

October 22, 2020

Susan Fraser  
Mobility 35 Program Manager  
Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)  
Austin District  
[Susan.Fraser@txdot.gov](mailto:Susan.Fraser@txdot.gov)

Dear Ms. Fraser,

Austin Outside is a broad coalition of Austin non-profits and businesses. Our mission is to champion outdoor places for all throughout Greater Austin. As such, we would like to ensure that all members of our coalition have sufficient time to participate in a meaningful way in the upcoming public scoping meeting regarding I-35.

TxDOT's notification for the [Virtual Public Scoping Meeting - I-35 Capital Express Central Project](#) indicates that the public will have 30 days in which to provide feedback on:

- Coordination plan & schedule
- Project purpose and need
- Range of alternatives

That is a lot to respond to, and this is a very complicated project.

As you know, the Federal Highway Administration Environmental Review Tool Kit states: "The purpose and need of a project is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives required in an EIS and assists with the identification and eventual selection of a preferred alternative."

The Austin community deserves adequate time to participate in the development of a [Purpose and Need](#) that will adequately establish a basis for the development of the Capital Express Central Project.

Many elected officials and their appointed boards and commissions meet monthly, as do most of our local non-profit organizations. Austin Outside meets quarterly and will have the added burden of calling special meetings to facilitate a response. With a national election November 3<sup>rd</sup>, newly elected officials will not yet be sworn in, nor will they have had sufficient time to make their appointments to boards and commissions.

30 days is not sufficient for local leaders, community groups, and interested citizens to learn about the project, meet to take official action, and submit a response. That is especially true with the fall holidays and the on-going global pandemic.

*We are writing to request a 90-day public comment period, to allow the public, elected officials, local businesses, and community organizations enough time to participate in this important public process.*

We look forward to hearing from you,

Joanna Wolaver  
President, Board of Directors, Austin Outside

CC:

Al Alonzi, Division Administrator, Texas Division, Federal Highway Administration

James Bass, Executive Director, TxDOT

Carlos Swonke, Director, Environmental Affairs Division, TxDOT

Senator Sarah Eckhardt, TX Senate District 14

Senator Judith Zaffirini, TX Senate District 21

Senator Dawn Buckingham, TX Senate District 24

Senator Donna Campbell, TX Senate District 25

Representative Sheryl Cole, TX House District 46

Representative Vikki Goodwin, TX House District 47

Representative Donna Howard, TX House District 48

Representative Gina Hinojosa, TX House District 49

Representative Celia Israel, TX House District 50

Representative Eddie Rodriguez, TX House District 51

Austin Mayor Steve Adler

Austin City Council Member Natasha Harper-Madison, District 1

Austin City Council Member Delia Garza, District 2

Austin City Council Member Pio Renteria, District 3

Austin City Council Member Greg Casar, District 4

Austin City Council Member Ann Kitchen, District 5

Austin City Council Member Jimmy Flannigan, District 6

Austin City Council Member Leslie Pool, District 7

Austin City Council Member Paige Ellis, District 8

Austin City Council Member Kathie Tovo, District 9

Austin City Council Member Alison Alter, District 10

Spencer Cronk, City Manager, City of Austin

Gina Fiandaca, Assistant City Manager - Mobility, City of Austin

Travis County Judge Sam Biscoe

Travis County Commissioner Jeff Travillion, Precinct 1

Travis County Commissioner Brigid Shea, Precinct 2

Travis County Commissioner Gerald Daugherty, Precinct 3

Travis County Commissioner Margaret Gómez, Precinct 4