffic on highway lanes | 50% (range 40–60%) | CAMPO's written responses to Council Member Laine, October 2026. Our range brackets CAMPO's figure evenly, since the actual split depends on ramp locations not yet chosen. On the north segment, which has two highway lanes each way, a higher share is possible; at 60% there (50% south), the frontage-road trip would be about 26 minutes. | Published (CAMPO); range is our judgment |

| Assumption                      | Value                                                                                                                       | Source                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Basis                          |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Traffic drawn from other routes | 0 to about 11,000 vehicles a day                                                                                            | High end: 5% of traffic on US 183 (about 130,000–150,000 a day) and on MoPac north of Parmer (about 85,000), TxDOT 2025 counts; MoPac-route drivers added to the south segment only. Not estimated: only CAMPO's regional model can say how many would switch. | Our judgment (illustrative)    |
| Induced-traffic elasticity      | 0.75: a 10% increase in lane-miles brings 7.5% more driving on that type of road                                            | <u>RMI SHIFT calculator methodology</u> , for state highways and arterials, based on <u>Duranton &amp; Turner (2011)</u> and later studies                                                                                                                     | Published                      |
| Driving per existing lane-mile  | Williamson: about 1.9 billion vehicle-miles a year on 757 lane-miles. Travis: about 5.7 billion on 1,550.                   | County data in the <u>SHIFT calculator</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Published                      |
| Added traffic per new lane      | About 5,200 vehicles a day (Williamson), 7,600 (Travis); about 6,400 for the south segment, which straddles the county line | $0.75 \times \text{driving per lane-mile} \div 365$                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Our calculation                |
| Total added traffic             | North (4 new lanes): about 20,600 vehicles a day. South (2 new lanes): about 12,700.                                        | Calculation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Our calculation                |
| Where the added traffic goes    | All on Parmer's new lanes, split between highway lanes and frontage roads in the same proportion as other traffic           | The studies find added lanes mostly create new driving on that type of road                                                                                                                                                                                    | Our application of the studies |
| Timing                          | Full effect by 2044                                                                                                         | The elasticities are long-run effects, which build over several years                                                                                                                                                                                          | Our judgment                   |

SHIFT counts only new driving, so it does not include drivers switching onto Parmer from other roads or times of day; the drawn-traffic row covers part of that. With an elasticity of 1.0 instead of 0.75, the highway lanes would take 10.3–17.9 minutes instead of 10.2–15.9, and the frontage roads 29.6 minutes instead of 27.9 (both at 50/50).

## Boulevard option

| Assumption                               | Value                                                             | Source                                                                                                                                                                                        | Basis                                 |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Intersection capacity gain from redesign | 20% (range 10–30%), averaged over the corridor                    | FHWA reports 20–50% more throughput at a median U-turn intersection than a conventional one ( <a href="#">FHWA</a> ); we use less because not every intersection would be redesigned this way | Published range, our corridor average |
| 35 mph zones                             | About 2 miles near schools and busy areas; adds about 0.4 minutes | Our proposal                                                                                                                                                                                  | Design choice                         |
| New pedestrian crossings                 | Adds about 0.3 minutes in total                                   | Estimate of extra stops at new signalized crossings                                                                                                                                           | Our judgment                          |
| Result                                   | About 30.2 minutes (28.7 at 30% gain, 32.5 at 10%)                | Calculation                                                                                                                                                                                   | Our calculation                       |

The intersection gain is the least certain boulevard assumption. It can only be pinned down by designing each intersection with turning-movement counts.

## Crash-rate analysis

| Assumption                             | Value                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Source                                    | Basis           |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Crashes counted                        | Fatal and serious-injury crashes in Austin, 2019–2024                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <a href="#">City of Austin crash data</a> | Published data  |
| Miles driven                           | Daily traffic × segment length for each road, summed over six years                                                                                                                                                                                                | <a href="#">TxDOT Roadway Inventory</a>   | Published data  |
| Road type                              | Frontage roads, state-maintained arterials and city arterials as classified in TxDOT’s inventory                                                                                                                                                                   | TxDOT Roadway Inventory                   | Published data  |
| Assigning crashes to roads             | The street named on the police report or, if none, the nearest road                                                                                                                                                                                                | Our matching method                       | Our method      |
| Crashes at frontage-road intersections | Counted with the road they are on, the same way for every road type (frontage roads: 11.3 per 100 million vehicle-miles). If all frontage-road intersection crashes were instead assigned to the cross street, the frontage-road rate would be 8.5, a lower bound. | Our matching method                       | Our method      |
| Results compared                       | Frontage roads 11.3, state-maintained arterials 6.0, Parmer within Austin 4.8                                                                                                                                                                                      | Calculation                               | Our calculation |

This analysis is preliminary. The counts of people killed and seriously injured on the Austin part of the corridor (west of MoPac, 2019–2024) and the fatal crashes cited in section 5 come from the same City records; they exclude the Cedar Park end of the corridor.

### **Not included**

The factors below were not included and would add delay to the highway option:

- Merging and weaving at ramps
- Bottlenecks where the highway lanes end at each end
- Time on frontage roads getting to and from ramps
- U-turn detours and the frontage roads' paired signals at each cross street
- Drivers switching from other times of day, or from other roads beyond our illustrative 5%

### **Bibliography**

Parmer Lane Corridor Study, Open House exhibits

CAMPO staff responses to Council Member Laine, October 2026

TxDOT traffic counts

TxDOT Roadway Inventory

City of Austin crash data

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Austin Vision Zero 10-year report

FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures

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TxDOT Roadway Design Manual, frontage roads

TxDOT Roadway Safety Design Manual, 6.2

TTI Report 1393-4F, Procedures to Determine Frontage Road Level of Service and Ramp Spacing