



I-35 Capital Express Central Project
Attn: Project Team
7901 N. I-35
capexcentral@txdot.gov

September 24, 2021

Re: East César Chavez NPCT Comments for I-35 Capital Express Central Public Meeting

On behalf of the East César Chavez Neighborhood Plan Contact Team (ECC-NPCT), I am writing to provide feedback on the I-35 Capital Express Central proposed alternatives as they relate to the East César Chavez Neighborhood, the section between 6th Street and Lady Bird Lake.

The ECC-NPCT supports the City of Austin and Travis County goals for I-35 in the context of the [East César Chavez Neighborhood Plan](#):

- Minimize the overall footprint of the highway,
- Improve safe access across the highways by creating gateways into ECC,
- Increase pedestrian safety and accessibility,
- Assure a thorough public process and environmental review.

Proposed Build Alternatives 2 and 3 both appear to fall short of these goals because they:

- Widen the highway's footprint bringing I-35 closer to residential neighborhoods, which include the Willow Spence Historic District and Sanchez Elementary School;
- Narrow the service road from two to one lane, which seems likely to increase congestion at the East Cesar Chavez Street and Holly intersections;
- Make only marginal pedestrian improvements via shared pathways;
- Deprioritize pedestrian traffic and safety by installing crosswalks rather than dedicated walkways at all but one intersection between the mile-long section of 6th Street and Lady Bird Lake;
- Are nearly identical, effectively leaving our Neighborhood with a single "take it or leave it" build alternative.

In consideration for both I-35's history and future impact on the East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood, we believe that effective environmental and community impact analyses requires a meaningful comparison of reasonable alternatives. We trust that TXDOT will continue to work with community members, City of Austin, and Travis County to create reasonable build alternatives for the section of I-35 that will impact the East Austin for the next several decades.

Please don't hesitate to reach out for any additional support or feedback that our team can provide for this critical project.

Sincerely,

Kristen Heaney
Kristen E. Heaney
Chair, ECCNPCT

cc: Mayor Adler, City Manager Cronk, Council Member Renteria, President Dewitt Peart, DAA