

March 25-28, 2025



Connecting Neighborhoods & Future Proofing

Hancock, Cherrywood, Wilshire Wood, & Delwood Communities

Austin’s History with Design Assistance Teams

This process builds upon Austin’s long history of collaboration with design assistance team efforts. In the 1990s, design assistance teams helped the city shape the future of downtown.

“Whereas, DATs have been used as a catalyst for other major local planning efforts such as the Palm District Plan and South Central Waterfront Vision Plan;” – Austin City Council Resolution, 2024

In 1991, the city invited a Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) to help build a strategy for the revitalization and future development of downtown Austin. The following year, the local implementation committee produced, “A Call to Action” to frame a plan of action to implement the team’s recommendations. In 1997, the team was invited back for “R/UDAT Revisited: A Call to Finish,” and in 2000 the “R/UDAT Review” took place.

Reflecting upon those efforts years later, downtown executive Charles Betts noted “When looking back on how far downtown Austin has come in the last 20 years, many newcomers to Austin would be surprised by the state of downtown in 1993.” It goes on to describe rampant vacancy, depressed real estate, the lack of downtown residential development, and a host of other challenges facing the city in the 1990s. The article then describes how outcomes of the public processes with design assistance teams led to “a number of recommendations that began the wheels of transformation to create the vibrant downtown we all know today.” In 2012, the city once again invited a design assistance team to work with the community to devise strategies for its south central waterfront. In 2019, the city invited a design assistance team to help the community think about the future of the Palm

District – a process that was conducted virtually in 2020 during the pandemic. The Hancock–Cherrywood process represents another chapter in the city’s history with such efforts.

The Hancock–Cherrywood Project

The current design assistance team effort began in 2024, when a local steering committee of representatives from the Hancock and Cherrywood neighborhoods formed and submitted an application to the Architects Foundation. The application was provisionally accepted, and a small team completed an initial visit in October 2024 to understand the project scope and begin building a national team with customized expertise fit to the project area.

Purpose

A broad project scope was identified in the community’s application to the Architects Foundation. As the application stated, “The Hancock–Cherrywood Area Framework is an initiative to leverage a current opportunity of two major transportation system developments and quickly craft a compelling vision for the approximately 60 acres between the Fiesta site and Hancock Center to the mutual benefit of the neighborhoods, the City of Austin, Central Health, and the large and small private, commercial landowners within the area. We believe an intentional, coordinated, long-term urban design vision will lead to redevelopment that is integrated with existing neighborhoods, provides ample greenspace and increased connectivity the neighborhoods, generates higher social and economic returns for private landowners and a stronger tax base for every taxing jurisdiction.”

Community Event and Process

From March 25–28, 2025, a community process was organized with participation from city officials, staff, residents and stakeholders. It included the following key elements:

- A two-hour tour of the project area, led by local steering committee members and neighborhood residents.
- A series of city hall meetings with public officials and city staff to discuss the area.
- Stakeholder workshops of 15–20 participants each were organized on key project area themes ranging from urban design to transportation and mobility, land use and regulatory frameworks, and economic analysis.
- A public workshop was held with approximately 100 participants representing neighborhoods in the project area and stakeholders and city staff.
- A community presentation to present initial findings, analysis and recommendations.

The team worked to integrate information collected from these sessions to perform an analysis of several scenarios and produce a series of recommendations, captured in this report.

Disclaimer

The ideas represented in the following report are those of the Architects Foundations’ design assistance team, based on our observations of the Hancock/Cherrywood community and its existing plans; the insights gleaned from City officials and residents; and the ideas shared with us about the area and the aspirations for it in during the team’s tour. This report represents our best professional recommendations in the public interest. We do not serve a client in this endeavor. The report, and the process that produced it, is a public service to the community.

The ideas captured here represent three intensive days of work and the information available to us at the time of this writing. We do not expect this report to be followed as verbatim, prescriptive advice. It should be understood as a developmental tool, and we expect the community will expand on these ideas and amend them as you make it your own.





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Connecting Neighborhoods & Future Proofing

Connecting Neighborhoods & Future Proofing

The Hancock–Cherrywood–Wilshire Wood–Delwood neighborhood associations came together to request assistance from the Architects Foundation’s Design Assistance Team (DAT) program to work with the community to explore options for a compelling vision for the Hancock Center and the Delwood Shopping Center. Austin’s City Council passed a resolution supporting this effort.

The on-going TxDOT I-35 Capital Express Central Project (I-35 widening), the potential to create public spaces that bridge portions of I-35, a future possible CapMetro Rail Red Line stop, a future possible upgrade to the Gold Line bus service, and on-going growth opportunities create unique opportunities. While the City of Austin has a robust planning program, there is no master plan or vision that brings all of these opportunities together to build economic and tax base, public benefits, and community consensus.

Design Assistance Teams provide donated time from multi-disciplinary subject matter experts from around the country. With the donated time, neither the neighborhood associations nor the City are “clients” for the project. Rather the project is done as a public service to help community members explore options that reflect their values.

The Community Speaks

In stakeholder meetings during a preliminary visit in October 2024 and stakeholder meetings and a community forum during the full March 2025 design assessment, a clear message emerged of community values and opportunities.

A consistent assessment of the neighborhoods’ assets and aspirations emerged from the process.

- The neighborhoods are walk-, bicycle, and, to a lesser extent, transit-friendly, especially within the residential areas, with a major gap at I-35 and at some of the major arterials. Sidewalks, shade canopies, human scale residential development all contribute to this asset.
- The neighborhoods have a strong sense of place, with mixed generational residents, easy access within the neighborhoods, and welcoming neighborhoods. “We are not just a collection of suburbs,” said one participant.
- The presence of naturally occurring affordable housing, especially immediately north and south of the Hancock Center.
- There is a healthy mix of businesses and institutions in the commercial centers and in the neighborhoods. This ranges from two beloved supermarkets, Central Health, and many small and local businesses to the extensive opportunities in the nearby Mueller redevelopment. This provides easy access for many community needs, generates jobs, and brings in visitors, economic activity, and tax base. Residents want an improved center that includes preference for local businesses and local serving businesses.
- The area has a strong outdoor focus year round, from local open spaces such as the Hancock Golf Course and Recreation Center, as well as regional opportunities ranging from Lady Bird Lake to protected open spaces large and small serving every outdoor and recreation need.
- The proximity to the University of Texas–Austin and downtown beyond UT, providing easy access to jobs and amenities offered there.
- The artistic and creative pursuits within the neighborhoods, nearby, and across the city create unique opportunities for the community.

- The potential for new open space, enhanced highway bridges, stitches, and caps, provide the potential opportunity to mitigate some of the massive relocation and gap that the I-35 expansion will create.

There was overwhelming support for improvements that provide better connections and a stronger community:

1. Connections that provide desirable pedestrian experiences crossing I-35, with most people focusing on caps and stitches.
2. Connections to improve transit, with most people focusing on access to the Red Line train.
3. Improved commercial and mixed-use development to provide commercial and economic activity, at or beyond the density of the Mueller redevelopment.

4. Community value and vision driven planning and development.

At the same time, there were fears about what happens if community aspirations are not achieved:

- Redevelopment and major investments absent a shared vision and a shared plan.
- A widened I-35 without the critically needed mitigation that allows easy and desirable pedestrian crossings, knits the neighborhoods together, and addresses the risk of blight from an open widened highway.
- Displacement and disruption to businesses and homes from the very long I-35 construction period and from new investments that drive up the costs for residents and businesses.



- City actions that don't support rational planning. One city staffer reported, for example, that "there is no single municipal officer who is the master of the toolbox" nor a single point of contact. A few residents offered that the regulatory system is opaque and overly complex to anyone but experts and contributes to a decline of democratic decision making and even community understanding.

Four strong themes of what the community wants:

- A vibrant commercial center that includes housing and local and local serving businesses.
- A strong sense of place and community.
- Inviting I-35 pedestrian crossings and connections.
- Minimizing residential and business displacement.

Many residents fear the expansion and think it is ill advised, but most at least acknowledge that it is coming and the City of Austin needs to work with TxDOT to get the best mitigation possible.

Precedents & Lessons Learned

Austin and the Hancock-Cherrywood area are unique, and there is no formula from other places that can automatically apply, especially because it is the uniqueness, the Austin weird, the non-cookie cutter style that people value. Nonetheless, there are lessons to be learned from projects within and outside of Austin.

Perhaps what was mentioned most-often is that as rapidly growing and evolving city, Austin has consistently grown faster than expected, with planning and infrastructure development underestimating the future demands. Residents and stakeholders stressed the need to future proof all investments to be ready for the expected continued growth, "don't be pennywise and pound foolish."



Many oppose the expansion but are focused on mitigation.



1937, 1964, and 2023 respectively.

The Mueller development was consistently cited as a great precedent. Many residents and other stakeholders cautioned, however, that with a growing city, adjacent access to I-35, and future adjacent access to the Red Line train any Hancock Center/Delwood Shopping Center redevelopment should be at higher density than Mueller. Design details, design standards, and consideration where development meets existing residential neighborhoods were cited as more important than density per se.



Mueller transformed the former airport, but in hindsight with good design it could have been built denser.

Many community neighborhood associations, and city government conversations focus on mitigating the impacts of the I-35 Capital Express Central Project. This has focused on enhanced bridges, stitches, and caps to provide pedestrian and visual connections across the soon to be widened I-35. Among the precedents most cited is the current Dallas Southern Gateway Park and Boston’s completed Rose Kennedy Greenway (2008). Both are major park improvement designed to restitch cities together and create large parks. Those projects may have more in common, however, with the larger I-35 southern Austin and the I-35 University of Texas caps.

Smaller enhanced bridges and stitches can also provide amazing pedestrian and visual connections without more expensive caps. Both Boston’s Massachusetts Avenue crossing of I-90 (MassPike), completed in 2024, and Atlanta’s 5th Street NW crossing of I-75/I-85, completed in 2008, transformed their respective neighborhoods and made crossing the interstates a joy. Both projects directly created large private investments. Instead of the interstate crossings being a blight they became major focal and placemaking points.

Design Principles

Austin is best served when it connects infrastructure investments, land use policies, and planning regime reflect community vision, goals, and values. Nine recommended design principles emerged of our understanding of those visions, goals, and values.

1. Lead with a transformative future-proof vision

Visions should be aspirational, leading towards transformative change that will stand the test of time, while still being actionable and achievable. The *Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan* (currently underway and projected to be adopted in 2026) aims at creating a citywide 30-year vision, but it is not yet providing any direction for Hancock Center/Delwood Shopping Center and the Hancock-Cherrywood area.

A vision can be as simple as building up Hancock Center and Delwood Shopping Center and adjacent mixed use areas to encourage great density, a variety of housing options, economic development, and local services in a pedestrian-scale environment spanning I-35 consistent with these design principals.

2. Heal the I-35 wounds comprehensively

Austin has a loose vision of I-35 corridor caps, stitches, and enhanced bridges to span the soon to be widened I-35 in strategic areas. This vision can help heal the I-35 wounds to the urban fabric and city neighborhoods.



Boston’s 2024 Massachusetts Avenue 272’ long mixed park and building development above I-90 and Atlanta’s 2008 5th Street NW 250’ long enhanced bridge/stitch park transformed both of those street crossings. (Atlanta bridge source: railstotrails.org)

It is critical that neighborhoods are not in competition with each other for extremely limited resources but are working together to tie both sides of the interstate together consistent with their needs. This is especially critical in light of the historical segregation on the east side of East Street from the 1928 **A City Plan for Austin** and reinforced with later highway, not I-35, development.

The more urban areas to the south that were already developed when they were divided by I-35 clearly need caps and stitches. Hancock-Cherrywood equally needs pedestrian friendly connections that draw people across I-35, create a strong placemaking opportunity, and build land values to attract development. They do not, however, need to cap I-35 from 38 ½ Street nearly to Airport Boulevard in areas which would not promote crossing the interstate or create quality heavily used parks.

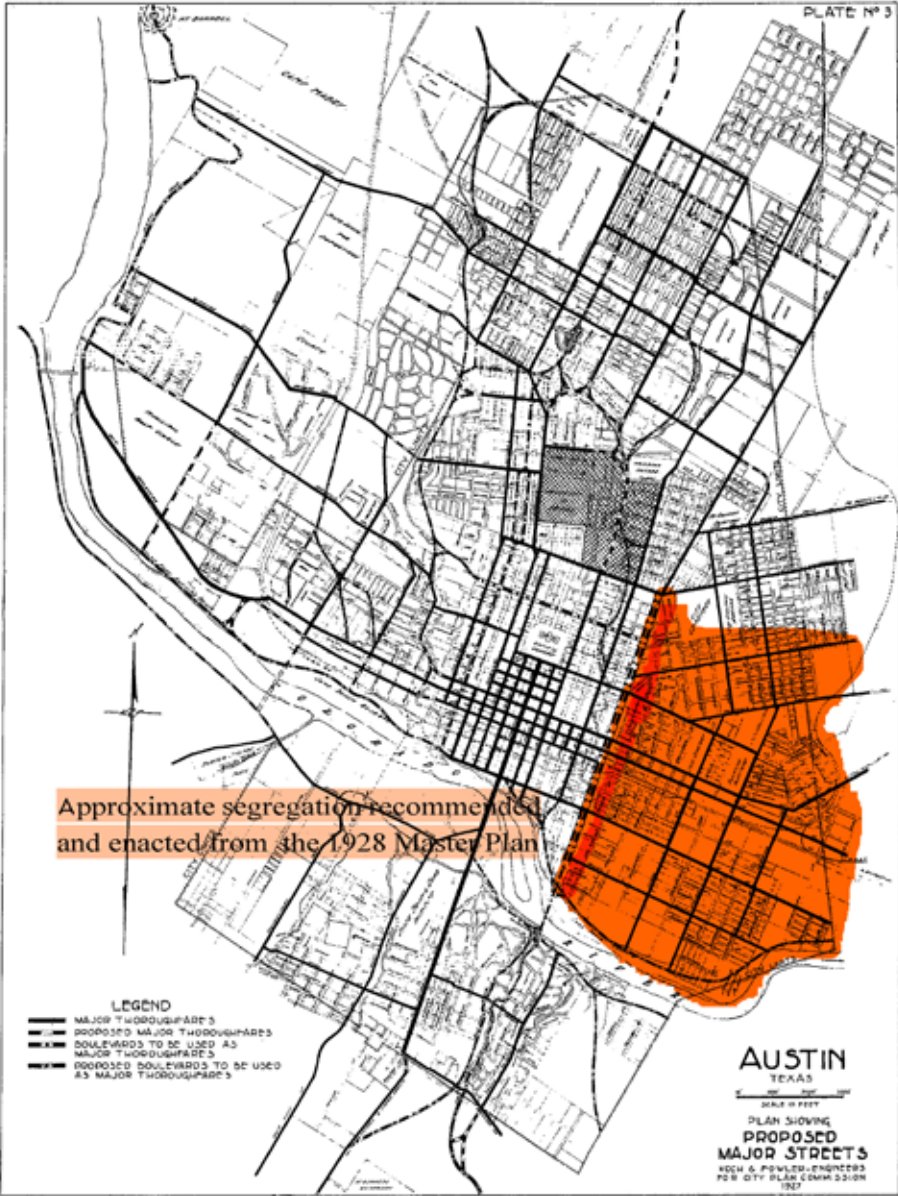
3. Connect across I-35 and to neighborhoods

It is critical to tie all of the commercial and residential neighborhoods together. I-35 pedestrian crossings should be designed and built to create the shortest possible pedestrian travel paths, enhance future rail service, make pedestrian crossings desired, not simply tolerable, experiences, and create special places that build community. With good design, the stitches authorized by City Council and the enhanced bridges authorized by TxDOT can fulfill this principle.

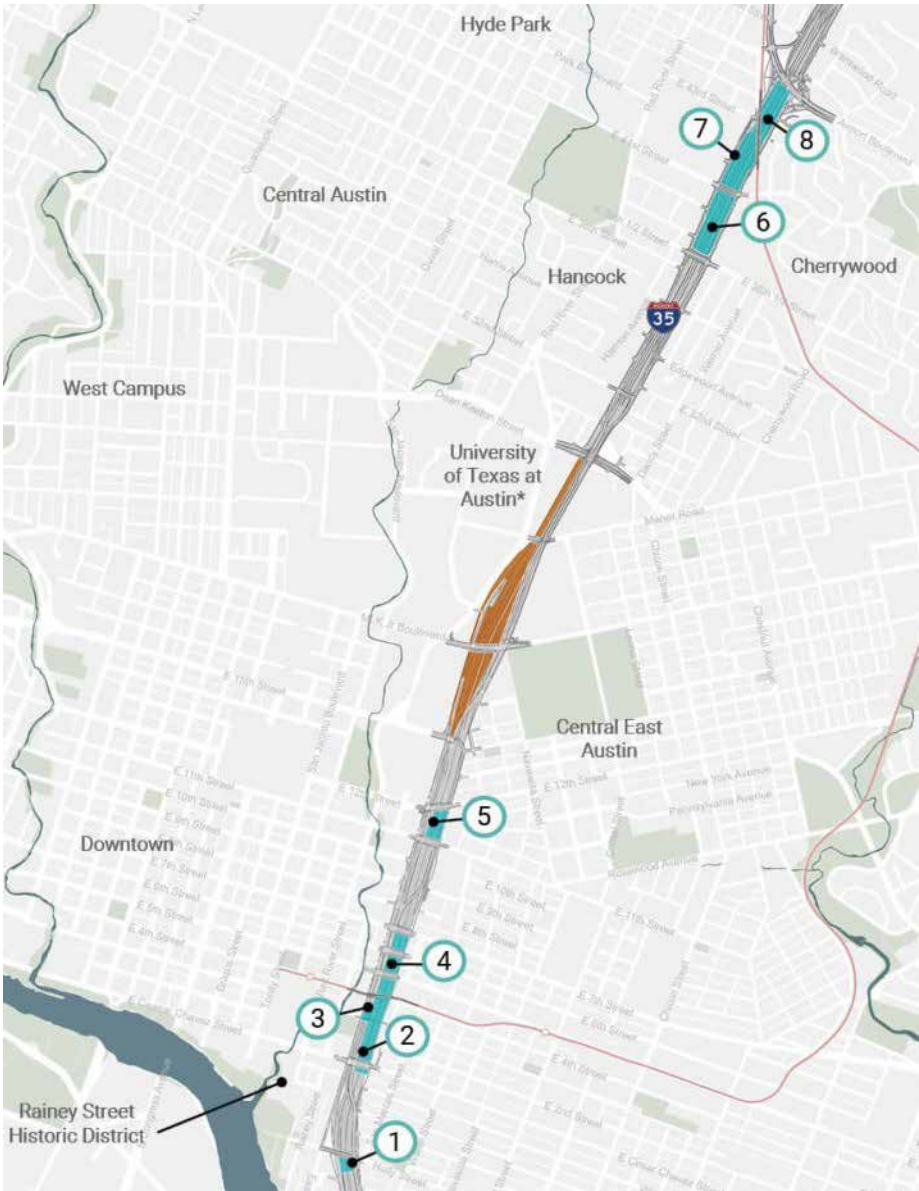
Long linear parks covering the highway serve when usage is likely to be very high, adjacent development that would not otherwise occur is sparked, and when creative enhanced bridges and stitches are not adequate.

4. Improve all travel modes, drive, walk, bike, and transit

The current I-35 expansion will serve the movement of freight and vehicles. Between the wider I-35 gash and its ability to reduce friction and thereby attract additional single occupancy vehicle trips, it has the potential to



A City Plan for Austin, Texas (1928) added to Austin’s segregation. **Our Future 35, Austin’s Cap and Stitch Program** explores how to comprehensively heal the wounds from the soon to be expanded I-35.



harm other modes of travel, walking, biking, and transit.

5. **Develop a dense village/town center with a Red Line stop.** Residential and commercial density higher than at Mueller and rail transit support each other. They are critical to create a strong sense of place and maximize economic benefits and value capture. Without them, Hancock and Cherrywood will be locked in as a low density suburb and an opportunity for a stronger economic engine will be wasted.

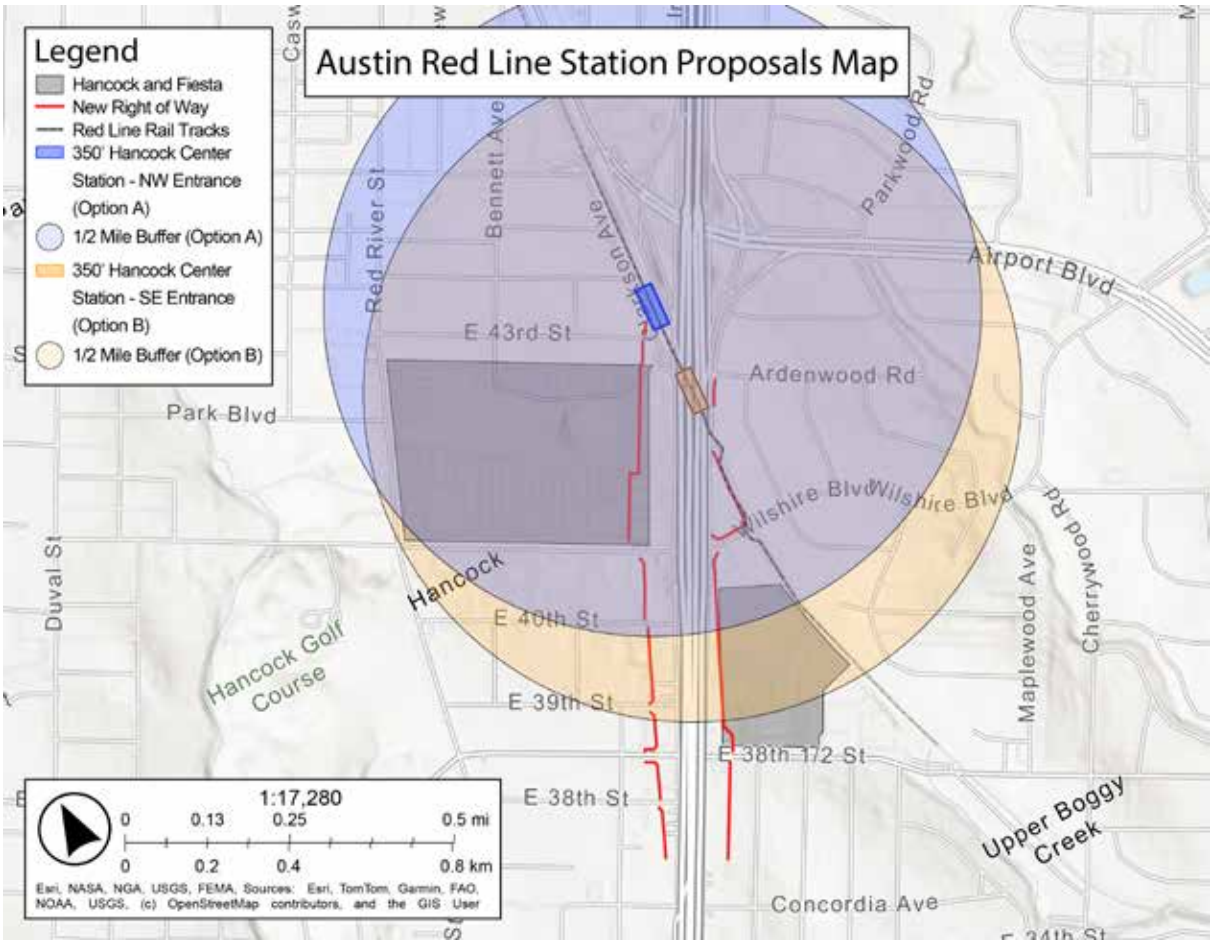
This creates the need to enhance the other modes of travel.

- **Red Line Train Station:** The best location for the train platforms are spanning I-35, with access from both the Hancock and the Cherrywood-Wilshire Wood sides of the platform. The station could shift slightly southeast or northwest along the tracks, so long as platform access was still from both sides. A 350' long straight platform could easily be accommodated over I-35 and would provide the greatest access to both commercial centers (Hancock Center, including Central Health, and Delwood Shopping Center) and the neighborhoods on both sides of the interstate who are adversely effected by the interstate expansion. A station further northwest, between Clarkson and the interstate, while still serving Hancock, would provide significantly worse service to Cherrywood and Delwood Shopping Center and exacerbate the shortage of transit options for those on the east side of the interstate who are also impacted by the highway expansion.
- **Gold Line Rapid Transit:** The best model for the Gold Line for the intermediate future is to shift it to a full bus rapid transit, with dedicated bus lanes (which can be shared with bike lanes), raised platforms for rapid entry and ideally pre-payment onto the bus, transit signal priority (TSP), short headways (time between buses), and only limited stops to speed travel. Anything less is not ideal, but

dedicated lanes at constriction points, TSP, short headways, and limited stops are the most critical components. In the very long term, shifting this to a street car system can both improve the quality of service and send a clear message to developers that the Gold Line is permanent.

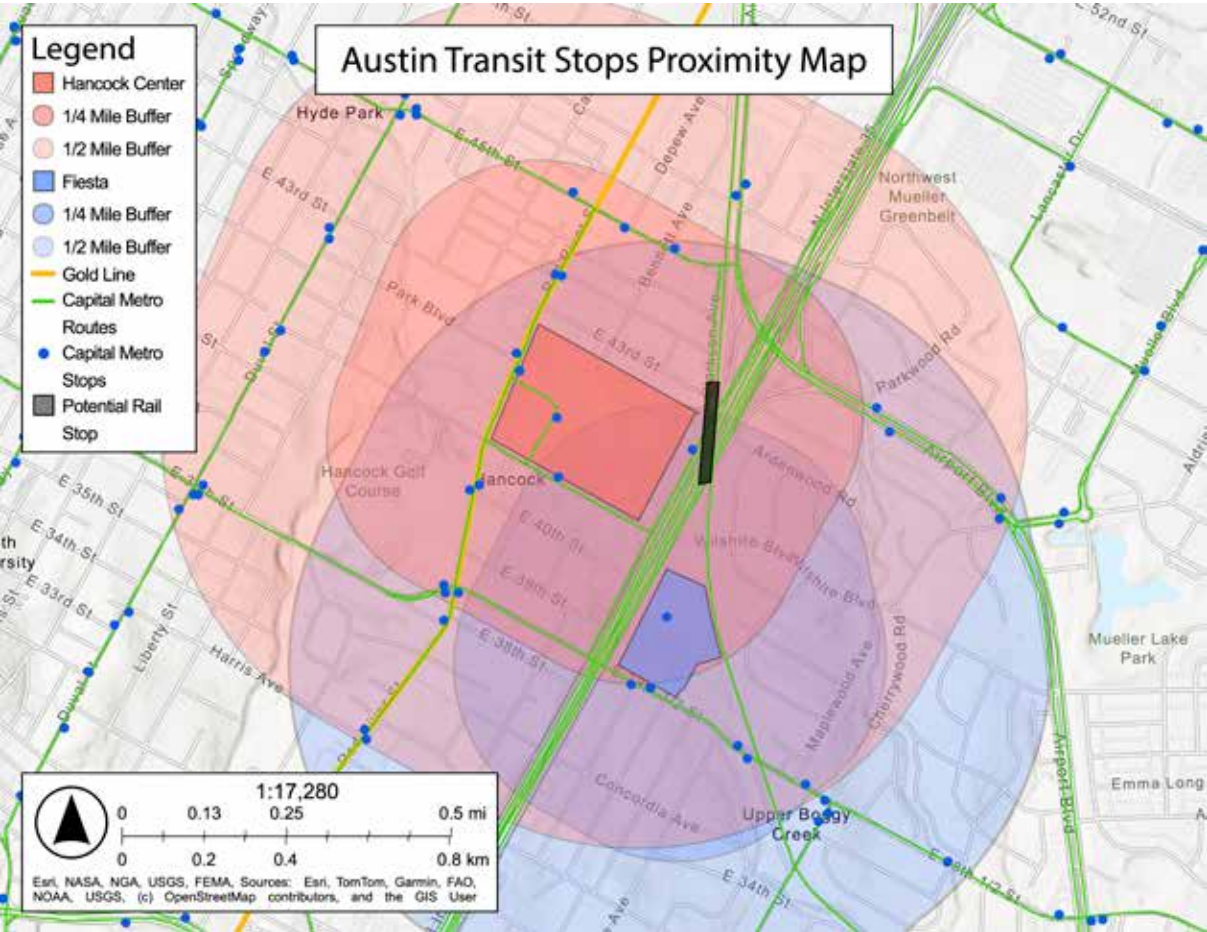
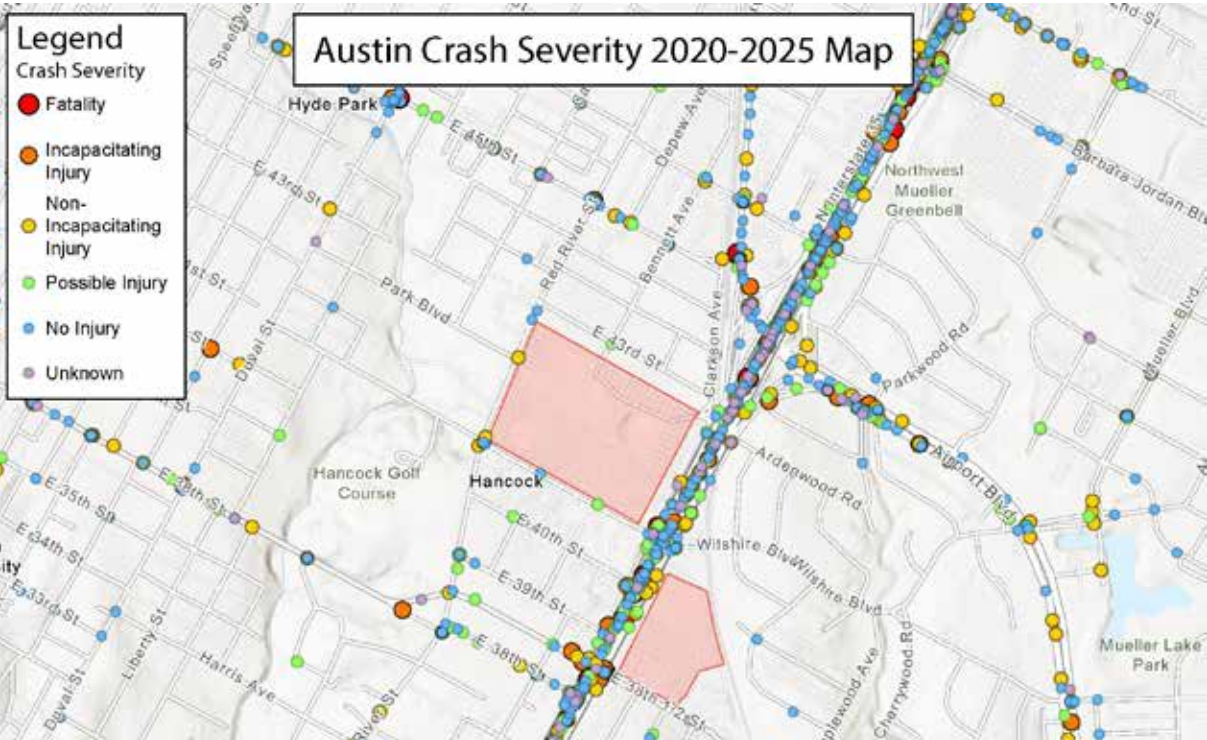
- **Gold Line BRT stop:** Ideally, the Gold Line Hancock Center stop will be a bus pulse point at the westerly side of the Red Line Train Station, for a multimodal experience allowing easy transfers. Because the actual demand for transfers may be a small percentage of stops, secondary location for the Gold Line BRT stop is anywhere in or bordering Hancock Center, as close to the Red Line as possible. Diversions of the bus route do add time to a bus run and reduce headway, so that needs to be considered in determining the final location.
- **Other surface bus service** (e.g., primarily Capmetro #10 as well as 7, 20, and 335 and an future reroutes)
- **Airport Boulevard Bicycle Lanes** and the **Red Line Parkway/I-35 Capital Express Shared Use Paths** are critical to expand the bicycle network, but so is making all streets bicycle friendly, starting with E. 41st Street as the easiest and most important first step.
- **Enhanced sidewalks and enhanced crosswalks** with placemaking features to attract pedestrians are equally important to connect to neighborhoods, again starting with E. 41st Street as a critical first step.

The conventional wisdom is that most people will walk a quarter mile and many people will walk half a mile before they get into their cars ("walking sheds"). Those numbers come from averages and the reality on the ground is very different. People who don't have options will walk further (e.g., transit dependent riders versus transit choice riders). More significantly, when walking is fun, wide



Locating a future Hancock Center Redline Train Station over I-35 would better serve Hancock, Delwood, Cherrywood, and Wilshire Wood than a train station further northwest.

sidewalks with shade, interesting and safe crossings of streets and highways, interesting and changing features along the way, far more people will walk great distances. When it is hot, unsafe, unattractive, or otherwise there is more friction to walking, few people will walk almost any distance.



Most crashes occur on I-35, its ramps, and the frontage road. Crashes and unsafe conditions, however, occur on other surface roads and can discourage some people from bicycling along surface roads and crossing arterial roads. Transit and accessibility improvements are all needed.

We talk about walking sheds, but the reality is people walk more when it is fun, safe, and comfortable.

5. Promote local and local serving businesses and economic anchors

The commercial centers (Hancock Center and Delwood Shopping Center and adjacent commercial areas) are critical to generate economic activity and tax base and to provide the vitality to support a dense mixed use center.

While anchors can bring in a new tax base to Austin (e.g., University of Texas spin-offs, corporate headquarters), regardless of their presence it is important to ensure both small local businesses, especially retail, services, and food and drink related, and local servicing businesses. In particular, having supermarkets, ideally H-E-B and Fiesta, both provide local needs and bring in customers from a larger area who then chain trips with other spending.

6. Expand housing, including affordable and attainable housing

Dense housing, at a density beyond that of Mueller, can help house Austin residents and create the critical mass necessary for a mixed use center and for improved transit hubs.

Ensuring affordable housing, defined as housing for households earning below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI) and usually developed at or below 60% AMI, is critical to serve Austin's needs and is incentivized through Austin's zoning. Equally important is to encourage attainable housing for households earning above those levels but left out of the private market. Smaller and more modest missing middle dwelling units should be part of any mix.



Ensuring both local businesses and local serving businesses, especially retaining supermarkets even with redevelopment, is important to serve neighborhoods and a wider service area.



Housing of all types, including affordable and attainable housing, is necessary to serve Austin's needs and provide the base to support businesses, pedestrian improvements, and transit.

7. Address spillovers into adjacent neighborhoods

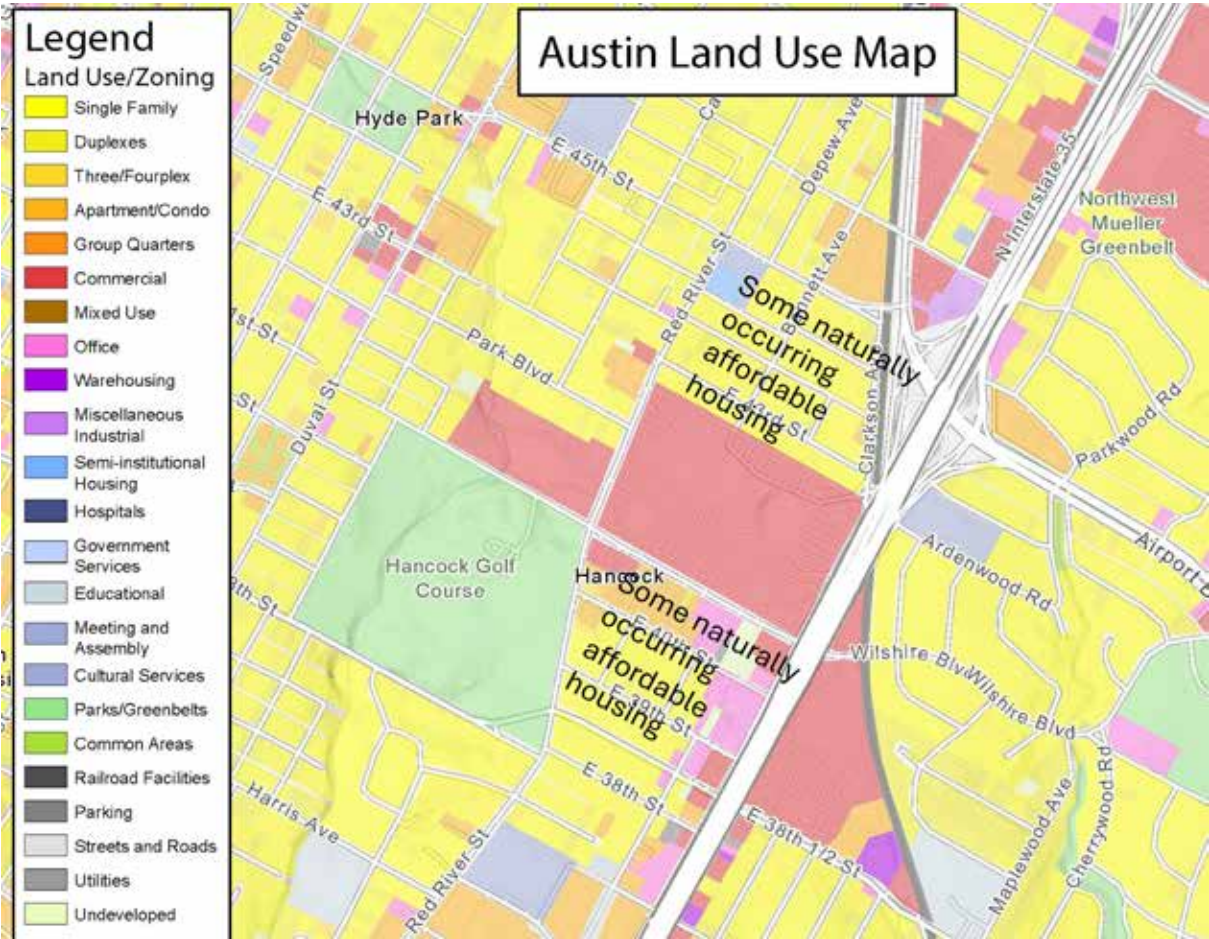
Developing a denser core at Delwood Shopping Center, Hancock Center, and some densification on the south side of East 41st Street will add land and economic value to the core. At the same time, there will be spillover into the adjacent neighborhoods, adding value to the land but also potentially creating some alternative investment opportunities to naturally occurring affordable housing, or housing at the lower end of the market, displacing residents. This creates the need to mitigate those impacts and implement anti-displacement tools.

8. Build the sense of place, placemaking and street activation

Interesting and comfortable streets, commercial centers, and neighborhoods all improve the quality of life, economic vitality, and a sense of place and belonging.

9. Mitigate construction disruptions – support business and residences

Construction impacts will disturb residential neighbors for years, but it can be deadly for any marginal businesses. Providing support to mitigate these impacts can keep the neighborhood livable and help businesses remain healthy.



Low to middle market housing values will appreciate, which is great for their owners, but could lead to housing gentrification and displacement without anti-displacement measures.



The Hancock Golf and Recreation Center provides a sense of place to Hancock Center, but there is nothing in the Center itself that identifies it as a unique and fun place. The new sidewalk, shared use path, and bus stop at Clarkson Ave/Hancock Center access added elements, but is shy of providing a sense of place.



I-35 construction will be very disruptive to residences and businesses for many years and construction impacts mitigation and business support is critical.

Housing & Mixed-Use Regulatory Principles

Implementing the design principles into Austin’s robust regulatory system is not complex.

- Provide the greatest allowable residential density in mixed-use areas. Besides limiting building heights at the margins of the mixed use commercial areas with step-back lines (wedding cake design) building height can increase substantially deeper into the site. Building height limits at the borders with existing residential neighborhoods, not Floor Area Ratios, should be the limiting factor for density.
- Austin already has a formula and approach for density bonuses and density with ETODs that require affordable housing. This formula should be expanded to include micro-size dwelling units or housing priced at the low-end of market rate housing (e.g.: attainable housing affordable to those earning between 80%% and 120% of household median income). Austin does have a complex variety of density bonuses. At least for this area, this could be simplified.
- There is always a risk that as an area becomes more desirable and land values rise, which is overall a great thing for municipal revenue and property owner return, there will be a spillover into the more moderately priced housing to the north and south of Hancock Center, areas rich in naturally occurring affordable housing. Austin should use its anti-displacement funding and zoning mechanisms to prevent the displacement that otherwise will occur and set a target at no net loss of attainable housing even as some individual units will be lost. This is especially a risk in two areas:
 - Red River to Clarkson at E. 43rd to E. 44th Sts. (zoned I family)

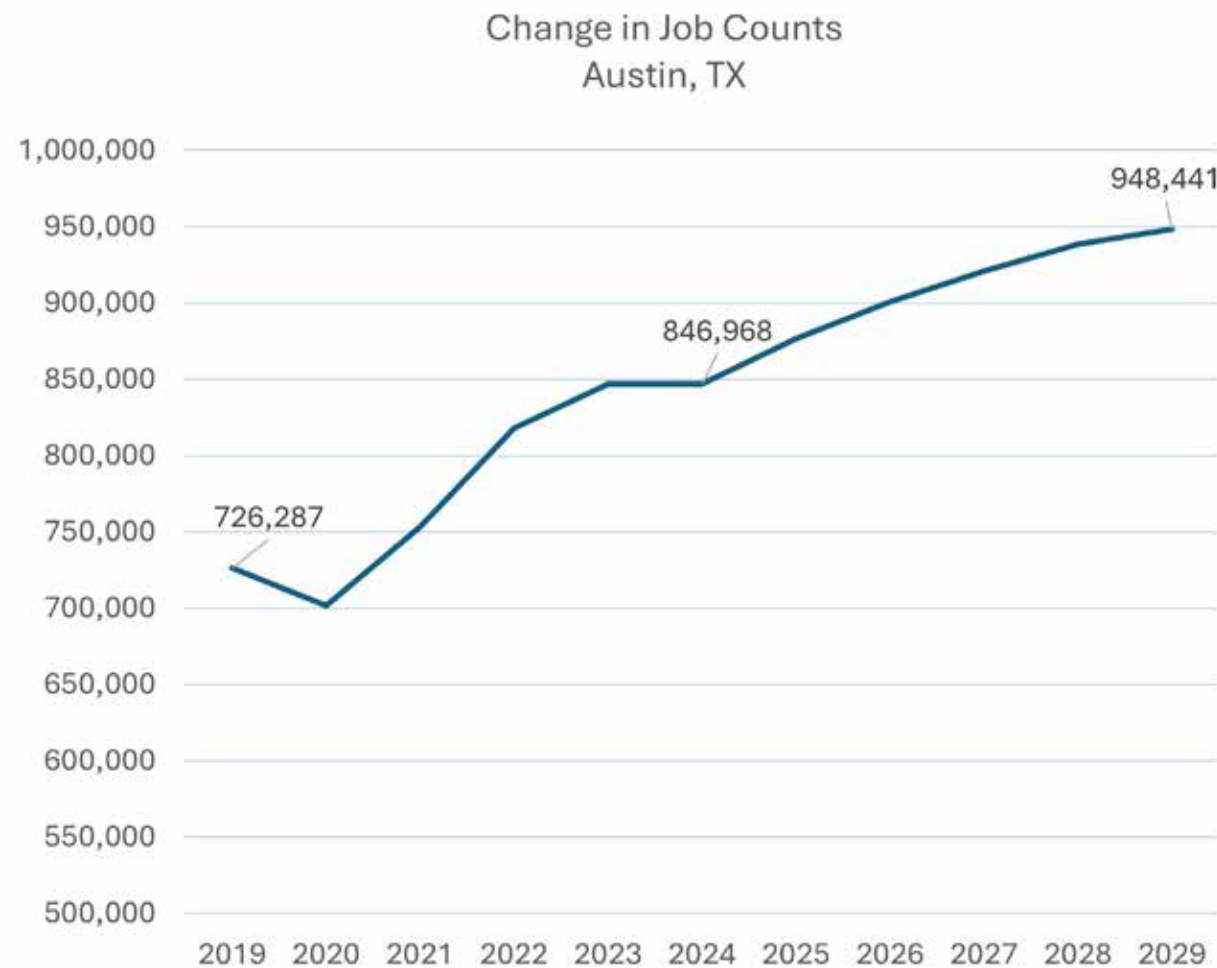
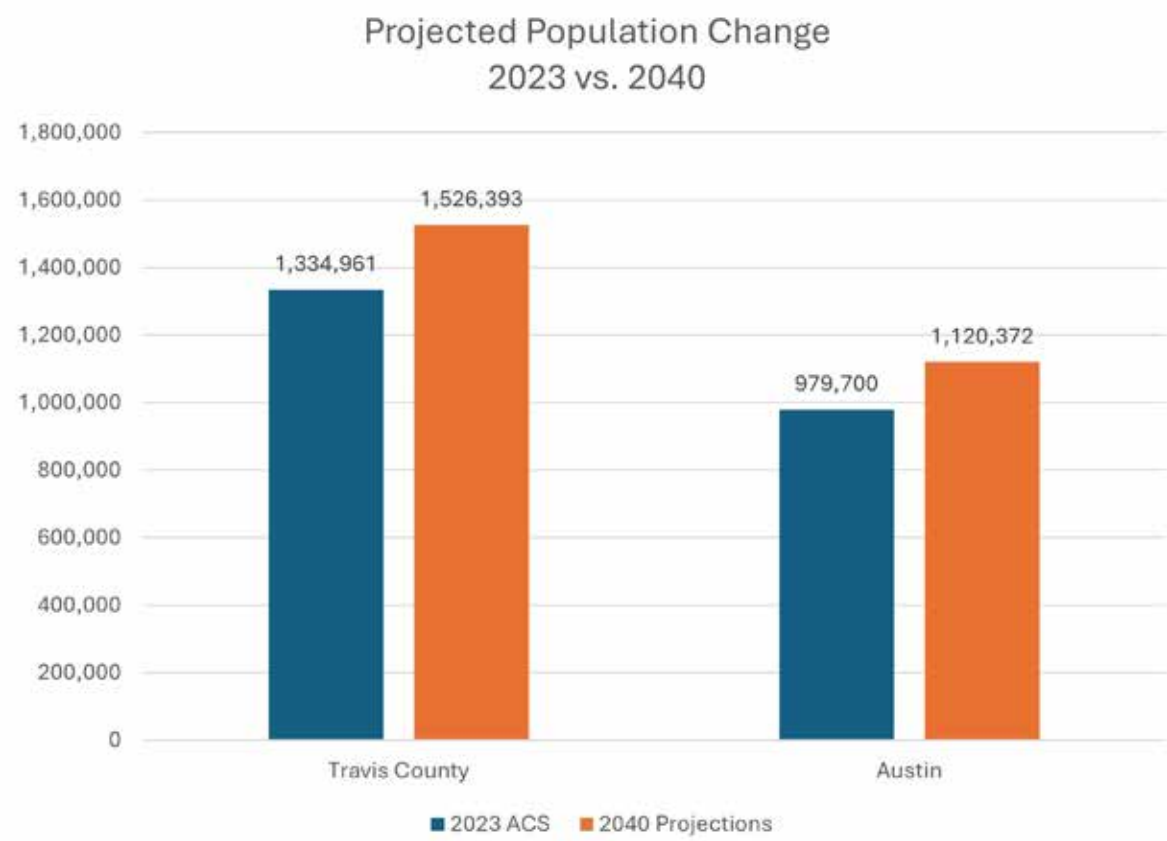
- Red River to Frontage Road at E 39th to E 40th Sts. (zoned community commercial, multifamily medium density, and limited office)
- While density within the mixed-use town center can be significantly greater than at the Mueller redevelopment, with the focus on not overwhelming existing neighborhoods it is critical to collaboratively develop design standards to guide developers and protect the walkability, vibrancy, and attractiveness of development. The standards should include core uncompromisable principles, while allowing great flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions without going back through the full approval process.
- The needs of the community for walkability, vibrancy, public spaces, placemaking and other needs should be leveraged as part of any development. Along with meeting those needs, however, Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) or other financial incentives will be required. Property and sales taxes, and potentially hotel and mixed beverage taxes, will rise with redevelopment beyond the amount of any TIRZ so the community will come out ahead, but maximizing the tax and community benefits is not possible without some support.
- Austin’s Equitable Transit Oriented Development (ETOD) framework can be used for the entire commercial and mixed use centers, but density will need to be much higher than Austin’s past TODs.
- ETOD zoning should be passed well before the Red Line train stop is developed, both in anticipation of that eventual train station at or near E. 43rd Street which needs the TOD density to pay for itself and with the existing Gold Line at Hancock Center.

Making the Business Case

Making the Business Case

Austin has been, and is likely to continue to be, a rapidly growing city. If Austin were to continue capturing its current share of Travis County’s population growth, it could result in over 140,000 new residents by 2040. To accommodate these new residents, there would need to be an additional 70,000 new housing units based on an average household size of 2.0. If the average household size in Austin were to continue to shrink, the housing production number could be even higher.

Adding to the growth pressures, employment projections through 2030 show the potential of an additional 100,000 new jobs in Austin. The 12% increase in employment is 3% higher than in the state and 8% higher than in the US. Although not all employees working in Austin will live in the city, this will create added pressure to continue building both housing and commercial space.



Housing of all types, including affordable and attainable housing, is necessary to serve Austin’s needs and provide the base to support businesses, pedestrian improvements, and transit.

Source: LightCast 2025.

Demand for additional housing is coming at every income level due to an historic underproduction of units attainable to low- and extremely low-income households as well as new moderate and higher-income households moving to Austin in recent years. Although the median household income in Austin increased by 28% from 2014 to 2023, median home values and median gross rent grew by 64% and 34%, respectively. This has resulted in 32% more renters spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs, creating housing insecurity.

Housing costs aren’t only a challenge for residents of Austin, but also employers. Of the top 15 fastest growing occupations in the city, 11 have median annual salaries below what would be needed to afford today’s median rent of \$1,764 per month.

Reflecting this projected demand in the vision for the Hancock–Cherrywood area brings in neighborhood principles of more housing opportunity, a greater diversity of housing types and unit sizes, more affordably priced housing, and leveraging residential development

to generate community benefits. The central location of both the Hancock and Delwood commercial centers could provide easy access to local and regional roadways for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and drivers. A future Red Line station in this area would provide connections to activity centers north and south.

Leveraging & Shaping Future Growth.

The recent building boom in Austin has created a pause in the market for both residential and commercial development. The addition of nearly 31,000 new housing units in the Greater Austin market has had a profound impact, driving rents down as vacancies rose sharply. The same is true for commercial office space. Nearly five million square feet of new office space entered the market over the past two years across the Greater Austin market resulting in stabilized rents and a sharp increase in vacancy.

Industry	2019-2025 Change	Annual Median Salary	Affordable Monthly Rent	Afford the median?
Management	36,005	\$124,350	\$3,108	Yes
Business and Financial Operations	21,614	\$79,570	\$1,989	Yes
Computer and Mathematical	13,559	\$108,730	\$2,718	Yes
Transportation and Material Moving	10,778	\$42,963	\$1,074	No
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	7,754	\$97,500	\$2,437	Yes
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	5,227	\$53,873	\$1,346	No
Construction and Extraction	5,002	\$54,370	\$1,359	No
Healthcare Support	3,797	\$40,181	\$1,004	No
Sales and Related	2,719	\$50,714	\$1,267	No
Production	2,379	\$43,017	\$1,075	No
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	2,186	\$35,486	\$887	No
Educational Instruction and Library	2,014	\$64,678	\$1,616	No
Personal Care and Service	1,872	\$33,878	\$846	No
Community and Social Service	1,812	\$56,518	\$1,412	No
Protective Service	1,609	\$57,367	\$1,434	No

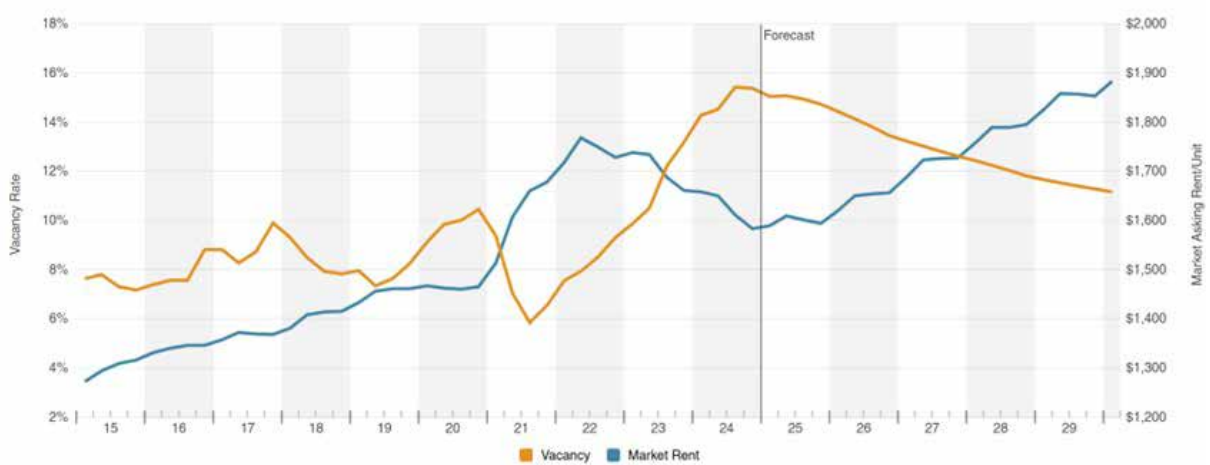
Source: LightCast 2025, DAT Team.

The impact of new housing units on vacancy in the Greater Austin market.



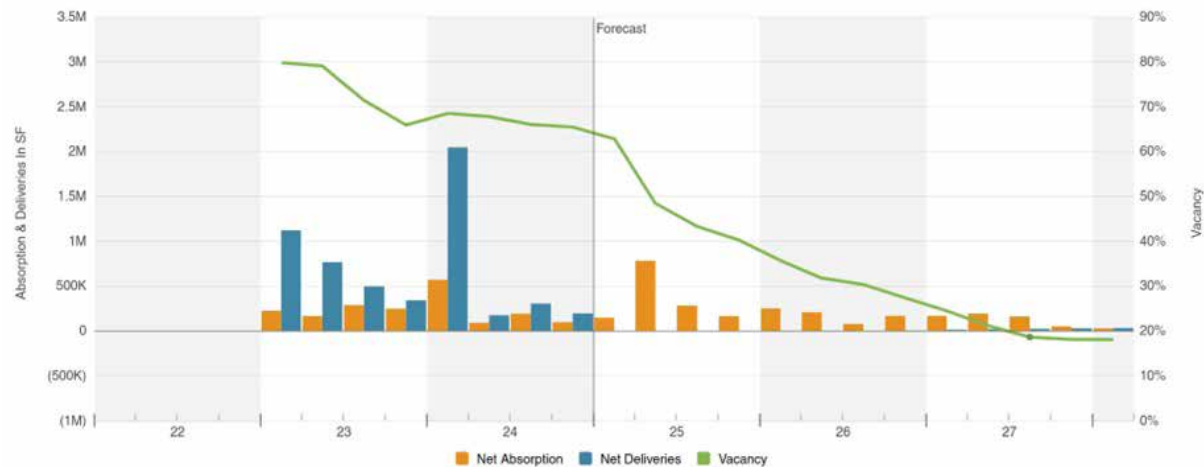
Source: CoStar, 2025.

The impact of new housing on vacancy and market rents in Greater Austin.



Source: CoStar, 2025.

The impact of new office space on vacancy in Greater Austin.



Source: CoStar, 2025.

Targeting industry sector growth to anchor the redevelopment plan.

Industry	Change in Jobs
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	28,224
Management of Companies and Enterprises	14,416
Health Care and Social Assistance	14,318
Administrative and Support Services	13,761
Construction	8,413
Government	7,445
Information	7,190
Finance and Insurance	6,830
Manufacturing	6,617
Other Services	3,482
Transportation and Warehousing	3,171
Retail Trade	2,792
Educational Services	2,505
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,168
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,925

Source: LightCast 2025, DAT Team.

This inflection point in the market offers the Hancock-Cherrywood area an opportunity to plan for the future it wants and harness the housing and commercial demand that is likely to come on the heels of this current market correction. If Austin does see an additional influx of 140,000 new residents by 2040, they will need a place to live. They will also bring new household spending power to create demand and support for new retail, restaurants, and local services. The same may be true for office space. Supporting growth of 100,000 new jobs will require additional square footage of office, retail, restaurant, and hospitality uses. The plan for Hancock-Cherrywood could leverage this future demand in Austin laying the groundwork for attracting an economic anchor for the redevelopment and supporting active ground floor spaces for retail, restaurants, and services.

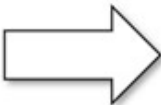
The table on the left highlights projected job changes over the next ten years in Austin by industry sector. The sectors highlighted in red are those that are most

commonly in need of office/medical office space and could serve as potential targets to anchor the redevelopment plan in Hancock-Cherrywood.

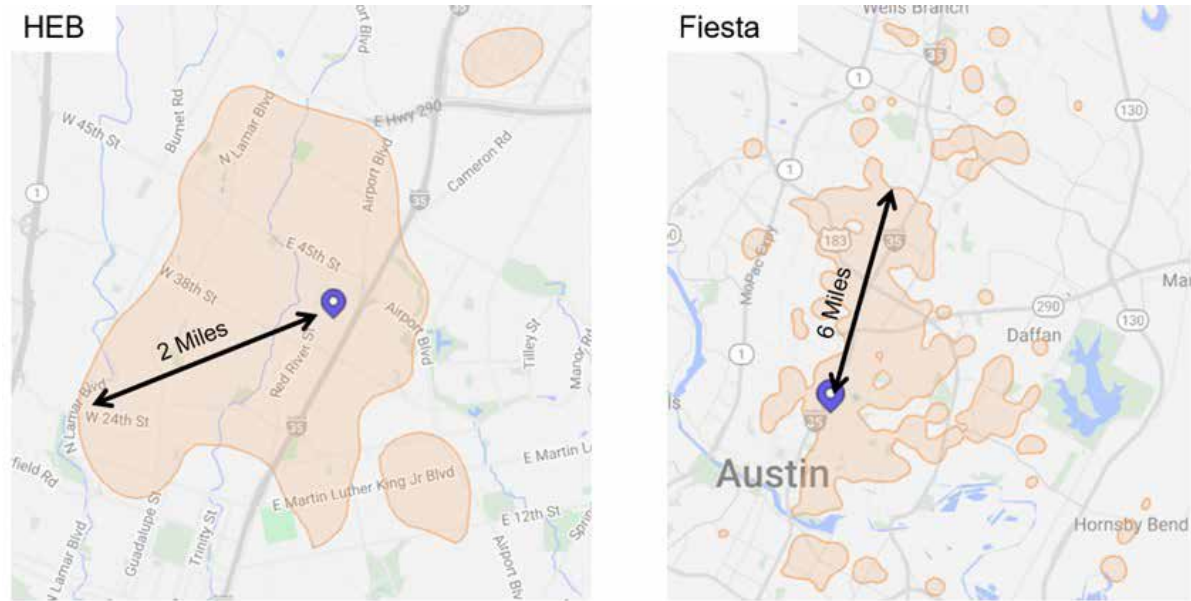
Rethinking the Role of the Neighborhood Centers

Central to both Hancock and Cherrywood are the existing commercial centers, Hancock and Delwood. Despite their current auto-oriented design, neighbors noted the important role both centers play in anchoring the neighborhoods and providing access to daily service needs including two grocery stores. Beyond the neighborhoods themselves, both centers draw customers from a broader area as well. Over the past twelve months, the Hancock Center attracted 3.9 million total visits while the Delwood Center attracted an additional 1.2 million visits for a total of over 5.1 million combined visits. Even in their current design state, these commercial anchors are bringing customers and spending power to your neighborhoods. These statistics should be marketed to the existing property owners and/or future developers who may be looking to invest in your vision. Under a redevelopment vision focused on walkability, transit access, additional housing, and commercial anchors, the visitation and spending power would likely grow even higher. Hancock/Cherrywood will not become a city center or downtown, but they can grow and be integrated together into a village or town center with a greater draw and dramatically strengthen their role as an economic, residential, and transit hub that helps make Austin even more vibrant.

Our research also revealed the importance of both the H-E-B and Fiesta grocery stores to these commercial centers. These grocery anchors are drawing nearly three million visits per year, yet who they are serving is very different. The maps below illustrate, within the orange areas, the distance from which 50% of their customer base falls within. For H-E-B, a much more localized draw encompassing much of University of Texas- Austin's



Food access is important to both local and regional visitors.



Source: Placer AI, 2025.

(UT) campus and neighborhoods west of I-35. Fiesta on the other hand attracts customers from a wider catchment area spanning as far as six miles north of the store and neighborhoods primarily north and east of I-35. The interstate is not only a visual and physical barrier between the neighborhoods but appears to be a market barrier as well. Finding ways to advocate for more east-west connectivity over the redesigned I-35 corridor could help open visual and physical access between both future mixed-use areas.

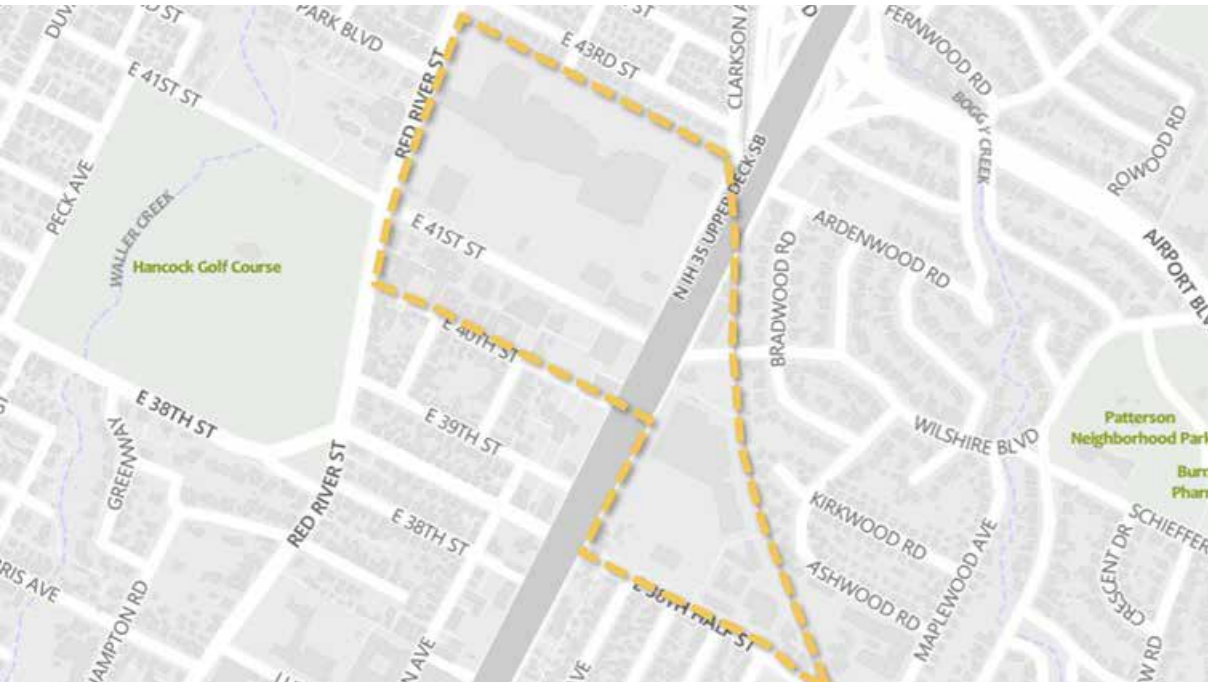
The Vision to Value Proposition

The vision plan for the Hancock-Cherrywood area embodies the principles and values we heard during stakeholder and neighborhood engagements, but redevelopment is also likely to bring monetary benefits that could be captured by the city and reinvested in public goods. Many neighbors talked about the trade-

offs between additional density in this area and the provision of public benefits such as affordable housing, parks and gathering spaces, improved public transit options, and infrastructure that could connect the two sides of I-35 (e.g., caps, stitches, and enhanced bridges). To support those requests, the private sector would need a level of density that could help cover some of those costs.

One example of an existing incentive that blends private investment with public benefit is the city’s density bonus program where a zoning change is granted to allow a taller building in return for a percentage of new housing units set aside for deed-restricted affordable housing. This strategy leverages a regulatory change in exchange for affordable housing with no direct monetary cost to the city. A similar strategy could be employed for the Hancock-Cherrywood vision where upzoning with greater dimensional requirements would create greater

Property value study area.



Source: Austin Property Viewer, DAT Team.

value than what could be realized under the current zoning scheme.

The Potential for Value Capture

Research of locations around the US has found that the addition of parks and open spaces, as well as transit can create market demand and add monetary value to existing land and building assets. The [Lincoln Land Institute](#) studied the impact of different types of public lands and open spaces on property values and found that in some cases living near an urban park or specialty park could increase values between two and eight percent. A study by the [Center for Transit Oriented Development](#) (CTOD) showed that living near transit can increase values up to 45%. This is, however, heavily

dependent on the type of transit, and the quality and frequency of service. Nevertheless, both public spaces and access to transit can help make the case to property owners and developers that this is a place worth investing in.

To help the neighborhood understand the potential value creation of the vision plan, the DAT Team created a high-level valuation model to compare current market values¹ in the study area to what a future build-out could generate. This analysis is intended to provide an order of

1. Market value is not equal to taxable value. DAT Team used market value due to data availability through Travis County’s online property assessment portal. A more refined approach should take into account the potential difference between market and taxable value.

magnitude range in market value and should be revisited as the vision plan and regulatory scheme are refined. For this analysis the DAT Team extended the original study area one block south to incorporate the area between 41st Street and 40th Street from Red River Street to I-35. This area is currently a mix of lower-scale buildings with commercial and residential uses and could have redevelopment potential under a different regulatory scheme.

Using property assessment data from Travis County’s online database, the DAT Team estimates the market value of the parcels within the study area to be around \$183 million dollars². Under a minimum density vision plan, with density similar to Mueller, build out of an estimated 3,000 new housing units and 700,000 square feet of mixed commercial, the DAT Team estimates the market value could increase to \$1 billion dollars or more³. At the city’s current tax rate of \$46.76 per \$1,000 of value that could result in over \$47 million dollars in property tax revenue.

Greater density, which is achievable with taller buildings in the center of the redevelopment, would obviously increase both market value and resulting property tax and, depending on the uses, sales tax, mixed beverage, and hotel tax revenue. With the planned two stitches supported by City Council and the enhanced bridges crossings, IF they are well designed and executed with empathy towards the needs of pedestrians to provide strong pedestrian ties across I-35 and knit the two neighborhoods together, this value capture remains realistic even absent more aggressive I-35 stitches.

Programs & Policies

The high cost of infrastructure for both the transit

2. Estimate removes the market value of Central Health and any other publicly owned parcels.
3. DAT Team utilized an income-based valuation model relying on rent, sale price, vacancy, OPEX, and cap rate assumptions as of March 2025.

investment and connectivity improvements across I-35 may necessitate a public-private partnership (PPP or P3) strategy where value is created by the private sector and captured through public sector mechanisms. Strategies like this have been employed in other locations throughout Austin through the program commonly referred to as Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ). This program freezes the assessed value of property within a defined district and as values rise (typically due to redevelopment or investment) the additional tax increment is reinvested back into the district to help pay for public goods. In the case of Hancock-Cherrywood, there may be opportunities to leverage future value to help cover some of the infrastructure costs. This again is highly dependent on the level of development allowed, the mix of uses, and the timing of the development coming online.

The city also has other value capture mechanisms that may be worth exploring for this area which include:

- Chapter 380 – empowers municipalities to create and provide economic development by contract consistent with state economic development goals. These agreements can include offering city funding through grants or loans at little to no cost to stimulate new business and economic activity. The developer must agree to meet certain guidelines such as growing the local economy, business activity, employment, or investment in specific target industries.
- Chapter 381- a similar program to Chapter 380 but this program is available through Travis County. This program allows counties to negotiate directly with developers and businesses to provide incentives encouraging developers to build in the county. This program allows for loans and grants of public money to promote state or local economic development and to stimulate, encourage and develop business location and commercial activity in the county.

- Chapter 312 – this program provides a tax abatement for up to ten years and should be used as an economic development tool for cities and counties to attract new industries and encourage retention of existing businesses. The city should be cautious with this program and not combine with a Chapter 380 agreement

One other important aspect of the vision plan that should be considered and evaluated is the impact of redevelopment on the surrounding neighborhood, residents, and businesses. A private investment of this size is likely to have ripple effects across a broader area. New housing is likely to be priced at top of market rents for the area and could set a new bar for landlords to raise rents on existing units. The same may be true for smaller, older commercial spaces that are currently affordable to local businesses that lack the financial backing or credit of a larger chain. While the goal of the vision plan is to incorporate affordable housing into new residential buildings and have smaller spaces at more affordable rents for local businesses, it is important to recognize and plan for the potential displacement impacts.

Fortunately, the city has a number of anti-displacement policies and programs that should be evaluated and deployed depending on how the ultimate vision for this area shakes out. Through a partnership with CapMetro, Austin developed an Equitable TOD Report which provides detailed policies and programs for mitigating the impact of new transit service and transit-oriented development. In the [final report](#), the policy toolkit describes opportunities to help existing small businesses during construction and on-going support for maintaining a small business culture. There are also strategies around housing affordability and mobility, urban design, and leveraging real estate.

As part of the city’s Project Connect transit initiative, a \$300 million [anti-displacement fund](#) was established to help affordable areas remain affordable and prevent displacement in areas near transit lines. Representatives

of the Hancock-Cherrywood area should continue to monitor this fund and its programs and take advantage of available money that could help during I-35 construction or future transit expansion in this area.

More housing and more commercial space is critical to keep Austin vibrant, growing, and affordable, but antidisplacement measures are needed to ensure that growth is not be at the expense of existing residential and commercial tenants and causes their displacement. Keeping Austin Weird requires that the small local businesses and long time residents are not replaced by a homogenized commercial and housing stock and tenants that could be anywhere.

Designing Connections

Town/Village Center Opportunities

With the exception of the I-35 corridor, the Hancock/Cherrywood study area consists primarily of two mid-sized suburban shopping centers comprised of stand-alone retail buildings and a medical use surrounded by surface parking lots. Before considering the potential of I-35 corridor cap options, the Hancock/Cherrywood DAT urban design approach focused on integrating these two shopping centers with the fabric of the adjacent neighborhoods and building a human-scale town or village center. To do this, the team sought to imagine the sites as hubs of dense, mixed-use development, gradually stepping down in height and density to meet the single-family residential communities that they would serve.

The redevelopment schemes produced by the Hancock/Cherrywood DAT show existing streets continued into the sites to divide the study area into smaller, urban-scaled parcels. Surface parking lots are replaced by structured parking. The enhanced public realm includes active street-fronts, landscaping, shade devices, and places for both outdoor commercial use and public assembly. New program elements that the team took note to include from community meetings (such as a recreational center or YMCA) were included, and the two popular and valuable grocery stores (H-E-B and Fiesta) were maintained.

The design shows one approach to the community's qualitative goals for the redevelopment scheme. The housing proposed specifically included small, single-floor at-grade units suitable for seniors in what could become intergenerational communities. The uses are not segregated or widely separated, and people living in any part of the development area would have easy access to any of its program elements. Many of the north and west-facing sidewalks are exceptionally wide with trees, buildings, and other architectural features

designed to provide shade and promote Austin's culture of four-season "outdoor living". The design intent was to be deliberately eclectic, "new" but not sterile, stylistically accessible but not overtly referential of any historical style or period.

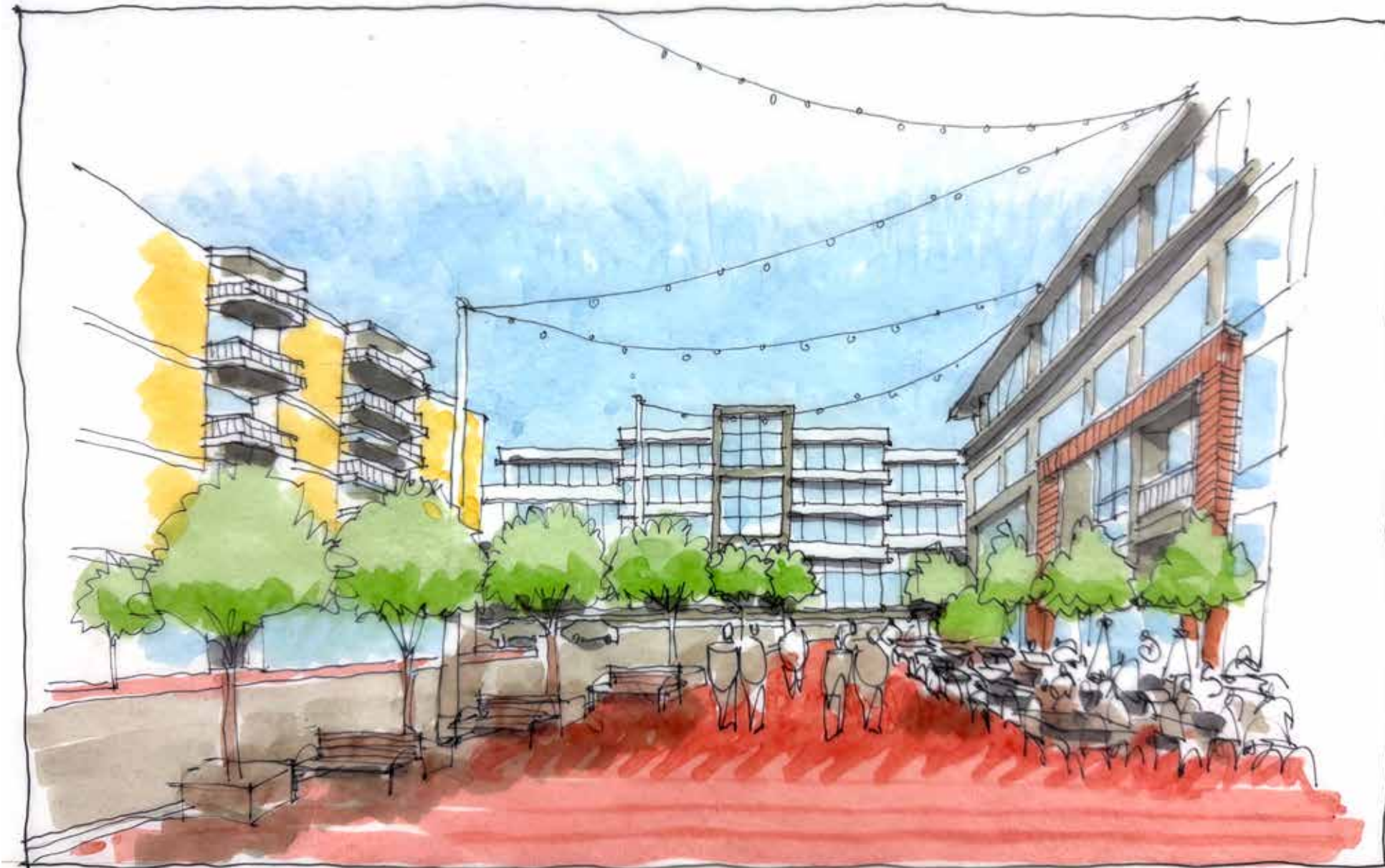
The redevelopment schemes are designed to show a realistic and possible approach to spark conversations. Obviously, any final scenario required consultation with the property and business owners, the neighborhoods and local stakeholders, and the city and will need to be adjusted to address concerns and build consensus. In all scenarios, building a consensus on design standards is critical. The actual density can be significantly greater once that consensus is developed.



The Hancock/Cherrywood DAT Redevelopment Plan with the "cap/stitch" parcels excluded. This plan was created to emphasize the potential of the sites themselves regardless of the outcomes of the cap studies. Three of the five ground-level perspective sketches on subsequent pages will illustrate the development potential of these parcels.

For all of the proposed development scenarios, where the redevelopment site meets residential neighborhoods, height should be controlled to respect existing neighborhoods. Away from those edges, however, the site could support even greater density and increased building heights. The proposed minimum density is similar to Mueller, which should be seen as the minimum density for any redevelopment.

The enhanced bridges shown connect the east and west sides of I-35. E. 41st Street's connection to Wilshire Boulevard is designed to be for emergency vehicles, buses, bicycles, and pedestrians, with a connection to a new roadway between the Red Line Parkway and Fiesta that links to E. 38 1/2 Street.



A ground level perspective view from the extension of Park Boulevard into the Hancock parcel on the west side. The sidewalk is shown at approximately 45+ feet wide to accommodate ample outdoor dining with room for pedestrians, dog-walking and scooters. It has a landscaped edge with benches to buffer the vehicular traffic. Trees and building edge provide shade. The street is aligned axially with the tallest building on the site: an "anchor" building of a corporate office headquarters over the new home of H-E-B grocery store. At the entrance to the grocery store, a colonnade facing the bow-shaped sidewalk would form one of the scheme's public places.



A ground-level perspective view showing a redeveloped E. 41st Street. In addition to the enhanced streetscape features, the sketch shows the stepping-down in scale and likely changes in style of the project's residential building types. The 4-story residential building on the left is likely elevator-served double-loaded corridor with apartments suitable for young professionals. A more contemporary architectural style is suggested. The buildings on the right were not originally included in the study area, but the team felt that both sides of E. 41st street had redevelopment potential. The 1-and-2 story residential buildings on the right suggest 2-family or accessory-dwelling-unit structures that would be more appropriate for intergenerational families. If desired, these buildings could be one story taller and still fit into the neighborhood. More traditional wood frame construction is suggested.



A ground-level perspective view of the extension of E. 39th Street into the Cherrywood study area, ending at a public plaza. Right to left in the sketch: Structured parking that serves the grocery store (Fiesta) and a new recreation center with a residential building above. Next, for the new home of Fiesta, a somewhat more rural architectural vocabulary is suggested. To the left of the new Fiesta building, a whimsical landmark structure (a purple water tower) in the center of the public plaza is shown. To the left of the purple water tower is low-rise single-family or two-family housing in front of the landscaped buffer that separates the housing from the red line parkway and rail line. If desired, any of the buildings not immediately abutting a single-family home neighborhoods could be taller and still fit in. At the far left is the proposed new recreation center.

Cap Proposal Prior to City Council Vote

The cap proposals presented in [Our Future 35](#) feature thoughtfully designed park spaces with exciting program elements. However, as currently designed, these caps are unlikely to function as the vibrant, connected community assets that many residents are hoping for. Several technical aspects of the proposals are difficult to interpret, but a key concern is the elevated nature of much of the cap, which sits above a trench-like condition formed by the highway's ingress and egress lanes.

Additional separation is created by the presence of multiple frontage lanes (distinct from the ingress/egress ramps), further distancing the cap from the surrounding neighborhoods. The result is a park that is effectively “in the sky”—vertically elevated and physically and visually disconnected from adjacent streets and development, with limited points of access and integration.

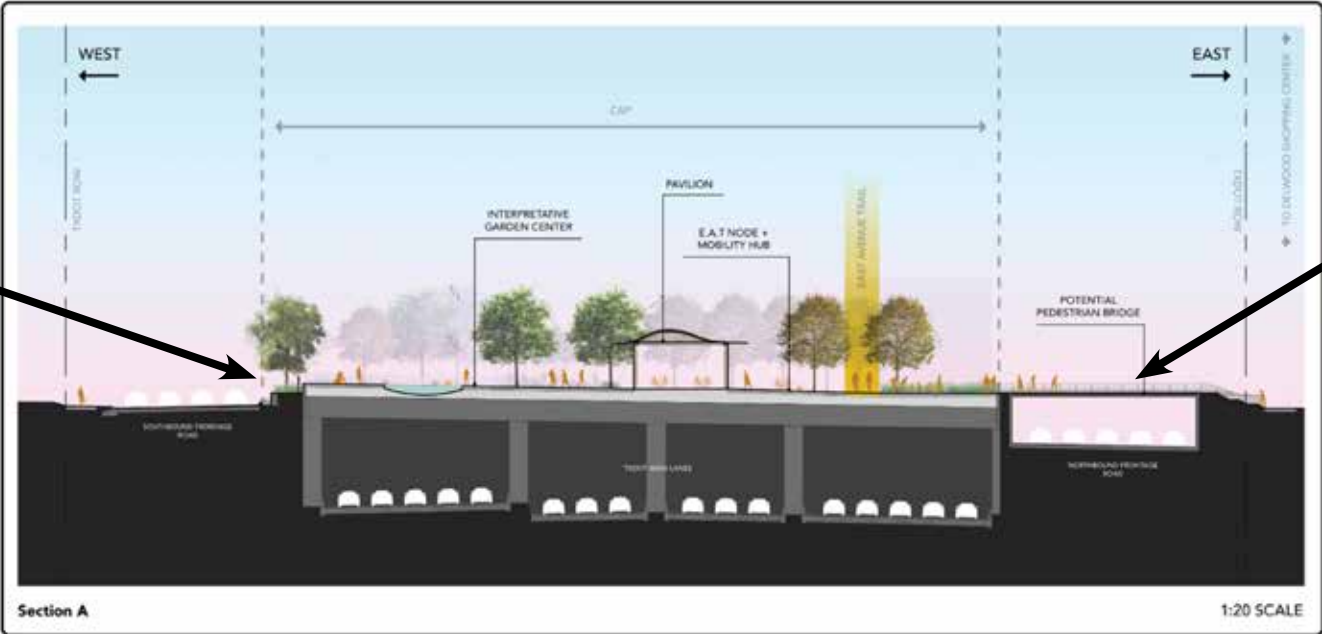
Of all the originally proposed caps, the cap between the red line train and Airport Boulevard had a marginal value. In the resource limited world, it was the one cap that was very hard to justify because of the lack of access to the cap and the lack of adjacent land uses that would benefit from that cap. Advocating for that cap weakens the compelling arguments for other caps and stitches south of the Red Line.



Diagram of the Highway Cap proposed prior to the Spring 2025 City Council vote, and the only originally proposed cap that had a marginal value.



381/2 to 41st Street - Image courtesy of Our Future 35. October 2024 Plans.



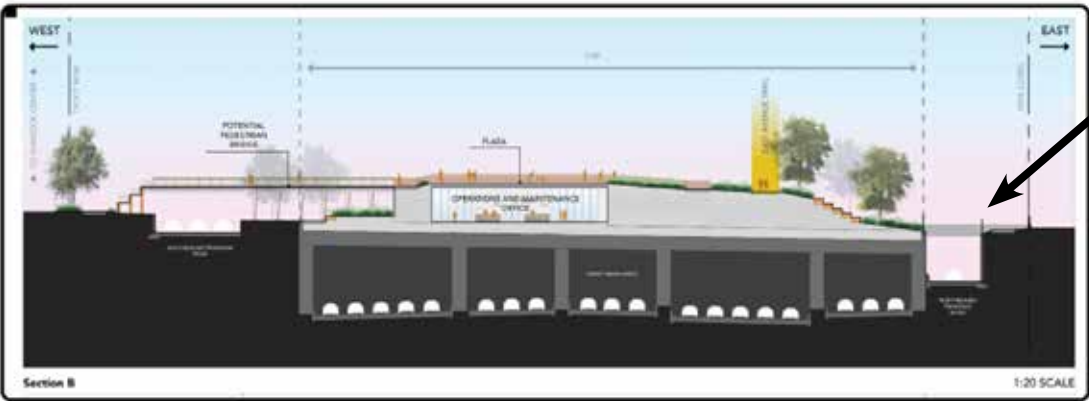
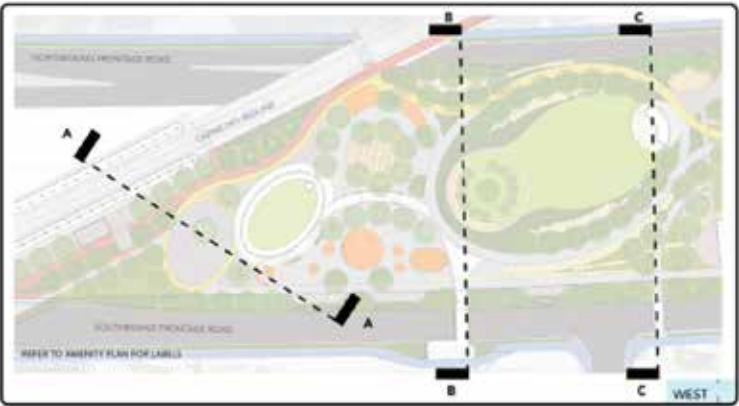
Elevated up to 14 feet.
Accessible from 38th ½ St,
41st St, and new pedestrian
flyover.

Pedestrian bridge above 60-
foot trench/frontage road.

Image courtesy of Our Future 35. October 2024 Plans.



41st to Red Line - Accessible from future Community Gardens/New Street, Clarkson, pedestrian flyover, Red Line Parkway, and 41st St. Image courtesy of Our Future 35. October 2024 Plans.



Significantly elevated. Serves Red Line Parkway. Reconsider Ops/Maintenance bunker to reduce elevation.



Images courtesy of Our Future 35. October 2024 Plans.

DAT Recommendations

The design team invested significant time in understanding TxDOT's proposed cap designs and worked to develop a concept that could both meet agency requirements and deliver the kind of community amenity residents envisioned. However, this proved infeasible without major changes to TxDOT's current highway proposal—which includes 19 lanes of subterranean highway, up to three frontage lanes, and intermittent highway ramps within the study area.

The design team strongly recommends that the community continue to advocate for the removal, narrowing, or elimination of frontage lanes and highway access ramps in this corridor. While TxDOT has indicated that changes are not feasible at this stage in their design process, it is our professional opinion—grounded in years of roadway design experience—that such modifications are indeed possible. These changes would likely improve connectivity to the caps, reduce crossing widths, and potentially lower the overall cost of the highway project.

If frontage roads were limited to one lane (or two at most) and all highway ingress and egress points were removed from this segment of I-35, the resulting cost savings could be significant—and the cap could be more effectively integrated into adjacent development. This approach is explored in the first design concept.

Concept 1. ALL CAPS: FULL PARK PROPOSAL

This concept incorporates the cap design developed by Hood Design Studio but emphasizes that the cap should be seamlessly integrated with the surrounding development. The vision includes residential and mixed-use buildings or towers that directly front the cap, creating a vibrant, active edge and wonderful “address” for the occupants of the building. Access to these buildings would be provided via reconfigured frontage roads located behind the development, rather than between the buildings and the cap. These properties would benefit from exceptional visibility and proximity

to high-quality open space, reinforcing findings that parks and well-designed public spaces can significantly increase property values.

Realizing this concept would require a complete rethinking of the number and configuration of frontage lanes, the alignment of the frontage road, and highway ingress and egress within the study area.



The Hancock/Cherrywood DAT Redevelopment Plan I, with an idealized design for the cap parcels. The team presented this scheme as a paradigm of what they believed the community hoped to achieve: a fully-accessible linear park like Boston's Rose Kennedy Greenway with new mixed-use buildings on either side of it. This plan, however, would require the TxDOT to significantly redesign the underground highway system by eliminating both the frontage roads and vehicular access ramps. Mechanical ventilation would also be required as this structure would now be considered a tunnel. Without this, the linear park or greenway would probably receive far less use than desired.



A ground-level perspective view of a residential building over a commercial use with its main entrance directly on the greenway as shown on Redevelopment Plan I. Note the absence of frontage roads and multiple points of pedestrian access to this greenway creating an ideal urban living room that could be equitably shared by both the Hancock and Cherrywood neighborhoods.



A ground-level perspective view of the proposed Red Line train stop looking north with a residential building at left as shown in Redevelopment Plan 1. Note the proximity that the residential use and the transit note both have to the green space and the symbiotic relationship this proximity creates.

Concept 2. THE WEDGE

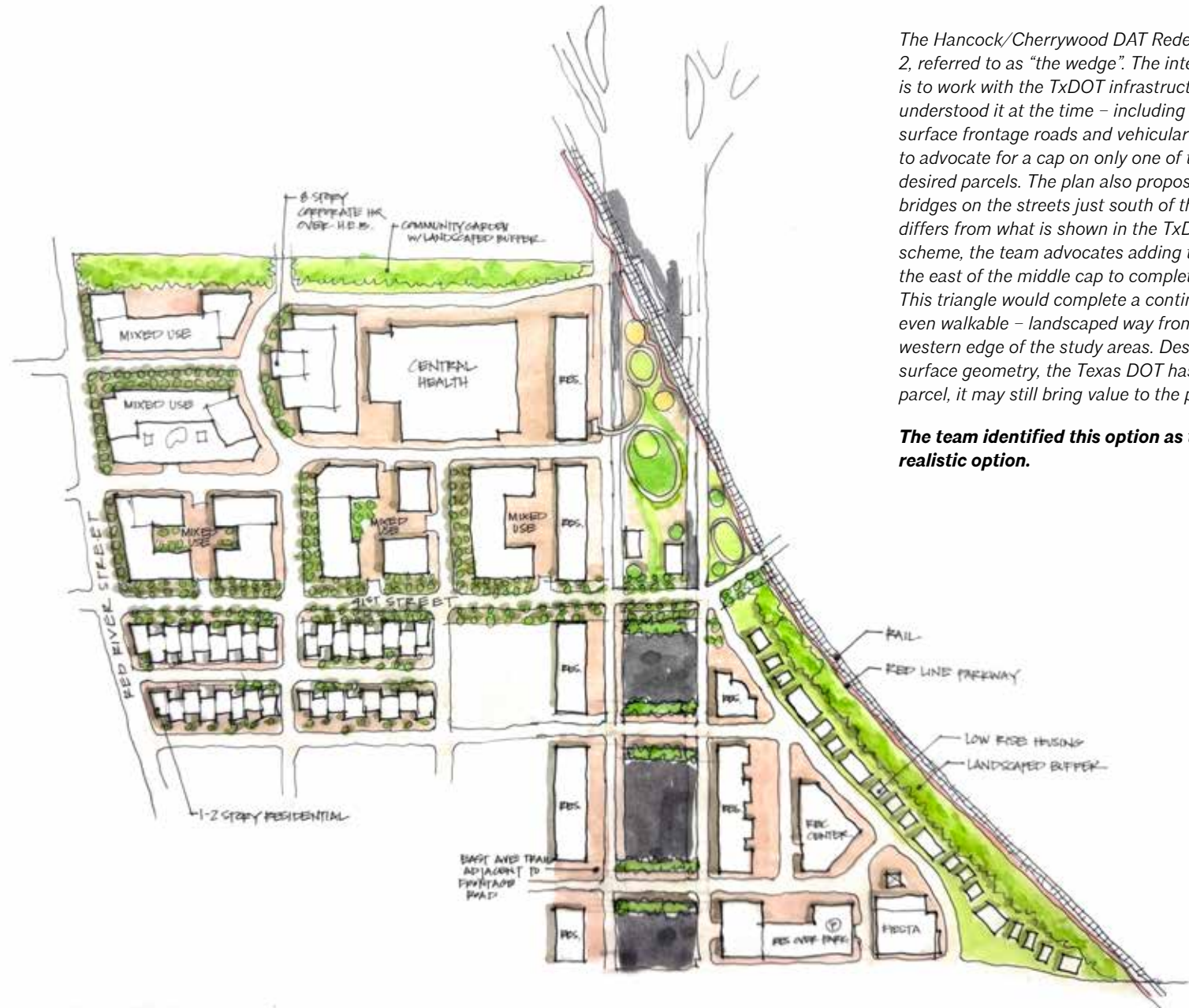
The second concept explores the opportunity to retain a portion of the highway cap—specifically the segment that offers the strongest connections between redevelopment areas and surrounding neighborhoods. This cap also has the potential to support broader regional connectivity by linking to the Red Line light rail station and integrating with the Red Line Parkway Trail.

Under this concept, we strongly encourage the community to advocate for, and require, TxDOT to construct wider enhanced bridge connections at East 41st Street and East 38½ Street, and potentially at other key locations than in TxDOT's plans. (See the discussion on precedents, especially Atlanta's 2008 5th Street NW enhanced bridge on page 3.).

Even today, I-35 presents a highly hostile environment for people walking, biking, or using transit—any mode other than a motor vehicle faces significant safety risks and is an extremely undesirable for anyone moving at a pedestrian speed. As the highway is widened, restoring and expanding safe crossings becomes even more critical.

TxDOT bears responsibility for repairing the community connections severed by the original construction of I-35. With further expansion, that obligation becomes more urgent. New bridge crossings should include wider decks to allow for landscape and hardscape features beyond the typical enhanced bridge crossing that mitigate noise and air pollution, and to create a more comfortable and inviting experience for people crossing above the highway.

While the concept is not illustrated to scale, we recommend a minimum 100-foot setback from the edge of the vehicle travel lanes to the edge of the cap to accommodate meaningful pedestrian, landscape, and placemaking elements.



The Hancock/Cherrywood DAT Redevelopment Plan 2, referred to as “the wedge”. The intent of this plan is to work with the TxDOT infrastructure as the team understood it at the time – including the multi-lane surface frontage roads and vehicular access ramps – and to advocate for a cap on only one of the three originally desired parcels. The plan also proposes two landscaped bridges on the streets just south of the wedge, which differs from what is shown in the TxDOT plans. In this scheme, the team advocates adding the triangle of land to the east of the middle cap to complete the “wedge” shape. This triangle would complete a continuous – and possibly even walkable – landscaped way from the southeast to western edge of the study areas. Despite the difficult surface geometry, the Texas DOT has given to this cap parcel, it may still bring value to the public realm.

The team identified this option as the most desirable realistic option.

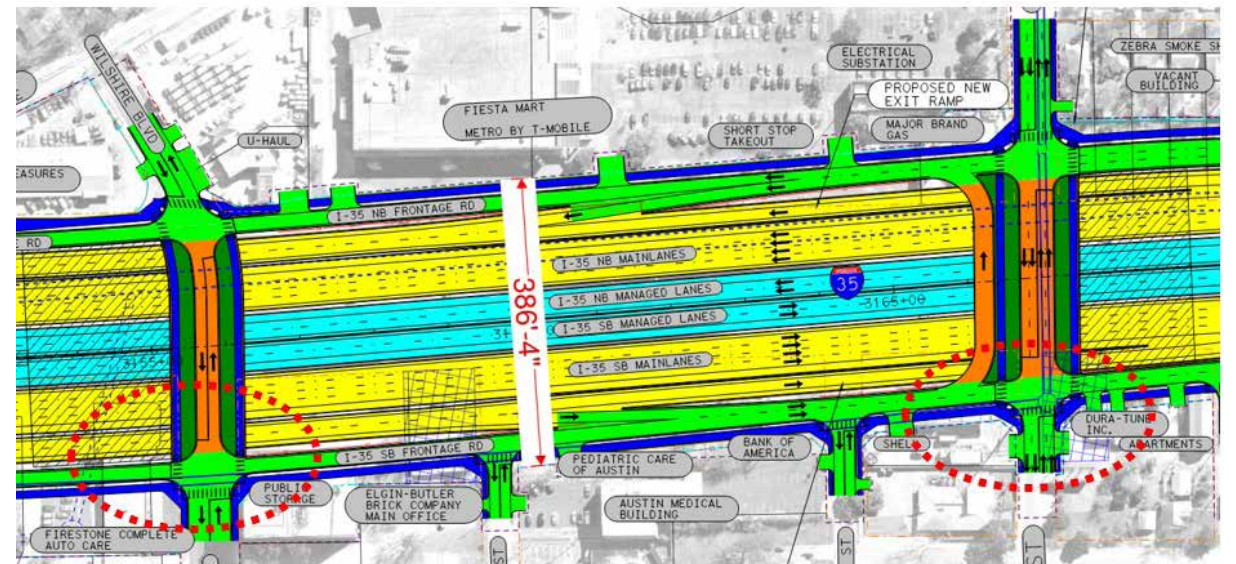
Features included in **both** designs:

- Integration of the future Red Line LRT station – make it a feature and easily accessible station
- Integration of the East Avenue Trail and the Red Line Parkway Trail
- All streets to be considered neighborhood serving – smaller, human scaled streets that allow for vehicles but do not prioritize vehicles over humans
- A community garden to the north of the design scenarios – serving as a fun community asset and buffer between new development and northern neighborhood.
- Redesign of the space just east of the northern cap – in one scheme this could be the location of the light rail station, and expand open space within the community.

Other things to consider

- There are multiple websites with disparate information. Find a way to provide a “one stop shop” or the advocacy website(s) should link to all the agency websites and provide descriptions of what you’ll find there.
- The TxDOT engineering process for I35 is not transparent and easy to understand. The highway concepts from last fall have changed but have not been shared with the community. The adjacent graphics provide an example of that. The number of arrows indicates the number of lanes in each direction. Green is frontage road. Pink is ingress / egress from highway. The top image is what we received from City staff during the charrette, while the bottom image is from the [TXDOT website](#). At intersections in the study area (Wilshire and 38th ½ Street in this case), note the arguably larger frontage roads in the newer concept.

- We did not fully explore a scenario without caps; however, during the DAT’s final public presentation, a participant asked, “What would you do if there are no caps?” If that had been part of the design brief, we would have placed even greater emphasis on the critical role that new streets must play in shaping a cohesive and enjoyable public realm. Our focus would have shifted toward re-imagining the cross sections of these streets and integrating more greenspace into the core of the two development areas. Thoughtfully designed streets and open spaces could serve as green spines, anchoring the neighborhood with a network of parks and public spaces—something this area urgently lacks.



Mobility & The Public Realm

During community conversations, participants expressed deep pride in their neighborhoods and a collective aspiration to transform the area into a lasting community asset. There was strong support for a mix of uses—including residential, retail, services, and the preservation or replacement of institutional anchors like Fiesta and H-E-B. For the redevelopment to succeed as both a local and regional destination, the design and function of the street network will be essential.

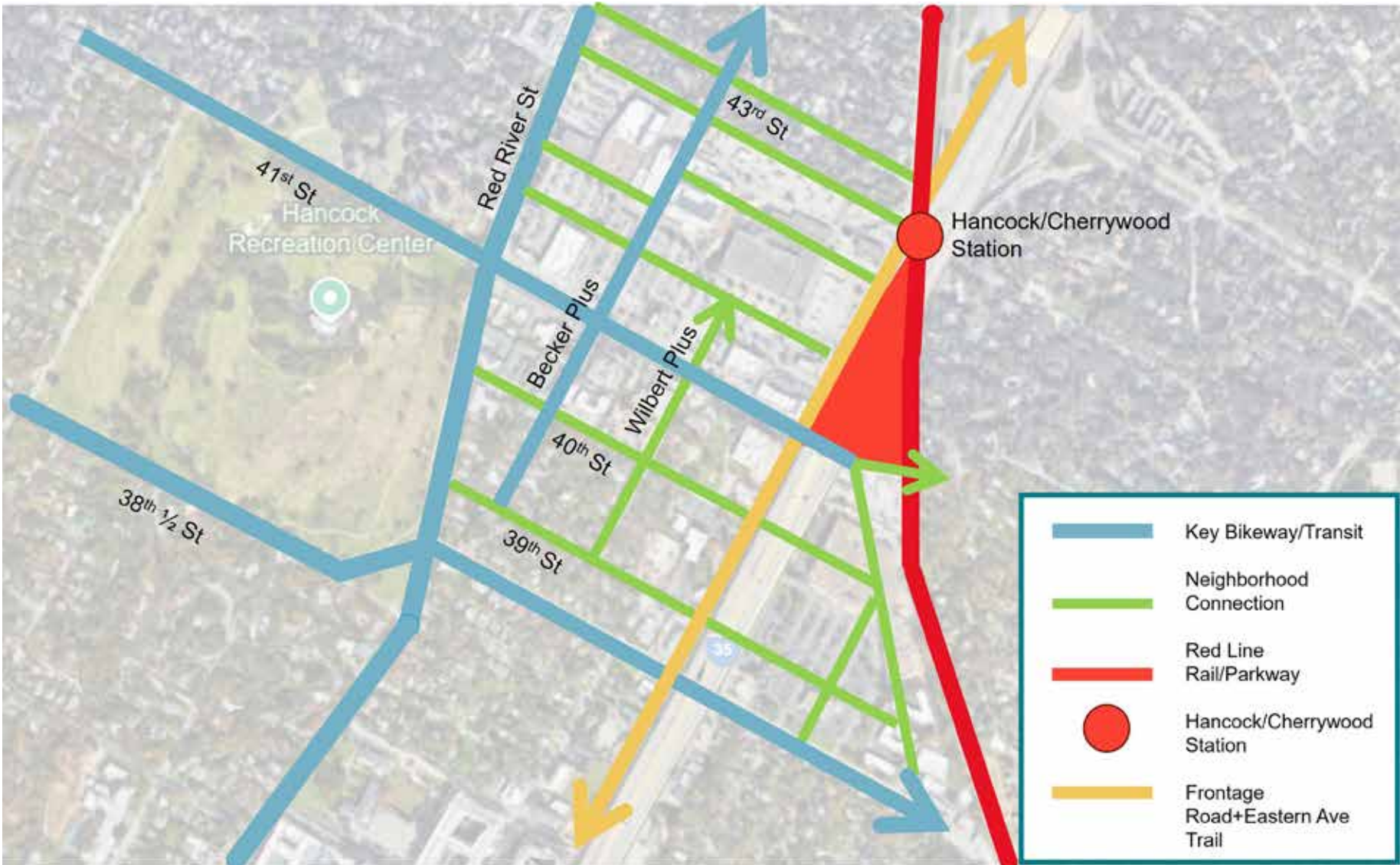
Participants emphasized the need for broader connectivity within and across the two major redevelopment areas, with particular focus on creating safe, inviting crossings over I-35 to better integrate neighborhoods and accommodate all modes of travel. They also expressed strong interest in streets that are not only functional but also enjoyable—spaces that incorporate green infrastructure, manage stormwater, and contribute to a memorable and vibrant public realm as part of any future master plan.

Mobility

The mobility network strategy emphasizes creating a walkable, bikeable, and transit-ready system of streets that serve as both transportation corridors and valued public spaces. Streets are envisioned not only as conduits for movement but as active, enjoyable places that contribute to neighborhood identity and quality of life. This people-first approach prioritizes safety, comfort, and connectivity—particularly across major barriers like I-35. Implementation should begin with East 41st Street, establishing it as a model corridor that demonstrates how mobility and placemaking can work hand-in-hand to support equitable, future-ready development.



Mobility Network Strategy diagram under the ALL CAPS proposal.

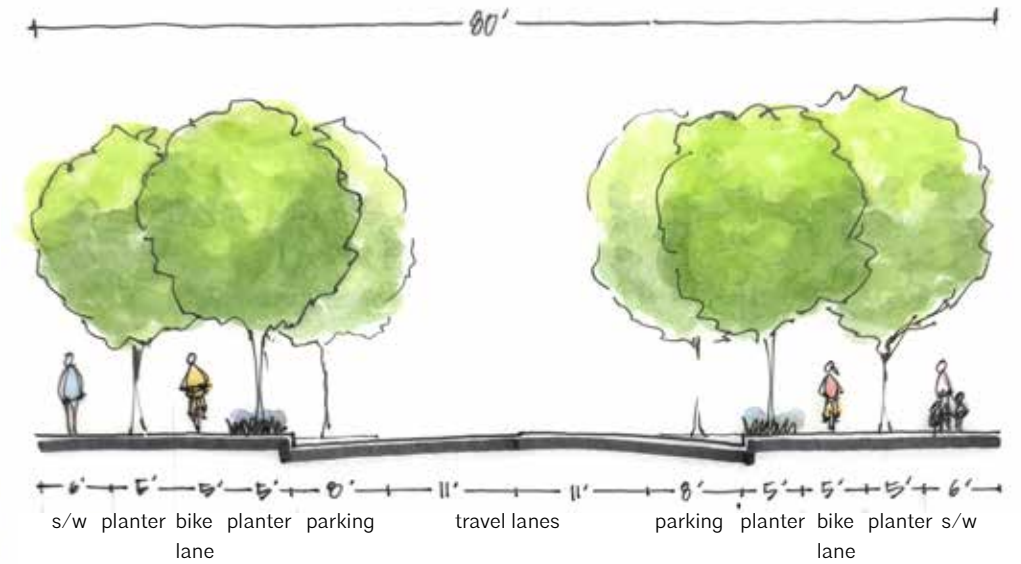
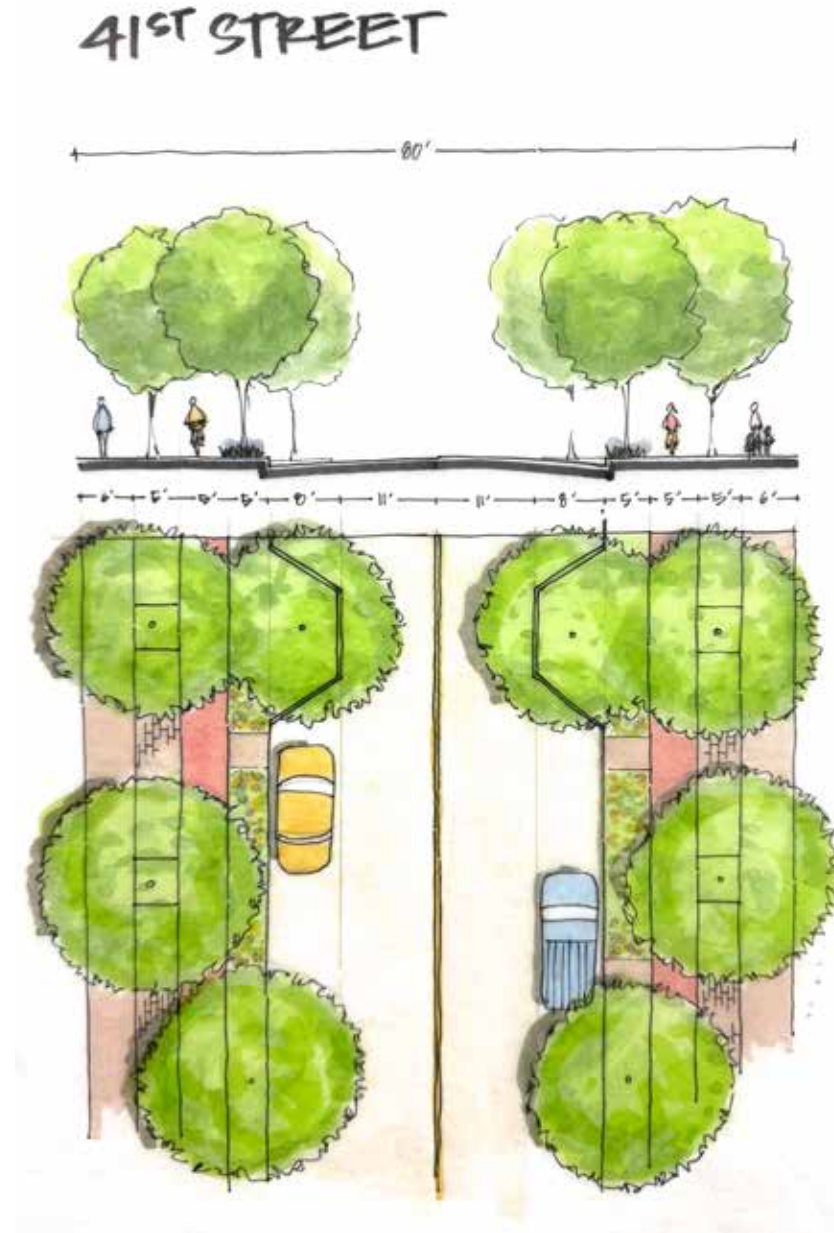


Mobility Network Strategy diagram under the WEDGE proposal.

East 41st Street Design Concept

Currently a wide corridor with frequent speeding, East 41st Street presents a significant opportunity to serve as an anchor street that models the area’s vision for a people-centered public realm. Its redesign can set a precedent for future street improvements by prioritizing comfort, safety, and experience for people walking, biking, and taking transit—before private vehicle use. Key design features include:

- Generous sidewalks shaded by street trees
- Sidewalk-level protected bikeways
- On-street parking
- Green infrastructure opportunities, such as landscaped bulb-outs and stormwater-friendly buffers
- Furnishing zones to accommodate seating, public art, bike parking, pedestrian-scale lighting, and waste receptacles



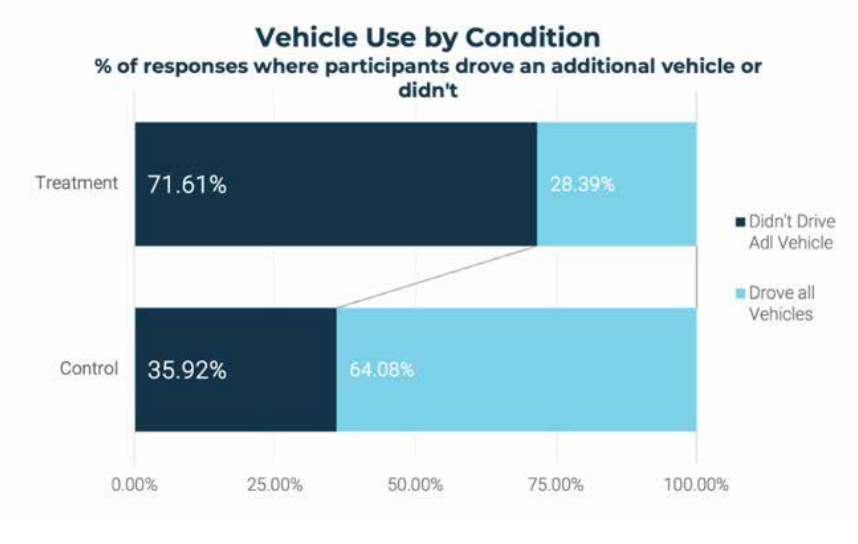
Incentivizing Transit

During the public forums, residents noted the availability of transit for those who need it (transit dependent riders). Many participants, however, noted that they did not regularly use transit and the appeal of rail or bus rapid transit (BRT) was that it could compete with driving for service to UT and downtown.

Some communities have adopted various measures to encourage transit. Austin, for example, already provides free for unhoused people, and K-12 students, and UT provides free service and subsidized transit and bikeshare services directly and through Cap Metro.

Other programs to encourage transit range from free bus service to a guaranteed ride home in an emergency to allow parents and caretakers confidence that they can travel quickly when the need arises.

The images on this page show incentive programs adopted in Los Angeles to encourage and incentivize new transit users.



Those in the treatment group were 4.5 times more likely to not drive one of their additional vehicles throughout the Challenge.

Team Roster & Acknowledgments

Wayne Feiden, Team Leader

Wayne Feiden, FAICP, is Director of the Center for Resilient Metro-Regions and Lecturer of Practice at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he focuses on assisting communities in placemaking, resilience, downtown revitalization, housing, economic development, transportation, open space preservation, regulatory streamlining, and community engagement.

Previously he was Director of Planning and Sustainability for Northampton. He led that city to earn a LEED for Cities GOLD rating and the nation's first Five-STAR Communities rating for sustainability. Wayne's publications include five American Planning Association PAS reports: Strategic Planning, Planning Management, Assessing Sustainability, Planning for On-Site and Decentralized Wastewater Treatment, and Performance Guarantees, as well as other peer-reviewed and research papers. Wayne's Eisenhower Fellowship to Hungary, Fulbright specialists to South Africa and to New Zealand, German Marshall Fund Fellowship to Europe (2015), State Department Fellowship Exchanges to Indonesia and Malaysia, and Bellagio Residency in Italy all focused on planning and resilience. Wayne has a BS in Natural Resources from the University of Michigan and a Master of City and Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina.

Michael R. Davis

Michael R. Davis, FAIA, is President of Mike Davis FAIA, LLC, having recently retired from Bergmeyer, the interdisciplinary design collaborative for which he was Principal, President, and Director of Corporate Social Responsibility for 39 years. While at Bergmeyer, Mike was 2013 President of the Boston Society of Architects, 2015-2016 Chair of the Board of Trustees of the BSA Foundation, 2017-2022 founder and Chair of the national AIA Committee on the Environment (COTE) Advocacy Committee, 2020-2023 member

and Chair of the national AIA Board Government Advocacy Committee (GAC), and served in 2021 as an AIA delegate to COP 26 in Institute's first year at the United Nations Climate Change conference in Glasgow, Scotland. Mike has participated on or led fifteen AIA Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) and Sustainable Design for Resilience Team (DART) charrettes in the United States, as well as the AIA's first four International R/UDAT charrette in Dublin, Ireland, Bequia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Freetown, Sierra Leone. Mike's professional experience includes multi-family private and university housing projects, adaptive reuse and historic preservation work, and commercial restaurant and retail interiors. As an advocate for sustainability in public policy, Mr. Davis advised the Boston Planning and Development Agency as a Member and Chair of the Boston Civic Design Commission from 1996 to 2018 and served on Boston Mayor Thomas Menino's Green Building Task Force and Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick's Net Zero Energy Building Task Force. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Architecture from Pennsylvania State University and a Master of Architecture from Yale University.

Eric Halvorsen

Eric Halvorsen AICP, is a principal at RKG Associates and has a wide range of planning and economics experience, including working on projects at the municipal and regional level repositioning sites both large and small. Eric has experience working complex, multi-disciplinary projects that bring together economic development, land use zoning, and transportation to create successful, active, and vibrant communities. He has worked on commercial and residential market analyses and has developed a specialty for market-rate and affordable housing strategies up and down the east coast. Eric holds a Bachelors of Science in Environmental Planning and Design from Rutgers University and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from University of Illinois.

Seleta Reynolds

In June of 2022, Seleta Reynolds was promoted to Chief Innovation Officer at the Office of Strategic Innovation for Los Angeles Metro. Prior to this new role, Seleta served as the General Manager for the Los Angeles Department of Transportation. Among her accomplishments were the nation's largest electric vehicle carshare program and the nation's largest universal basic mobility plan pilot. Previously, she served at the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, leading the Livable Streets Unit.

She has published four articles in Forbes magazine and a key article in the Eno Center for Transportation regarding the adaptation of Los Angeles for Urban Mobility in our Digital Age. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in American History from Brown University.

Cindy Zerger

Passionate about design and the human experience, Cindy Zerger PLA, ASLA, serves as the Urban Design Practice Lead for Toole Design. A seasoned urban designer with a broad range of projects including complex urban design and master planning efforts, streetscape final design, and national Complete Streets initiatives, Cindy has focused her career on the intersection of transportation and the built environment. She blends a background in organizational management and leadership with years of experience in both planning and landscape architecture, equipping her to drive project success from both design and policy perspectives. Cindy is a dynamic speaker and facilitator and regularly leads trainings and design workshops for local, state, and federal agencies on accessibility in design, sustainable streetscapes, and centering experience in our transportation systems.

Outside of work, Cindy enjoys cycling, running, reading books on all things design, and going on urban park adventures with her husband and son.

Joel Mills

Joel Mills is Senior Director for the Communities by Design program. Joel's 28-year career has been focused on strengthening civic capacity, democratic processes and civic institutions. This work has helped millions of people participate in meaningful public processes, visioning efforts, and community planning initiatives. In the United States, Joel has provided consultative services to hundreds of communities, leading participatory processes on the ground in over 100 communities across 38 states. He has led public processes, training programs and workshops in over a dozen countries across 5 continents. His work has been featured in over 1,000 media stories and several books. Joel has served on dozens of expert working groups, boards, juries, and panels focused on civic discourse and participation, sustainability, and democracy. He was a founding Board Member of the International Association for Public Participation's United States Chapter. He has spoken at numerous international conferences concerning democratic urbanism and the role of democracy in urban success, including serving as the Co-Convener of the Remaking Cities Congress in 2013. Joel is an Academician of the Academy of Urbanism in London and serves as a Senior Editorial Associate for Civic Green. He is the author of numerous articles on the relationship between democracy, civic capacity and community.

Erin Simmons

Erin Simmons is Senior Director of Design Assistance for Communities by Design, a program of the Architects Foundation. For more than 17 years, Erin has provided technical assistance to hundreds of communities around the world, leading democratic planning processes and training workshops focused on empowering citizens to create equitable, sustainable, and resilient communities. Her work has been featured in hundreds of news articles and publications, and she has spoken extensively as a subject matter expert on the topics of participatory

planning, sustainability, and community revitalization.

Prior to her work with Communities by Design, Erin worked as historic preservationist and architectural historian for an environmental and engineering firm, where she practiced preservation planning, created historic district design guidelines, and conducted historic resource surveys. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Florida State University and a Master’s degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia. Erin is an Academician of the Academy of Urbanism in London, UK.

Acknowledgments

The team would like to express its gratitude to the many residents who took the time to share their thoughts about the future of this area by participating in the process. Your lived experiences and aspirations helped shape our team’s understanding of the area as well as our recommendations. The team is also thankful to the city officials and staff that shared their valuable insights about planning work to date and important contextual information. The team’s collaboration with the local host steering committee for this project was an essential component to the process as well. The team would like to extend a special thanks to the following local sponsoring partners for their support of this process:

Hancock Neighborhood Association

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