



# *Assuring Mobility*

## Protecting Our Quality of Life



Allison Fang



Council Briefing  
Feb 25, 2010

# Today's Presentation

- Strategic Mobility Plan Status Update
- Schedule for remaining milestones

# Mobility



- **2008: City pursues transportation issues aggressively**

- Transportation Department launched
- Downtown Austin Plan studies transportation issues
- Rail plan submitted to Transit Working Group
- City accepts grant from Chamber to study downtown circulation needs

- **2009: City Council authorizes Strategic Mobility Plan and Urban Rail Studies**

- Strategic Mobility and Rail Preliminary Engineering Consultants activated
- Environmental consultants activated from rotation list to wrap-up Alternatives Analysis
- Downtown Circulation Study Completed – ring of congestion confirmed

- **2009: Early Successes**

- Pass-through financing agreement with TxDOT awarded to complete MoPac at US 290 Interchange
- \$4 Million in Federal Stimulus funds awarded to City of Austin for road and signal improvements
- City launches “Accelerate Austin” program to move forward with infrastructure projects



# Public Outreach



- Over past four years, we have been participating in many outreach efforts:
  - Circulator AA
  - Downtown Austin Plan
  - East Riverside Plan
  - Comprehensive Plan
- Strategic Mobility Plan
  - 6 public input sessions
  - 6 public workshops
  - Stakeholder meetings

# Austin – 15<sup>th</sup> Largest City

## One of the most congested

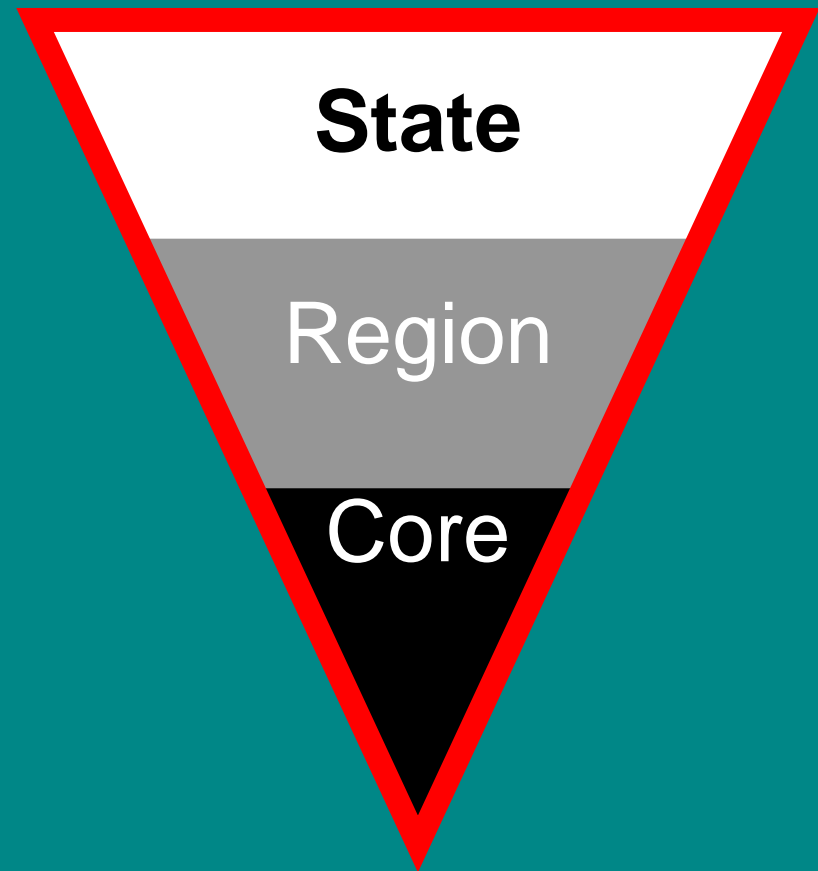
*What are the most important issues to address to ensure a positive future for Central Texas? (choose three)*

<b>Transportation/Congestion</b>	<b>66.6%</b>
Land Use	34.1%
Cost of Living	30.9%
Water Availability	28.2%
Air Quality	27.8%

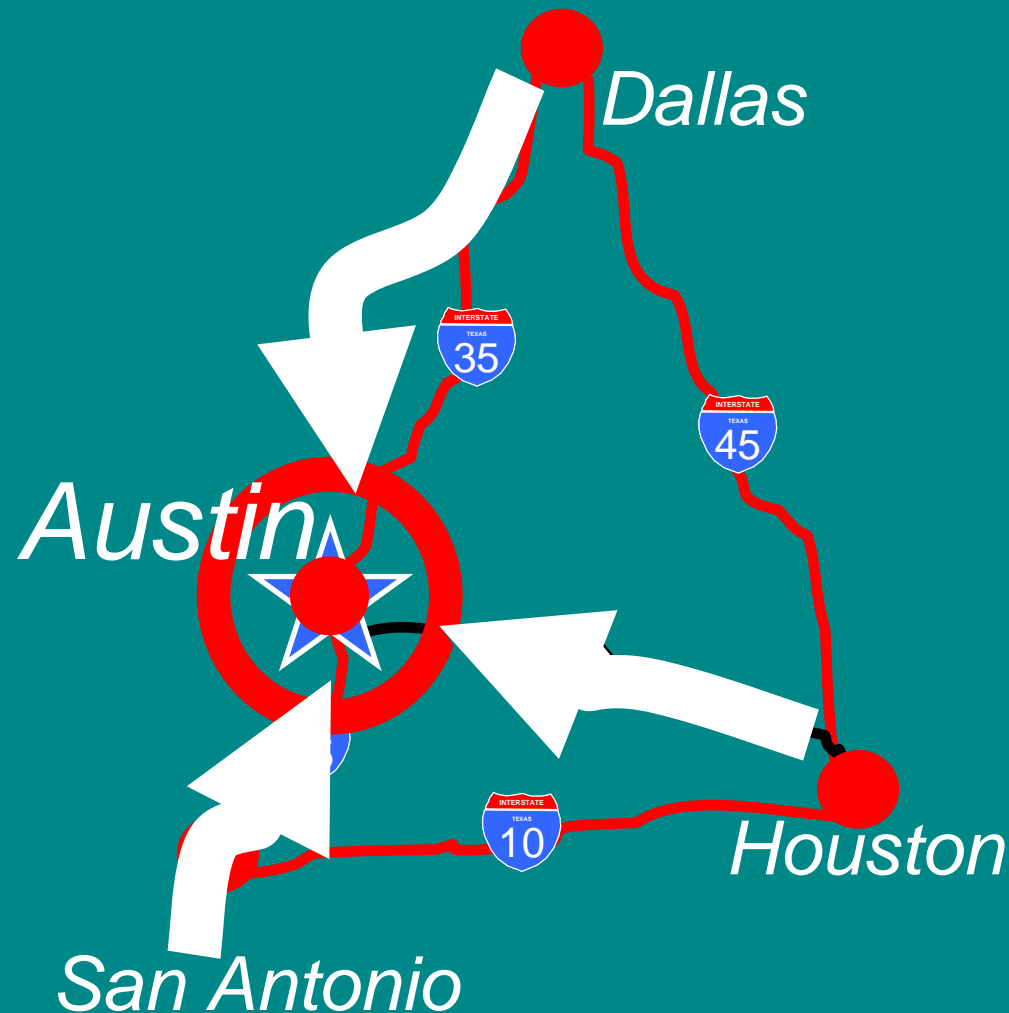


# How do We Think About Transportation?

- State or Super-Regional
- Regional Central Texas
- City of Austin / Core



# Texas Triangle is Growing



# Austin at the Crossroads

- State will grow by 10 Million in 20 years
- A million people are coming to Austin
- Practical hub of state-wide passenger rail investments
- Center for government activity
- Center for creativity and innovation
- Climate and community attributes offer a unique quality of life

# CAMPO 2035 Plan

## Five County Region

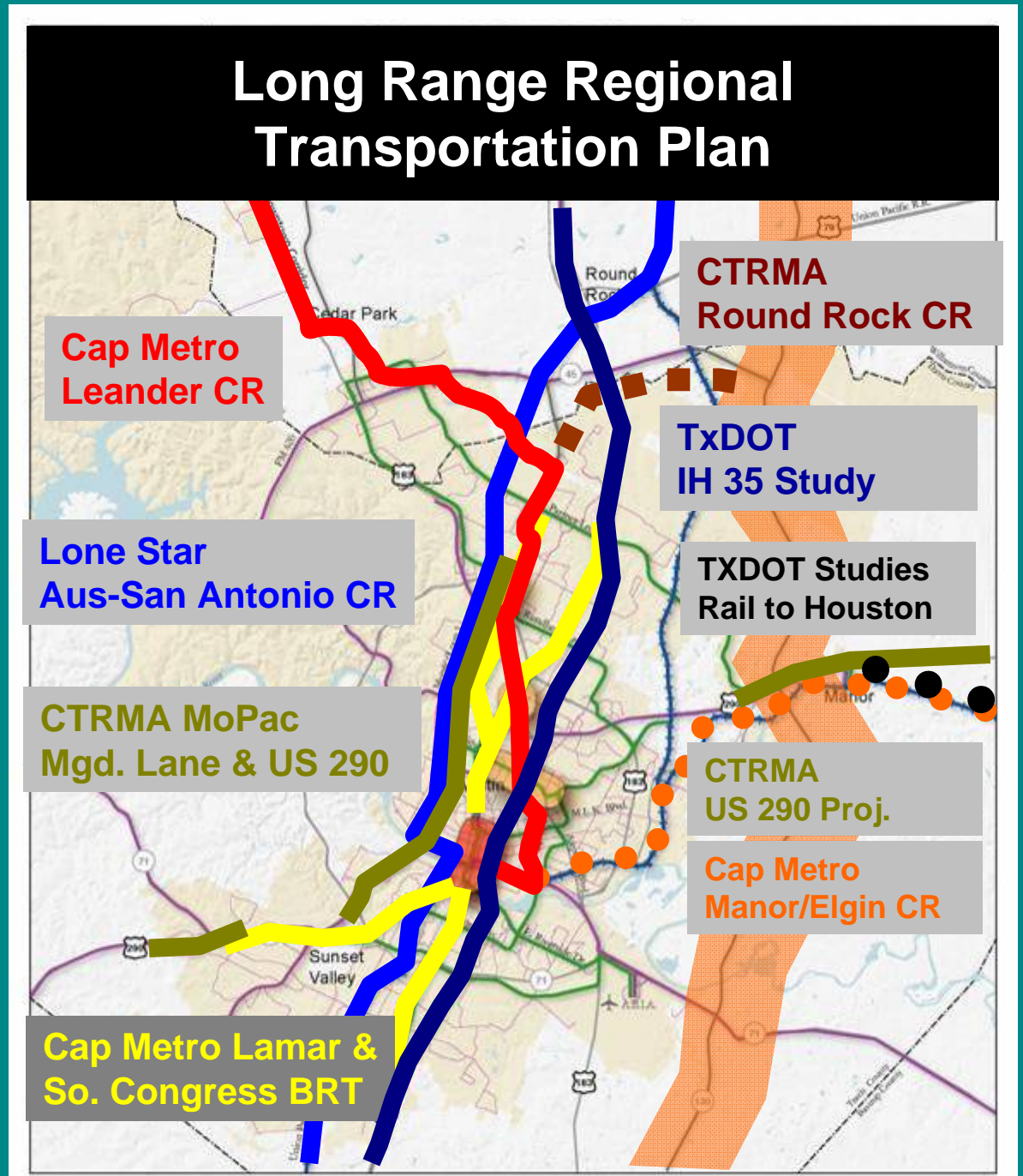
- Growth in population and jobs is coming
- Limited Resources from State and Federal
- Region decided to go in a new direction that balances growth and quality of life (activity centers)





# Regional Partners

- **TxDOT/CTRMA**
  - MoPac Loop 1 Mgd. Lanes
  - US 290 Oak Hill Y
  - Round Rock CR Spur
  - IH 35 Study
  - Rail to Houston
- **Lone Star Rail**
  - Austin-San Antonio Intercity Commuter Rail
- **Capital Metro**
  - MetroRail (Austin to Leander)
  - Metro Rapid (Burnet/Lamar and Lamar/So. Congress Rapid Bus)
  - Future MetroRail (Austin to Manor/Elgin; Georgetown, Pflugerville)
- **Cities/Counties**
  - SH 130
  - Regional arterials





# *Austin Strategic Mobility Plan* Answering our part of the call



# Strategic Mobility Plan Public Outreach



- Define community values with respect to mobility
- Identify gaps within the network
- Define what success looks like
- Tell us what the barriers to success are



# What we've heard so far:

## Values

- Give us more travel choices
- Deliver a sustainable transportation system
- Think environmentally
- Partner with other agencies to assure an integrated system
- Solutions should be cost effective
- Address existing needs, protect future options
- Different problems may need different solutions depending on location





# Austinites Define Success

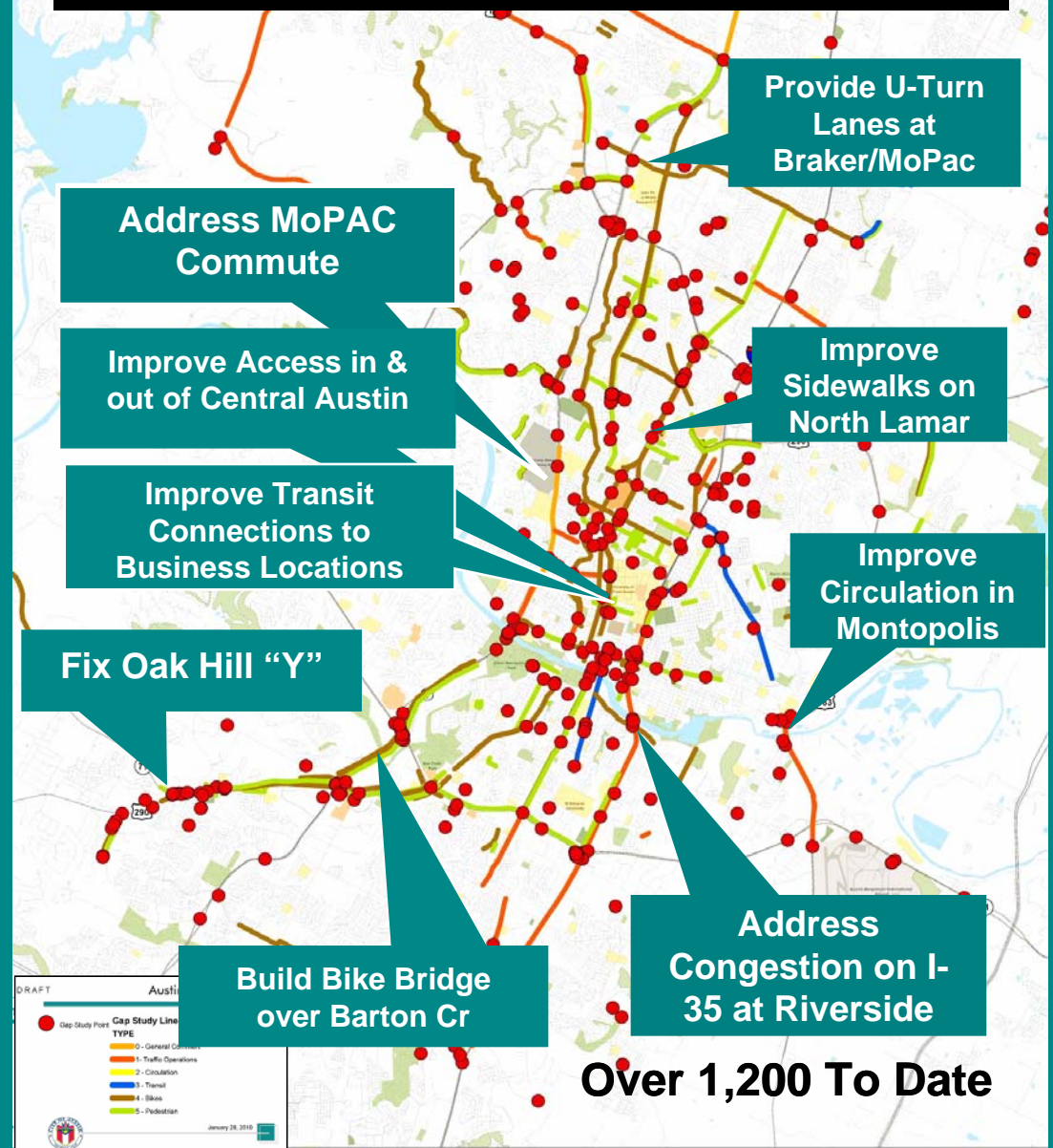
- Regional system – *interagency cooperation, connectivity between modes*
- Choices – we will have a multi-modal travel system; connect to activity centers
- Affordability - % of household income spent on transportation is same or less
- Financial Health – maintain economic viability of city core; ensure healthy transportation system
- Quality of Life – don't increase commute times, protect air and water quality, green space; aesthetically pleasing



# Residents Identify Mobility Gaps

- Over 1,200 gaps identified
- Diverse range of gaps concern citizens
  - Roads and bridges
  - Bicycle facilities
  - Sidewalks
  - Transit facilities
  - Access to key employment centers
  - Transit connectivity

## Many Problems Suggest Many Solutions



# Austinites identify Barriers to Success

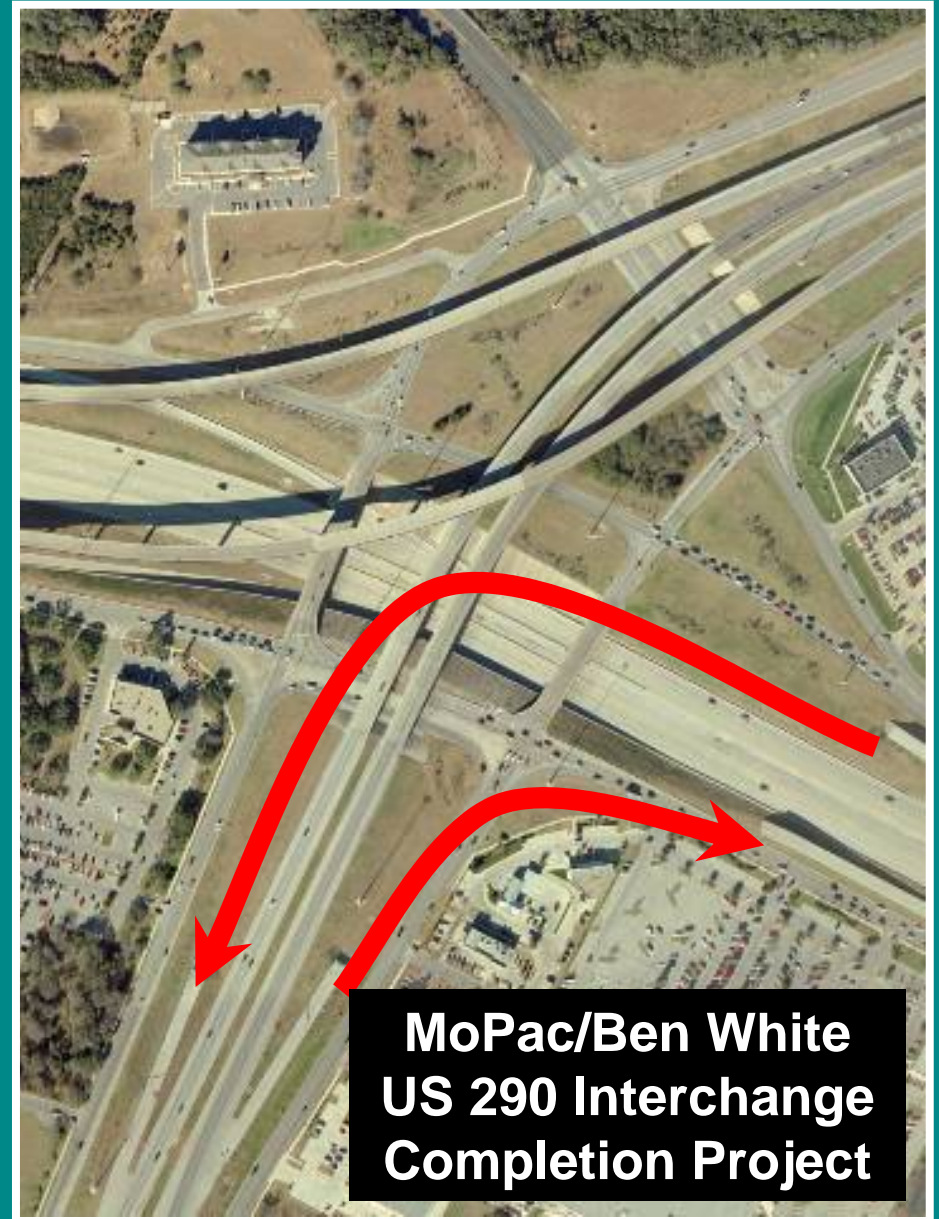
- Where do the funds come from (capital & operations)?
- We need to have strong political leadership
- Silos vs. systems approach
- Competing interests
- Neighborhood concerns vs city wide needs
- Show me what's in it for me
- Need a strong champion
- Concern about deadlines
- Analysis Paralysis





# Austin Launches a Response

- Financing ramps at MoPac/US 290
- Supporting IH 35/US 290 ramp completion project (TxDOT)
- Constructing additional new signals with Federal AARA stimulus funds
- Deploying arterial dynamic message system to provide improved driver information (AARA funding)
- Accelerating & prioritizing arterial roadway projects from previous bond packages (Accelerate Austin)
- Completing parking meter conversion
- Accelerating deployment of Bicycle & Sidewalk Plans
- Supporting vanpool & carpool programs
- Improving coordination with regional transportation partners
- Coordinating construction activities with mobility needs





# Why Consider Roads and Trails as part of solution

## *Identifying the right tool for the mobility need*

- Oak Hill Y Alternative Project (partnership with TxDOT, CMTA and CTRMA)
- MoPac Managed Lane and Sound Wall Project (partnership with TxDOT & CTRMA)
- SH 130 Connector Arterial Completion (partnership with Travis Co., TxDOT)
- IH 35 Improved Ramping and frontage road modifications to reduce downtown stacking of traffic on main lanes
- Spicewood Springs Rd reconstruction (Loop 1 to Loop 360)



- US 183/Ed Bluestein Road - various intersections upgrades
- Montopolis – improved access
- Extension of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to the west

# Why Consider Roads and Trails as part of solution

## *Identifying the right tool for the mobility need*

- Barton Creek Bike & pedestrian bridge beneath MoPac/Loop 1
- Completion of Boardwalk on Lady Bird Lake Trail
- Airport Boulevard Pedestrian Improvements
- Safe Routes to Schools – pedestrian investments throughout city
- Expanded use of innovative bicycle lane markings at major intersections to improve safety
- N. Lamar Pedestrian improvements
- Improved pedestrian access to transit stops
- Waller Creek trail system

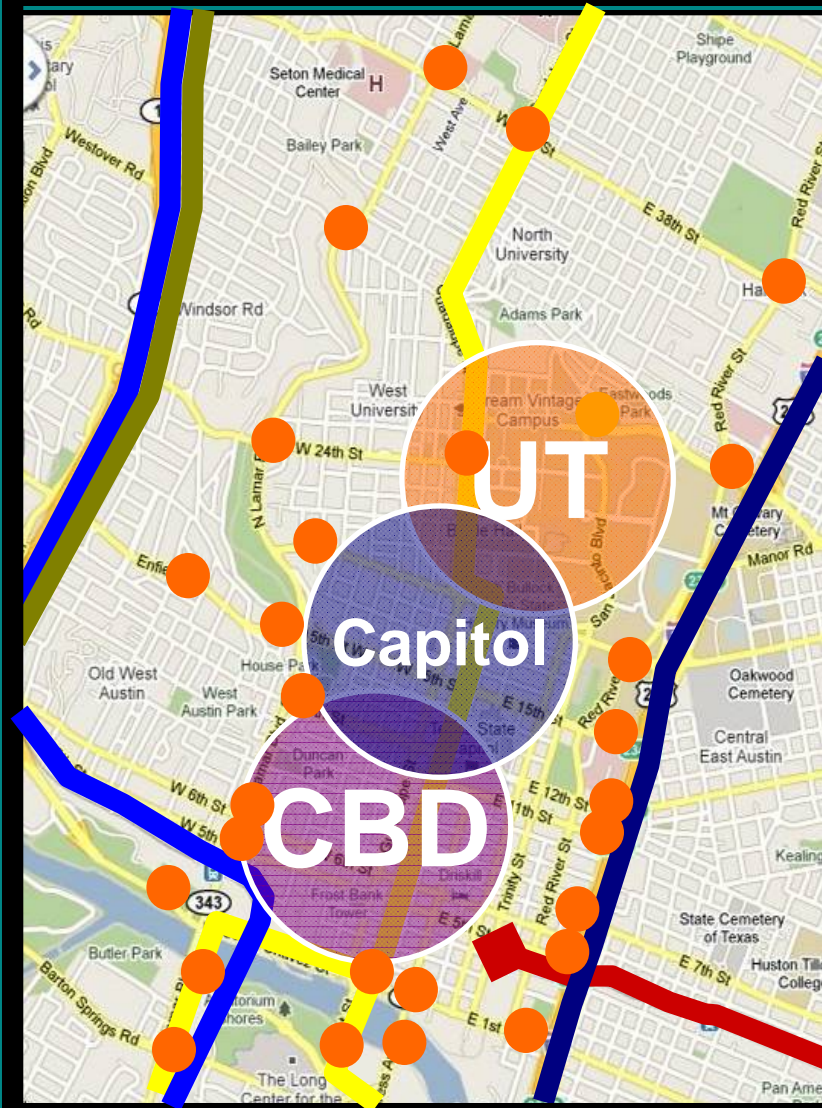


# Why Consider Urban Rail

## Central Austin is Constrained by Mobility Choke Points

- **Choke Points:**
  - Lamar Blvd; Barton Springs; SB Fr. Road IH 35; 38<sup>th</sup> St.
- **Issue:**
  - Key economic drivers are located within core
  - Roadway capacity in/out is full
  - Economic sustainability constrained by lack of alternatives
  - Regional network solutions have to be here

## Long Range Regional Transportation Plan



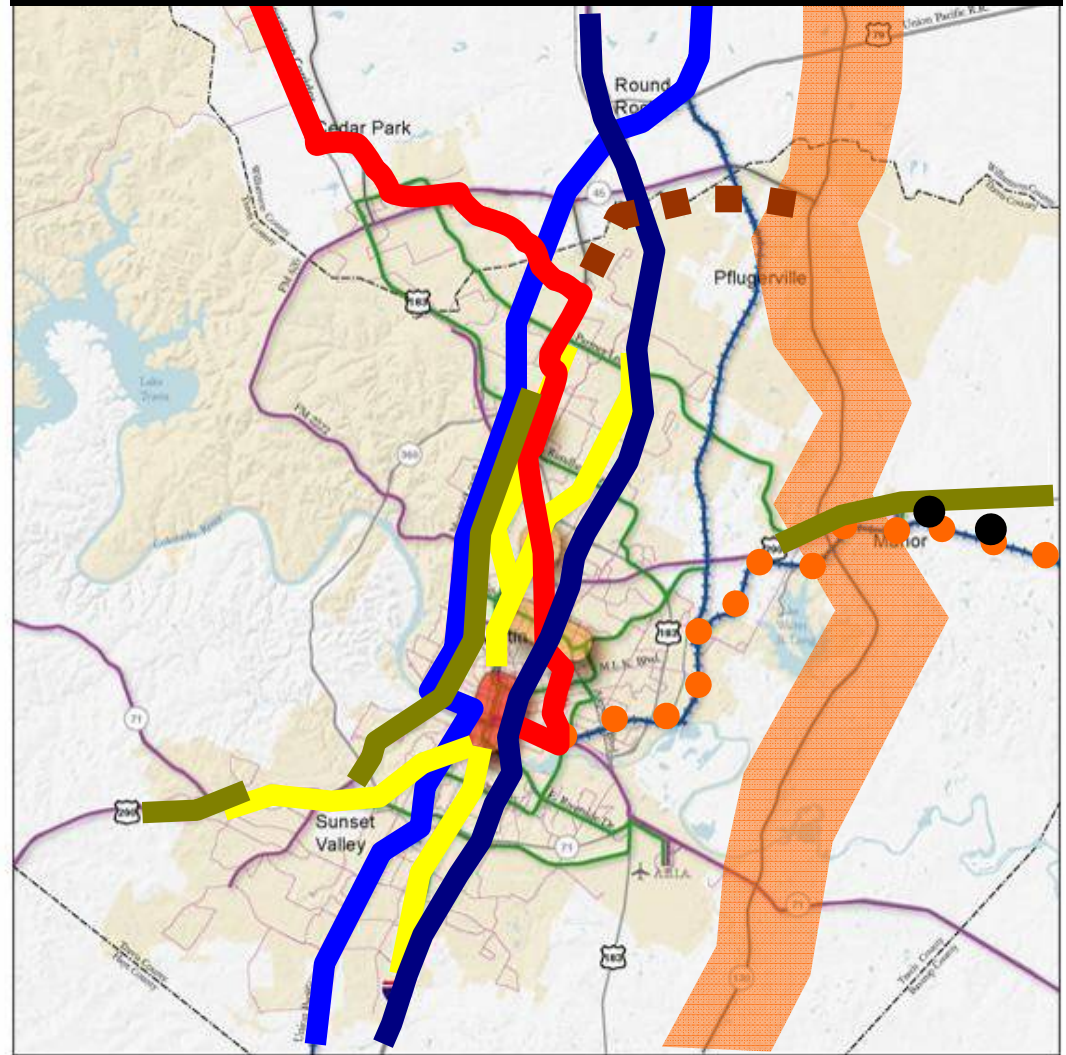
● Mobility pinch points



# Why Consider Urban Rail

- Regional investment by partners need to be connected at core
- Roadways are full getting into the core
- Right-of-way opportunities are limited
- Multiple users making demand on corridors
- Rail is seen as an attractive alternative to automobiles
  - Attracts new riders
  - Encourages economic activity
  - Environmentally sustainable

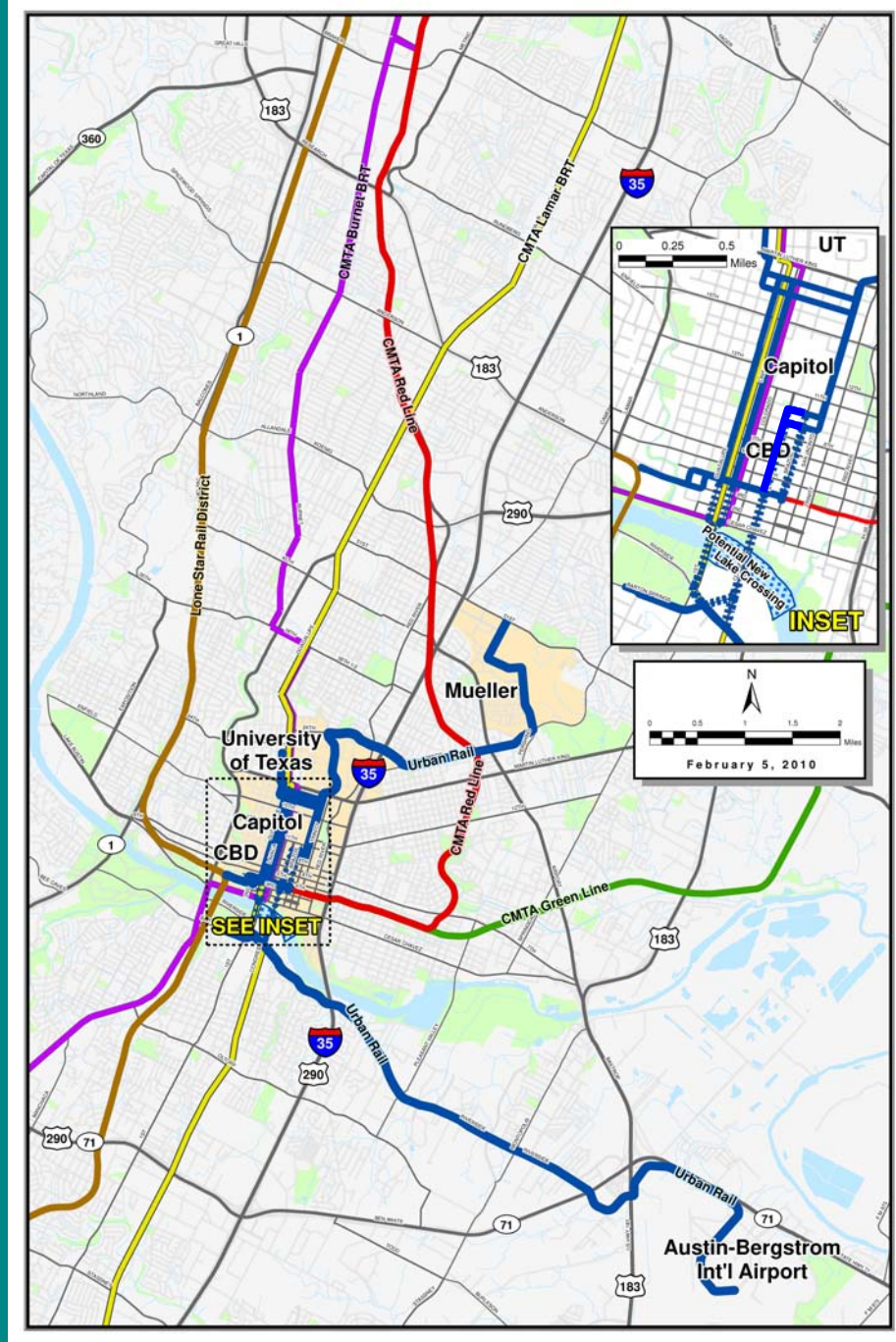
## Long Range Regional Transportation Plan





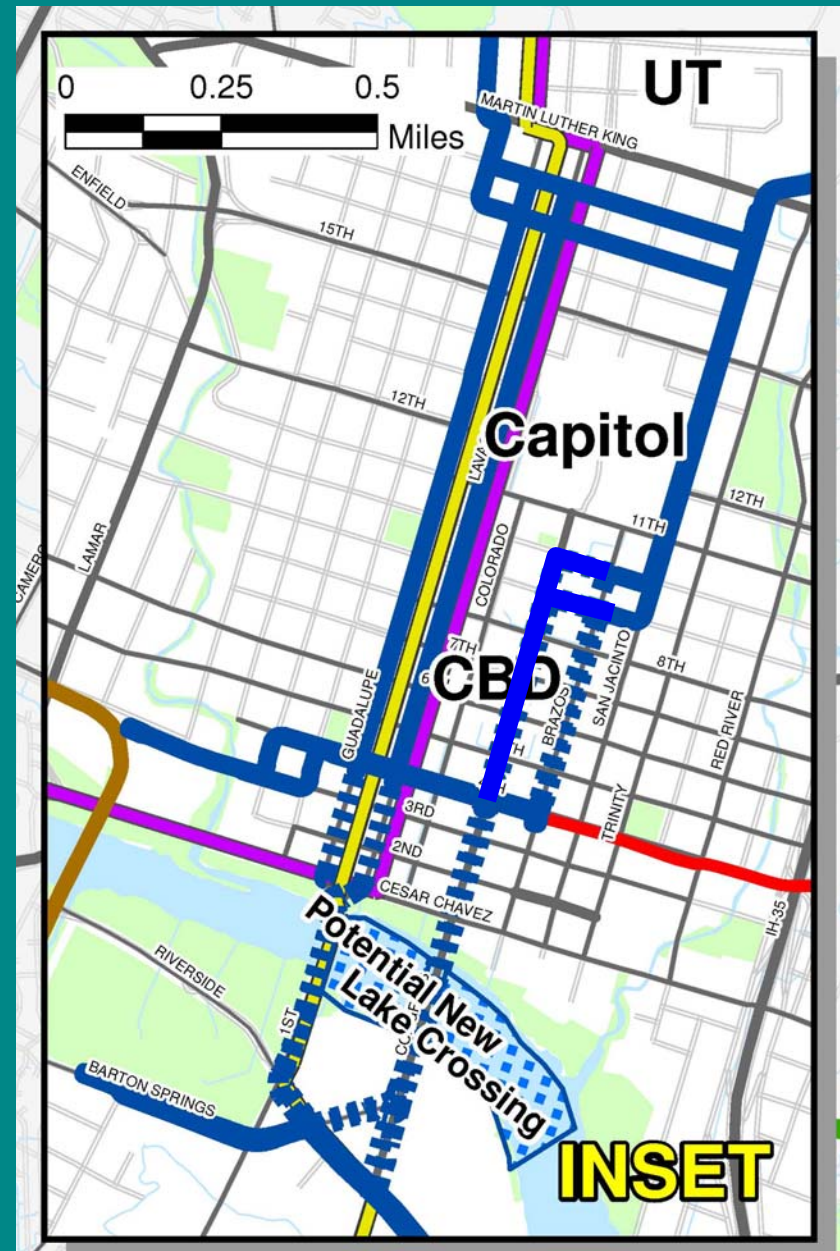
# Proposed Urban Rail Corridors

- Mueller to ABIA
- Connect with emerging commuter rail service
  - Capital Metro Red Line
  - Lone Star Rail
- Serve major employment destinations
  - UT
  - Capitol Complex
  - Downtown
  - ABIA
- Serve major residential and cultural destinations
  - Mueller
  - Manor Road Corridor
  - Riverside Corridor
  - Sea Holm & Green Water developments
  - Palmer Center

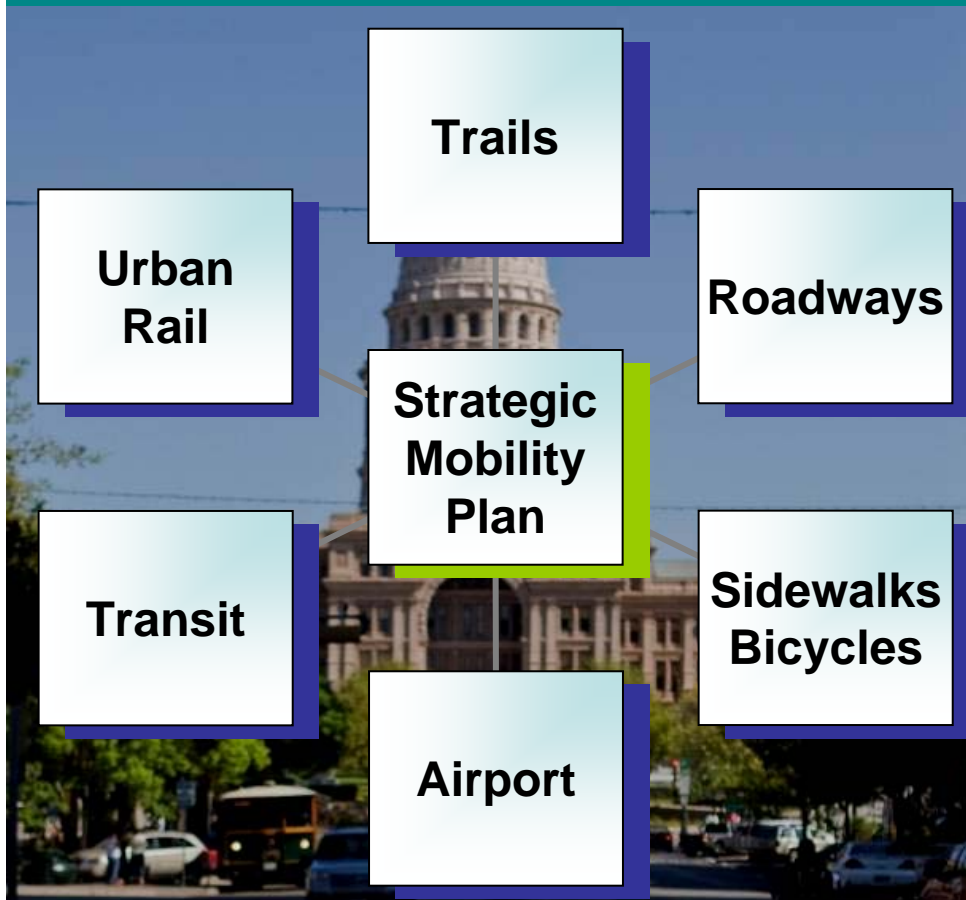


# Proposed Urban Rail Corridors

- Two north-south corridors
  - Congress/San Jacinto
  - Guadalupe and Lavaca couplet
- Two east-west corridors
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Street (council designated rail corridor)
  - 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> Street couplet
- River crossing
  - Existing bridges
  - New bridge
- Connection to LSTAR at Seaholm
- Connection Center to Redline at Convention Station



# Strategic Mobility Planning



- Austin has a **generational opportunity to invest in our economic vitality & sustainability**
  - Identified problems call for a system response
  - No single solution solves all problems
  - Local investments should reflect local values and regional responsibilities



# Transportation Program Schedule

## March

- Joint Boards and Commissions: Mobility Briefing
- City Council: Prioritization Methodology Report

## April

- ***April 8th*** – City Council: Mobility Needs Briefing
- ***Apr. 12-15*** -Community Mobility Forums (Round 2)
- ***Mid Apr*** - CAMPO Transit Working Group Mobility Needs
- ***Mid Apr*** - Joint Boards and Commissions Mobility Needs
- ***Apr. 21 (work session)*** - City Council: City's General Fund Financial Forecast
- ***April 22*** – City Council Locally Preferred Alternative Briefing
- ***Apr. 29*** – City Council: Transportation Program Funding Plan (Long term plan + Initial System Investment) Briefing

## May

- ***Mid May*** - CAMPO Transit Working Group: Funding Plan
- ***Mid May*** - Joint Boards and Commissions: Funding Plan
- ***May 27*** – City Council: Transportation Program LPA and Funding Plan (Initial System Investment) Decision