Hello, and welcome to the virtual open house for the I-35 Georgetown to Round Rock project. This presentation is pre-recorded and will be available until Friday, May 3, 2024. The purpose of this meeting is to share information about the project, including potential improvement concepts and managed high-occupancy vehicle lanes. Participants are encouraged to share comments on their experiences traveling I-35 and input on potential improvement concepts.

Program Overview

Mobility35 Capital Area

A region-wide effort between TxDOT and CAMPO to improve safety and mobility on 79 miles of I-35 through Williamson, Travis, and Hays counties. This includes five segments on the 100-most-congested roadways in Texas list.

Challenges to improving I-35 include:

- Highly-constrained urban environment.
- Need to maintain mobility during construction.
- Need for east/west connectivity.
- Diverse interests.
- Funding.

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The Mobility 35 Capital Area program is a region-wide effort between the Texas Department of Transportation, or TxDOT and the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, or CAMPO, to improve 79 miles of I-35 through Williamson, Travis, and Hays counties.

While improving I-35 is critical for our fast-growing region, there are several challenges we must consider when developing improvement plans. Some of the major challenges include:

- A highly constrained urban environment,
- The need to maintain mobility during construction,
- The need for east and west connectivity,
- A wide range of diverse interests,
- And funding.

This region-wide program includes several sections of improvements along I-35, including the project area we are discussing today, I-35 from SH 29 in Georgetown to SH 45 North in Round Rock.

Corridor Overview

Project Corridor Characteristics

- I-35 is a critical roadway for local, regional, interregional, interstate and international travel.
- The corridor serves as a major north/south thoroughfare for the region.
- I-35 provides connectivity for the growing region including the booming tech industry, manufacturing sector and metropolitan areas.
- The segment from RM 1431 to SH 45 North is #20 on the list of the state's 100 most congested roadways.*
- The annual congestion cost from the segment of the I-35 corridor through Round Rock is more than $62.3 million.*

** The Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI)*

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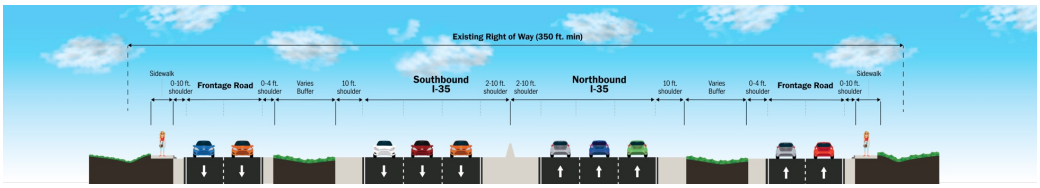
The I-35 corridor is a critical north-to-south roadway for the entire state of Texas, the US, and indeed all of North America. It provides everyone, from local drivers to international travelers, with the needed connectivity for goods, services, jobs and more.

The segment of I-35 from RM 1431 to SH 45 North, a segment within the project limits, is listed as number #20 on the state's 100 most congested roadways. In addition to traffic, congestion along the I-35 corridor through Round Rock costs drivers more than 62.3 million dollars in fuel consumption and travel delays each year.

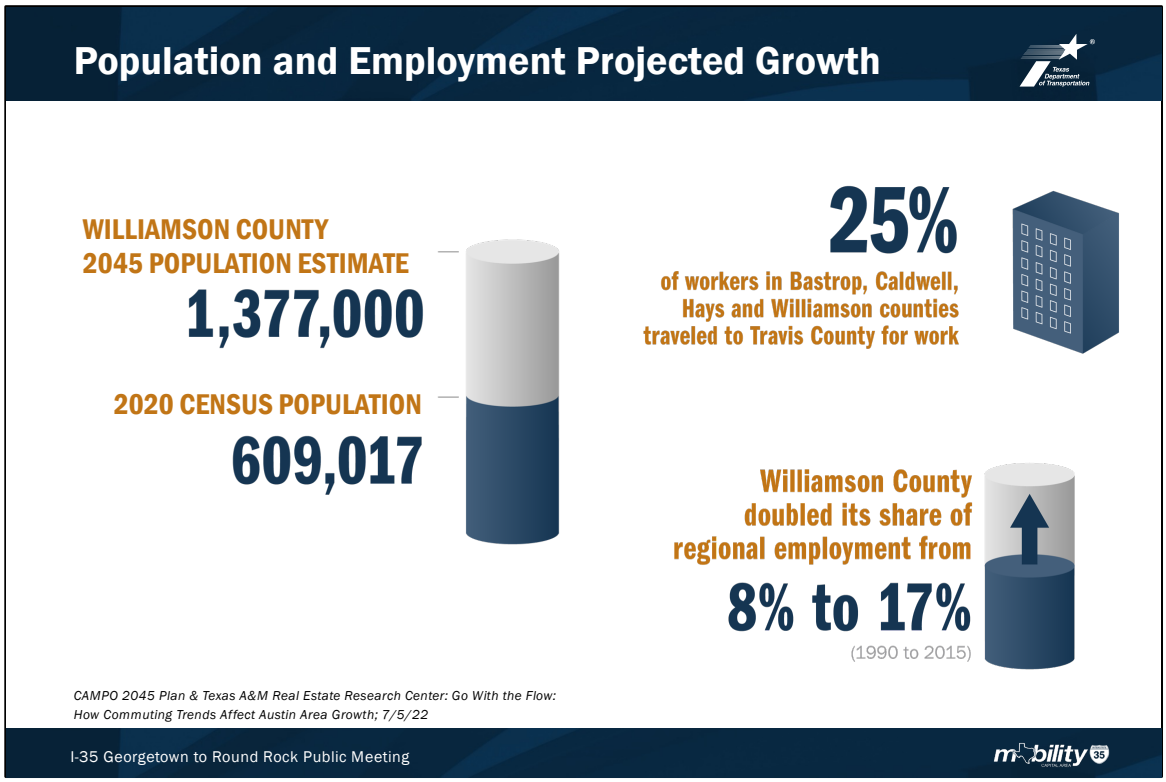
Existing Typical Section

SH 29 to SH 45 North



The roadway configuration and right-of-way width varies as you travel along I-35. While the above figure illustrates the general roadway configuration, some sections have additional travel lanes and no shoulders or sidewalk.

I-35 through the project area typically consists of, 3 mainlanes in each direction with shoulders, one-way two-lane frontage roads, and discontinuous sidewalks. Some sections include additional mainlanes, auxiliary lanes, frontage road lanes, and some sections lack shoulders. Additionally, the right-of-way width varies through the project limits. Generally, the right of way is narrower in Round Rock, and wider in Georgetown.



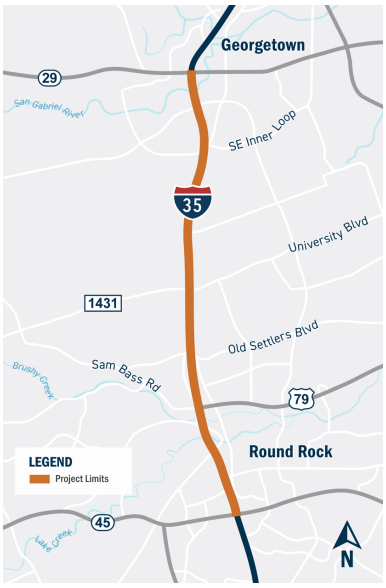
Williamson County is expected to more than double its population by 2045. Additionally, 25% of workers in Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, and Williamson counties traveled to Travis County for work. These trends suggest more travelers on I-35 over the next 20 years. Planning for improvements now is critical in maintaining efficient travel for commuters, local drivers, and freight that carries goods from Mexico to Canada.

Project Overview

This project would:

- Add two, non-tolled managed lanes for high-occupancy vehicles in each direction.
- Add flyovers at SH 45 North.
- Relocate and modify entrance and exit ramps.
- Reconstruct several bridges and cross-street intersections.
- Add bypass lanes in each direction.
- Add shared-use paths throughout the corridor.

Previous studies and intersection improvement projects will be used to inform project development.



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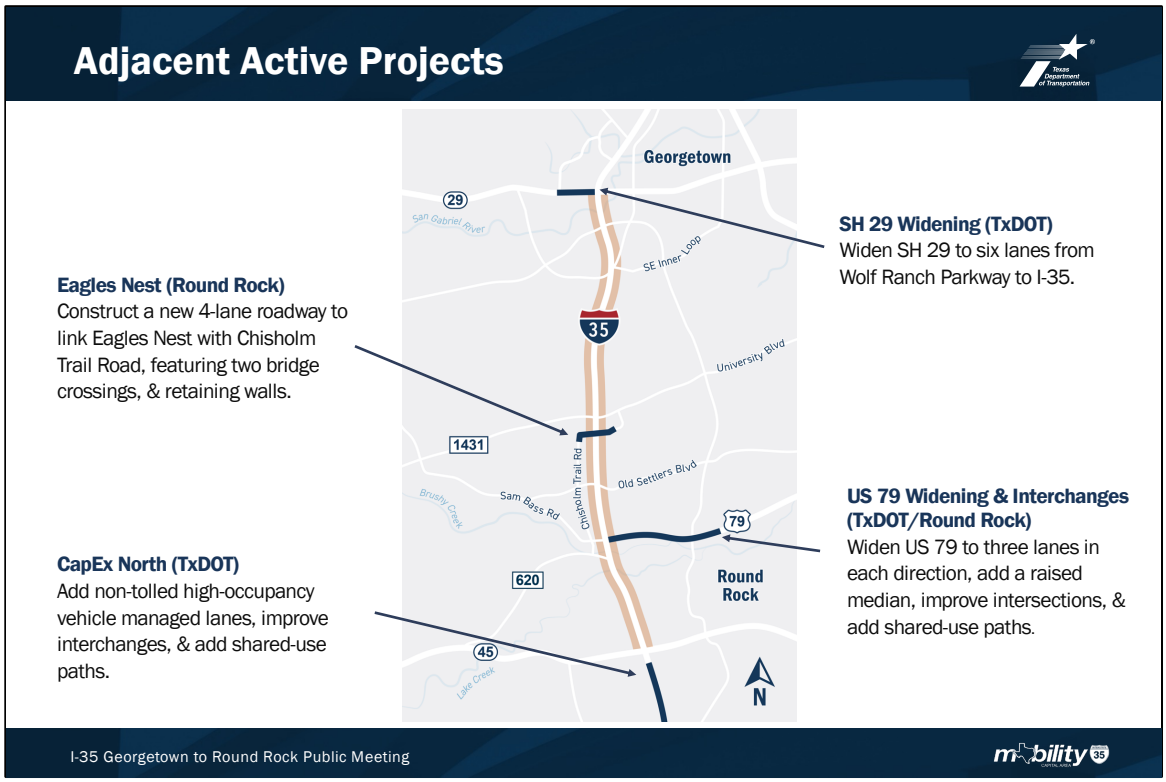
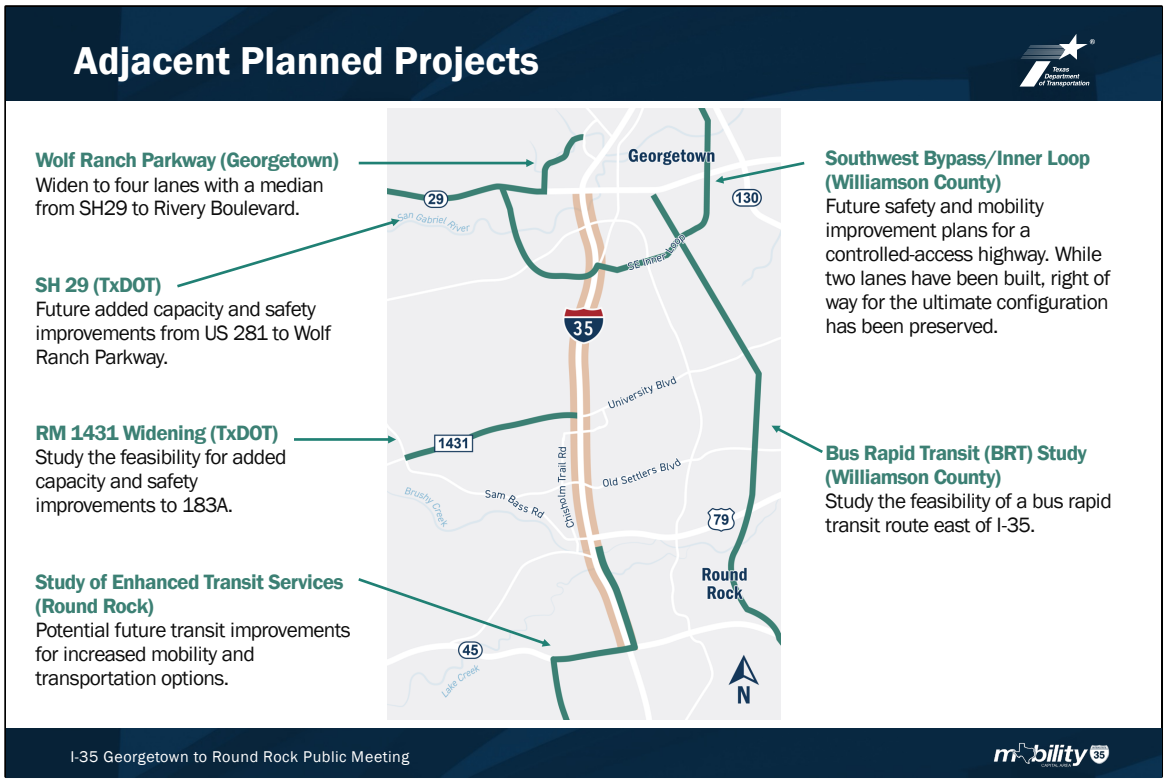
This project would improve safety and mobility in a variety of ways. Two non-tolled, managed high-occupancy vehicle lanes, or HOV lanes, would be added in each direction, along with flyovers at SH 45 North to complete the interchange. Various entrance and exit ramps would be relocated and modified as needed, while several bridges and cross-street intersections would be reconstructed.

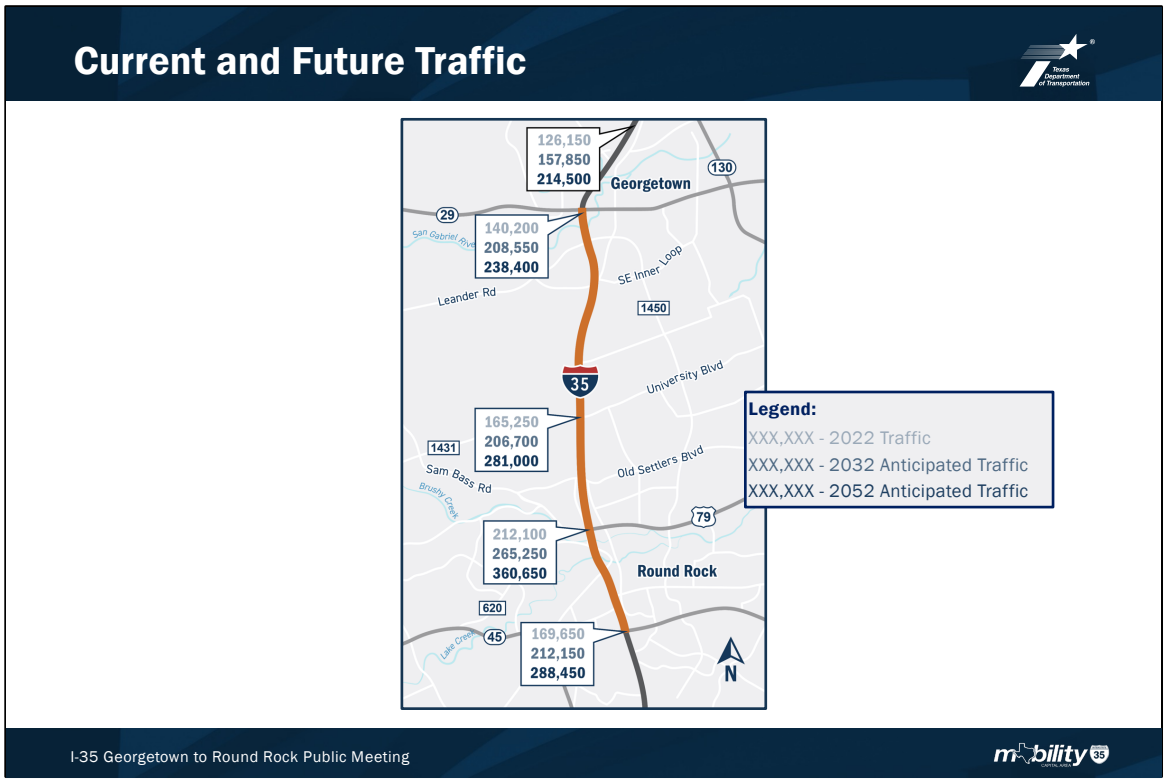
Other improvements include adding bypass lanes in each direction at some interchanges, and shared-use paths throughout the corridor.



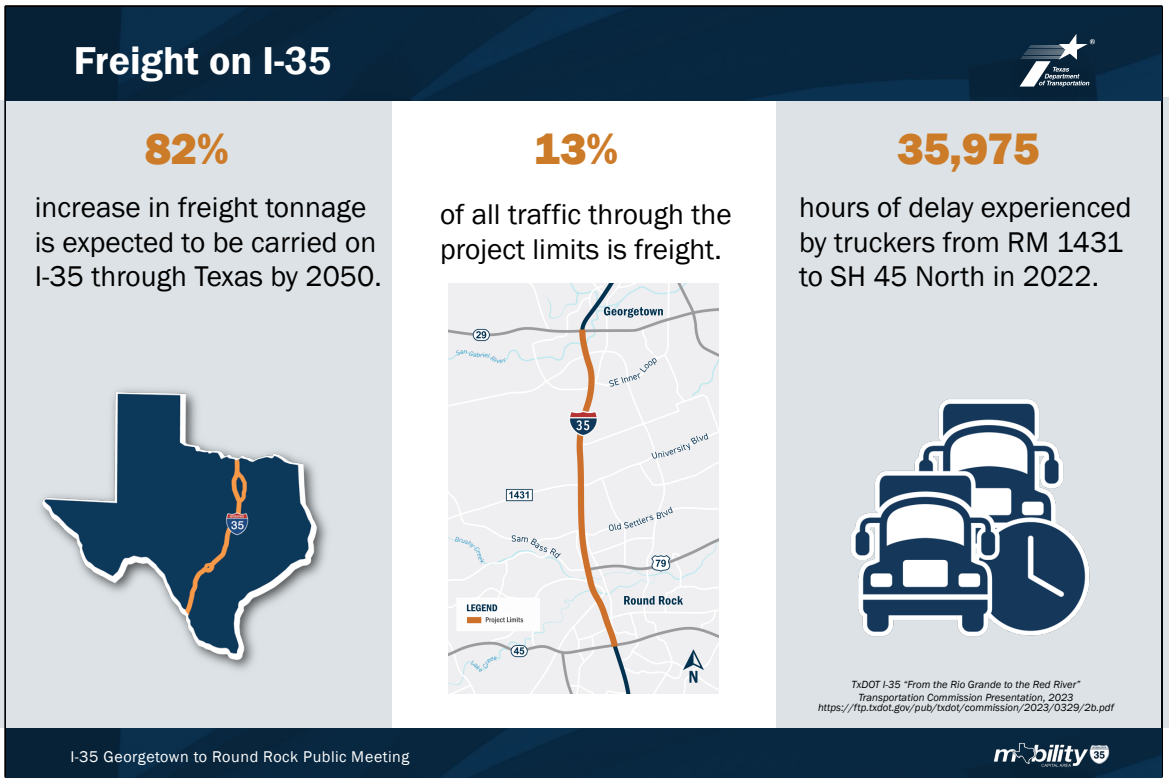
Several projects adjacent to or connecting to I-35 through the project area are underway and are aimed at enhancing safety and mobility through Georgetown and Round Rock. These adjacent active projects are being considered, and the team is working with local agencies and jurisdictions as improvement concepts and plans are being developed.



The same goes for planning projects adjacent to or connecting to I-35. These long-range plans are aimed at enhancing safety and mobility through Georgetown and Round Rock and are expected to be implemented as travel increases or funding is identified.

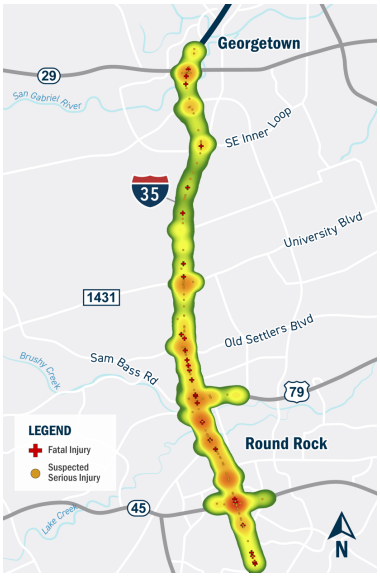


Here are the traffic projections for the future. From 2022 to 2052, traffic is expected to increase by nearly 70% in several sections along the corridor. These numbers illustrate the need to plan for safety and mobility improvements now.



I-35 is not only important for those living and operating businesses alongside it, but it is a vital roadway for freight. Freight drivers use I-35 to deliver goods not just through the state but through the country. 13% of all traffic through the project limits is freight and we expect to see an 82% increase in freight tonnage on I-35 by 2050. Current limitations will continue to cause delays. For example, in 2022, truckers experienced more than 35,000 hours of delays from RM 1431 to SH 45 North. These delivery delays harm the economic competitiveness of the region. Delays can impact those expecting to receive goods, and in turn, impact consumers purchasing goods.

Safety Analysis – Crashes from 2018 to 2022



7,823 crashes

Averaging more than 4 crashes per day

- 22 fatalities.
- 5,251 crashes along mainlanes.
- 2,267 crashes along frontage roads.
- 305 crashes on ramps.
- 9 crashes involving cyclists.
- 22 crashes involving pedestrians.
- 7 crashes involving trains.
- 662 crashes involving a commercial vehicle.
- 26% more crashes than the statewide average for urban interstates.

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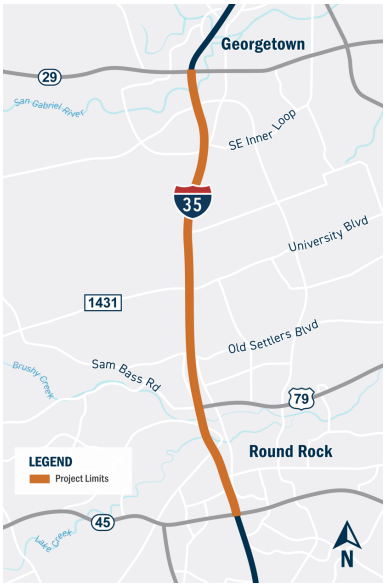
Safety is a top priority for TxDOT, and part of our mission is improving the safety of all roadways for all modes of travel. This section of I-35 averages more than 4 crashes per day, and there were nearly 8,000 crashes from 2018 to 2022, 22 of them being fatal. The breakdown of crashes includes:

- 5,251 crashes along mainlines.
- 2,267 crashes along frontage roads.
- 305 crashes on ramps.
- 9 crashes involving cyclists.
- 22 crashes involving pedestrians.
- 7 crashes involving trains, and
- 662 crashes involving a commercial vehicle.

This section of I-35 sees 26% more crashes than the statewide average for urban interstates.

You can see that crashes are concentrated at the interchanges, and in the section between Old Settlers Boulevard and SH 45 North.

Traffic Origin and Destination Patterns



I-35 through this section experiences heavy local and through traffic. These overlapping travel patterns are a cause of congestion.

65% of all traffic on I-35 is local.

Local Traffic

35% of traffic along the corridor starts and ends inside the project limits.

30% of traffic along the corridor originates outside and ends inside or originates inside and ends outside of the project limits.

Through Traffic

35% of traffic along the corridor starts and ends outside the project limits.

Source: Replica

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This section of I-35 experiences heavy traffic from both local and through drivers. These overlapping travel patterns are a cause of congestion.

Two-thirds of traffic is composed of local drivers using I-35 to either get to their local destinations or to travel outside of the project area. The remaining one-third consists of drivers traveling through the project area without stopping.

Traffic Origin and Destination Patterns

Drivers use many of the major intersections throughout the corridor to cross or access I-35.

These overlapping traffic patterns, including the fact that drivers use I-35 not only as a thoroughfare but also as a local roadway, require innovative approaches to maintaining mobility across and along I-35.

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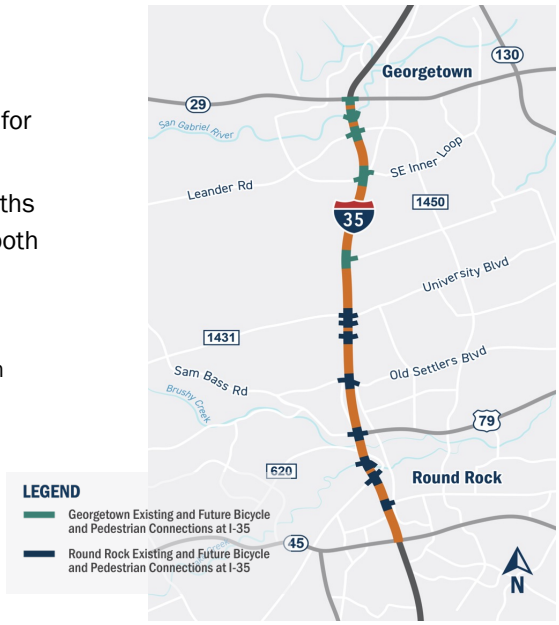
Drivers use many of the major intersections throughout the corridor to cross or access I-35.

These overlapping traffic patterns tell us that I-35 is doing several jobs in this area. As an interstate, it functions as a critical thoroughfare, serving long-haul trips within the region. It also serves as a connecting roadway to get people and goods to other roadways. And lastly, it acts as a local corridor for residents to cross I-35 or use it for short distances.

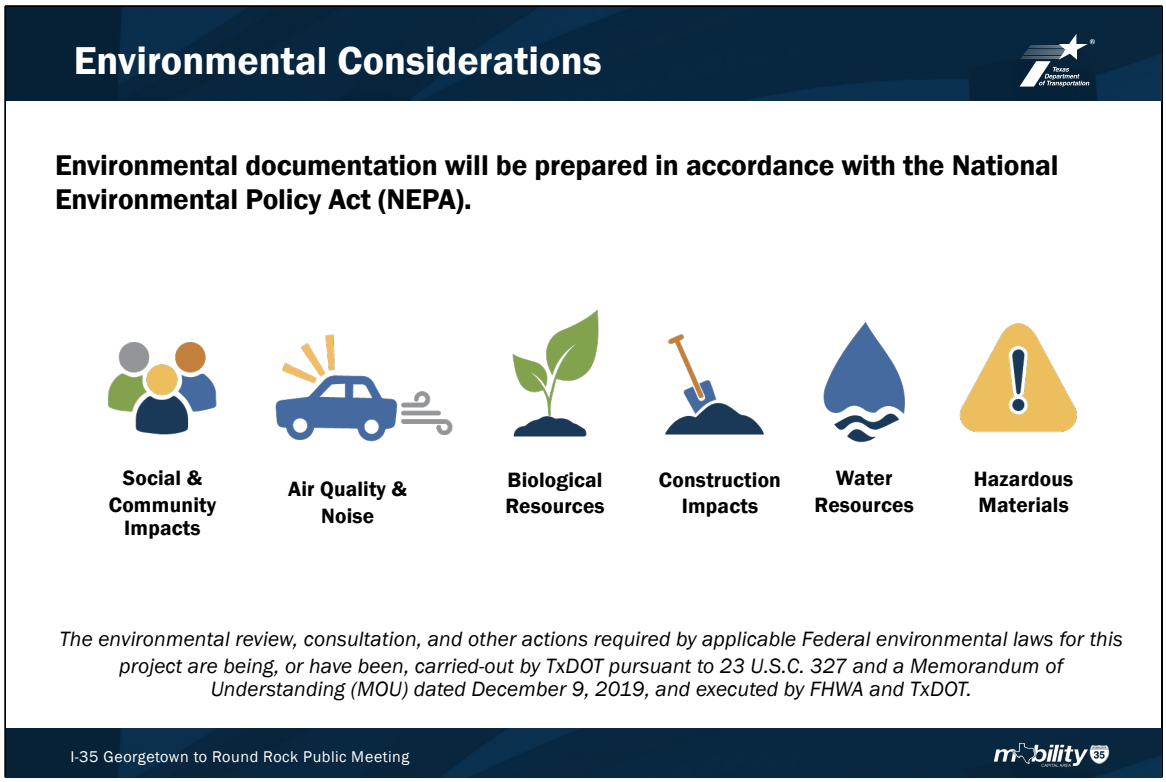
Considering this information, it will require innovative approaches to maintaining mobility across and along I-35.

Bicycle and Pedestrian

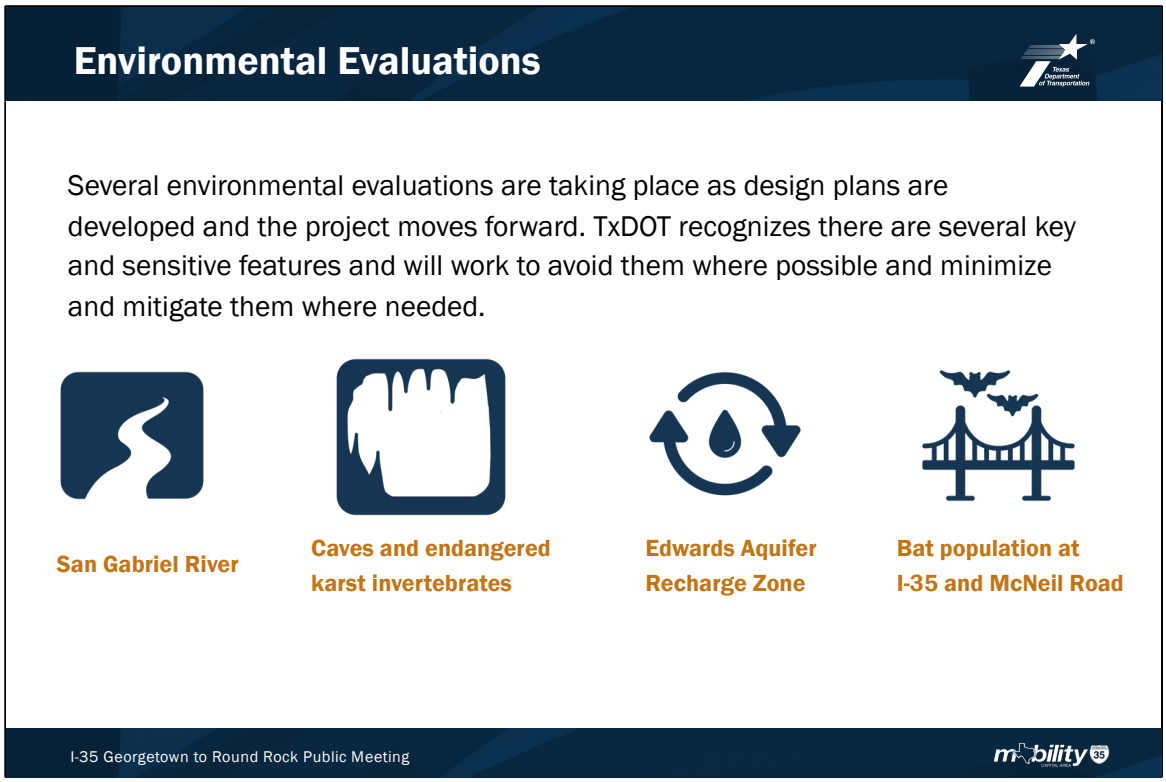
- Existing active transportation plans are being incorporated into the planning for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations for this project.
- This project would include shared-use paths to provide safe and efficient options for both bicycles and pedestrians.
- Local agency bicycles/pedestrian plans:
  - City of Georgetown Active Transportation Network (Future Mobility Plan).
  - City of Georgetown Future Bicycle Network.
  - City of Round Rock Trail Master Plan.
  - CAMPO Regional Active Transportation Plan.



This project would include shared-use paths throughout the corridor to provide safe and efficient accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians. As improvement plans are developed, TxDOT will consider local agency bike and pedestrian plans and provide effective connections to local paths at I-35, including connections to off-road trails.



This project follows the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA. Several environmental studies are underway and will consider a variety of potential impacts, such as social and community impacts, air quality and noise, biological resources, construction impacts, water resources, hazardous materials, and more. Environmental documentation will comply with NEPA and available for review at the end of this project.



Several environmental evaluations are taking place as design plans are developed and the project moves forward. TxDOT recognizes there are several key and sensitive features and will work to avoid them where possible and minimize and mitigate them where needed.

What are Managed High-Occupancy Vehicle Lanes?

Managed high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes are lanes reserved for vehicles with multiple occupants including carpools, vanpools and transit vehicles.

This project proposes adding managed HOV lanes similar to the Capital Express North, Central, and South projects.

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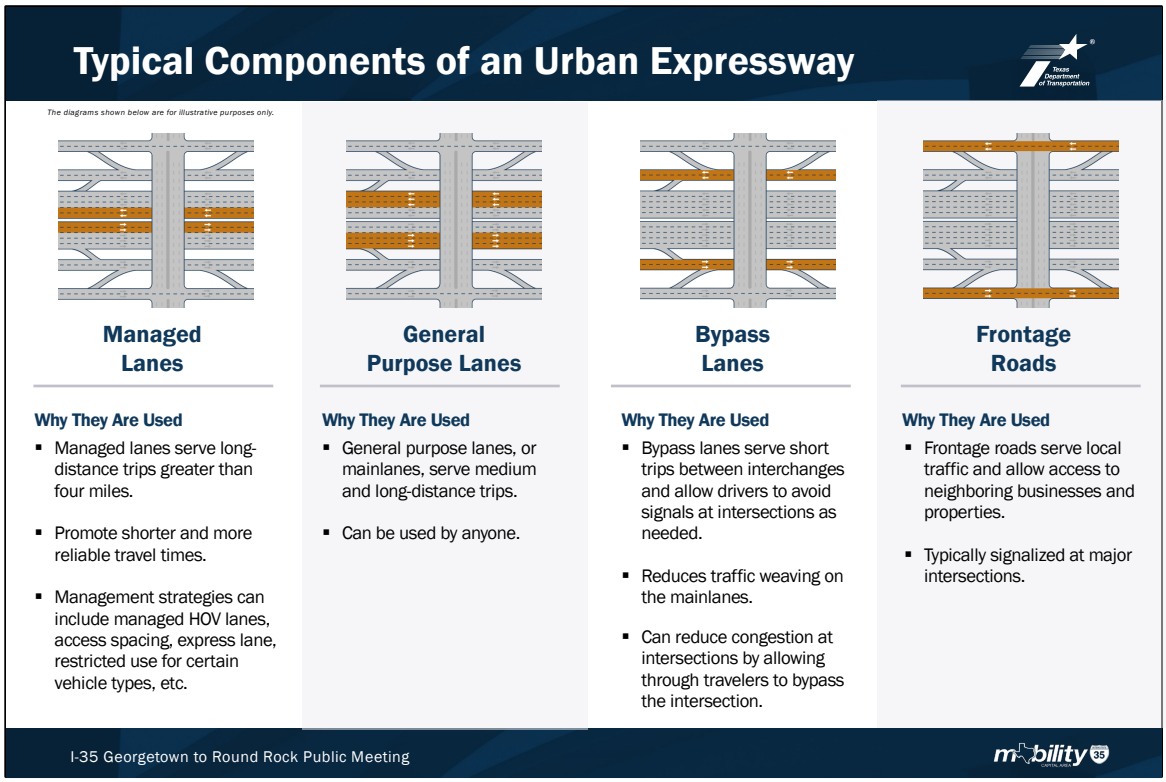
Managed high-occupancy vehicle lanes, also called HOV or carpool lanes, and are lanes reserved for multiple-occupant vehicles including carpools, vanpools, and transit.

This project proposes adding managed HOV lanes similar to the Capital Express North, Central, and South projects.



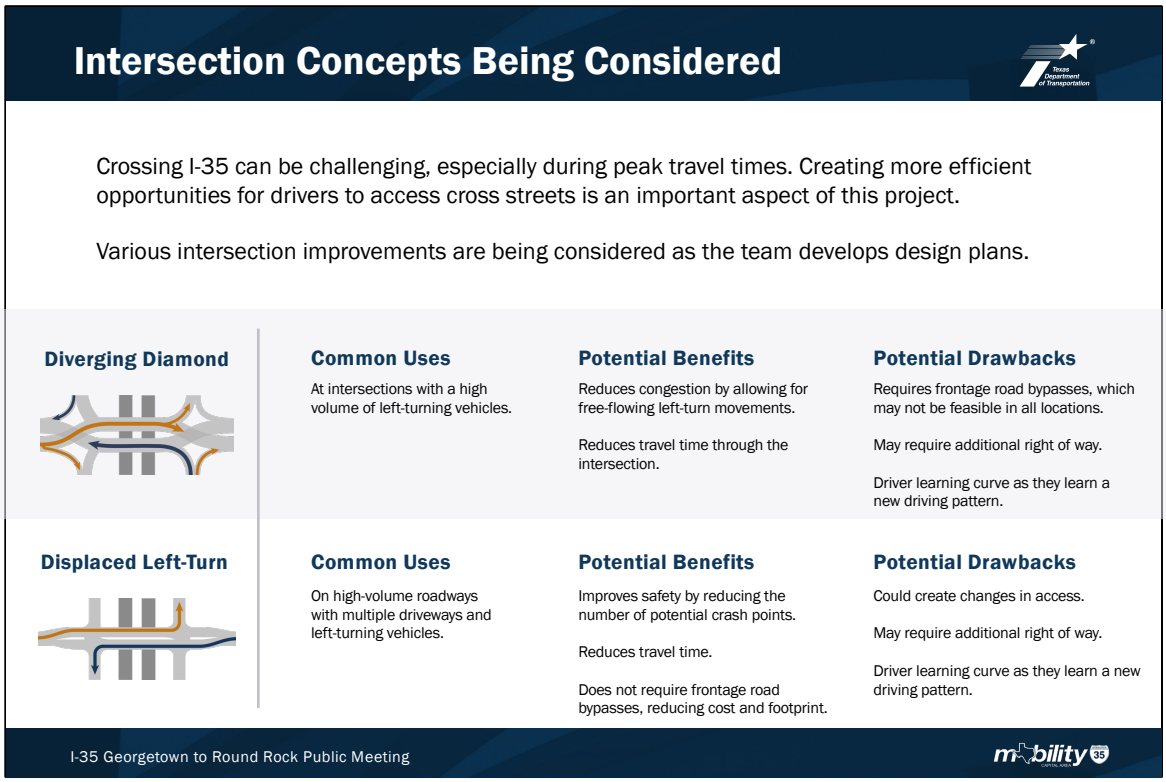
Several types of lanes are used on urban expressways, which typically consist of managed lanes, general purpose lanes, or mainlanes, bypass lanes, and frontage roads.

Managed lanes promote shorter and more reliable travel times. They serve long-distance trips greater than four miles and can include a variety of approaches such as HOV, Express, Restricted, and Reversible lanes.

General purpose lanes, or mainlanes, serve medium and long-distance trips and can be used by anyone.

Drivers use bypass lanes between interchanges to avoid signals at intersections as needed. They reduce congestion by allowing drivers who wish to travel through the intersection to bypass it completely. They can serve a single interchange, or extend through a series of closely spaced interchanges. Bypass lanes also help keep the mainlanes running smoothly by keeping the bypass traffic separated from the longer-distance movements.

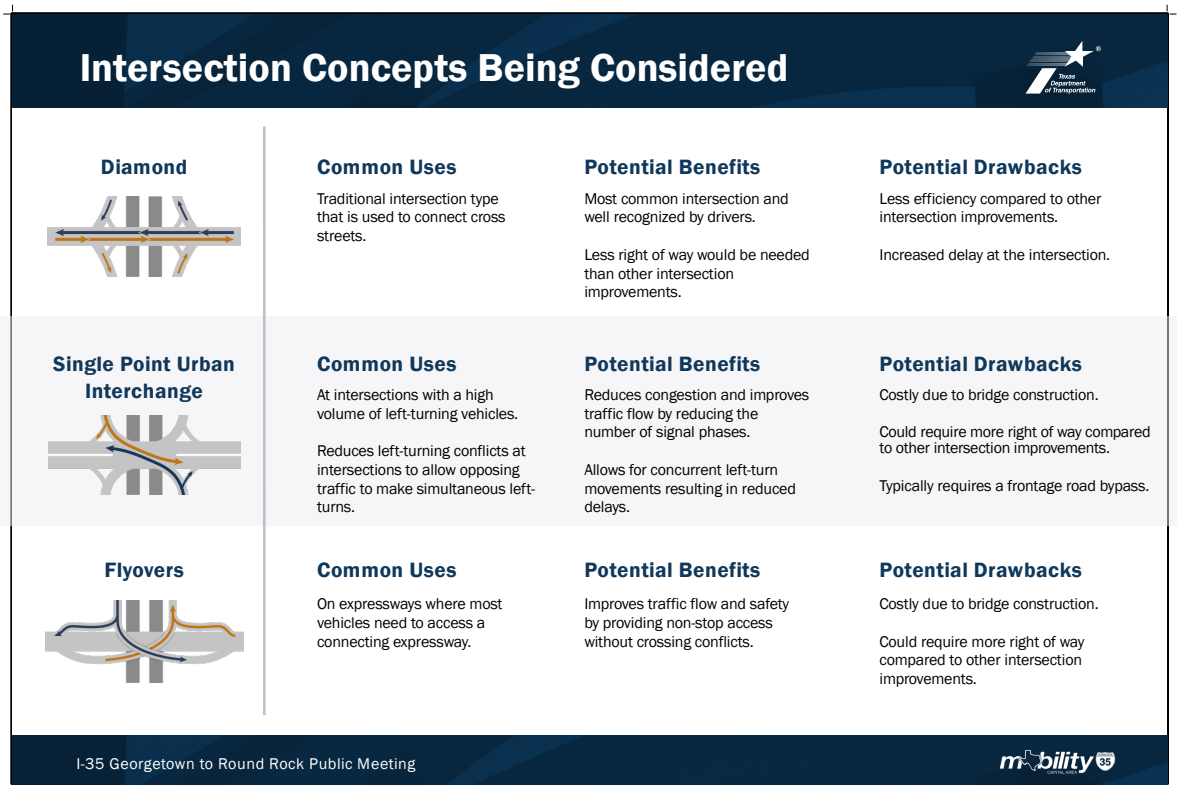
Frontage roads serve local traffic and allow access to neighboring businesses and properties. They are typically signalized at major intersections.



Improving I-35 from SH 29 in Georgetown to SH 45 North in Round Rock will include improving intersections in order to handle conflicting traffic movements effectively. Crossing I-35 can be challenging, especially during peak travel times. Various intersection improvements are being considered and evaluated as the team develops design plans.

Diverging Diamond Intersections, or DDIs, are commonly used at intersections with a high volume of left-turning vehicles. Even though they include the unusual crossing-over of traffic to the left side, and back, they improve safety by reducing the number of potential crash points. While DDIs reduce congestion and travel times through intersections by allowing for free-flowing left turns, they require frontage road bypasses and additional right of way, which may not be feasible in certain locations. Additionally, drivers must learn a new driving pattern. That said, DDIs are becoming a more popular intersection solution in Austin and throughout Texas.

Displaced left-turns are commonly used on high-volume roadways with multiple driveways and left-turning vehicles. They reduce travel time by allowing cross-street through and left turn movements to operate simultaneously. They are becoming popular at interchanges in Texas because they do not require frontage road bypasses. Similar to a DDI, they improve safety by reducing the number of potential vehicle conflict points, but there is a driver learning curve, and they can create changes in access and may require additional right of way.



Other types of intersection concepts being considered and evaluated include diamond, single point, and flyover interchanges.

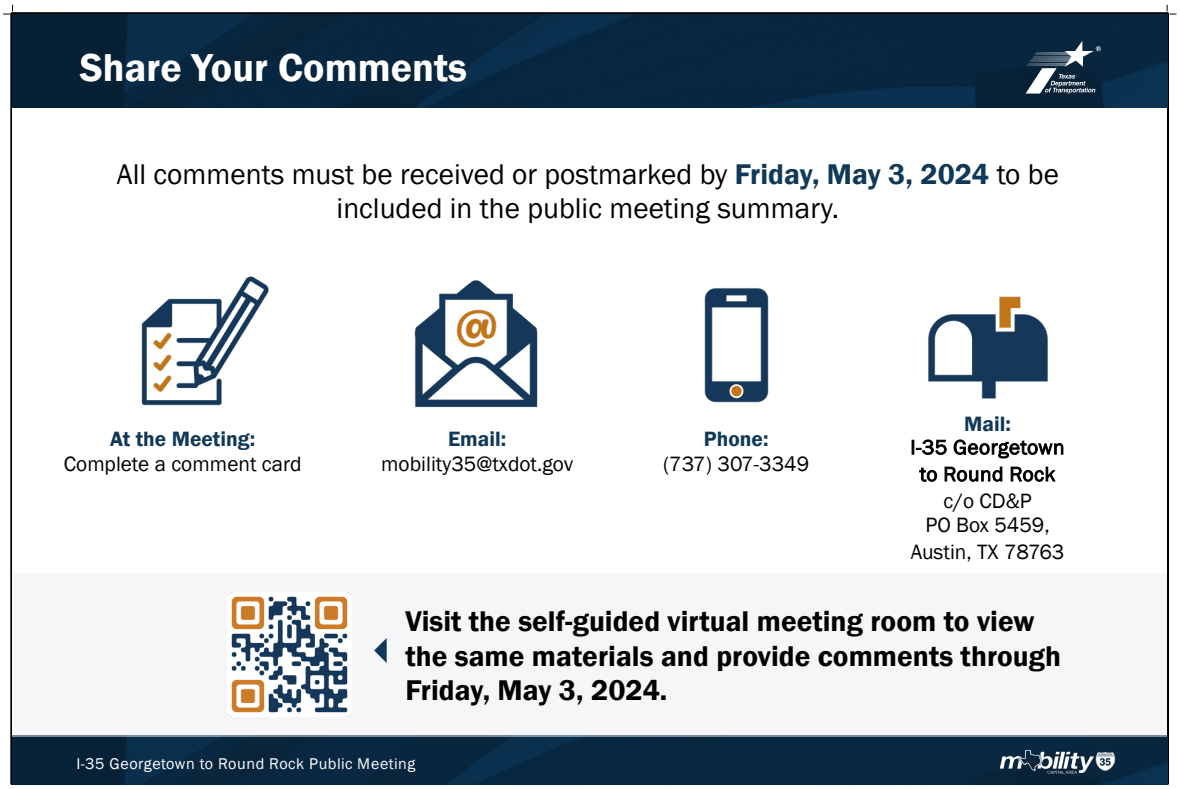
A diamond intersection is a traditional interchange type that is used to connect cross streets. This is the most common interchange type, well recognized by drivers, and requires less right of way than most other intersection types. However, they are less efficient compared to innovative intersections such as DDIs or displaced left-turn intersections, which means they may have higher travel delays. They also have more vehicle conflict points than the innovative types.

Single point intersections are commonly used at intersections with a high volume of left-turning vehicles. They reduce the potential for collisions and increase intersection efficiency by allowing opposing traffic to make simultaneous left turns. Single point intersections typically require frontage road bypasses, and when they do, they also gain efficiency by operating with fewer signal phases. However, they tend to be costly due to bridge construction and right-of-way needs.

Flyovers are commonly used for direct highway-to-highway connections. They improve traffic flow and safety by providing nonstop access to the connecting roadway, as drivers do not need to use the frontage roads or signalized intersections. However, they typically require more right of way and are expensive due to the need for several bridges.

This project is expected to span over six years. The schematic design process has recently begun, and will last about two years. We expect to have an environmental decision in late 2025, with detailed design and right-of-way acquisition beginning in 2026. Construction is slated to begin in 2030.

This timeline is contingent on funding, right-of-way acquisition, and utility relocation. Dates are subject to change.



Public input is an important part of the project development process, and TxDOT encourages you to share your input at any time. Comments can be submitted at the in-person meeting, through email at mobility35@txdot.gov, through voicemail by calling 737-307-3349, or by mail at I-35 Georgetown to Round Rock, PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763.

All comments must be received by Friday, May 3, 2024, to be included in the official public meeting documentation and summary.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to hearing from you.