

**RESOLUTION NO. 20130620-**

**WHEREAS**, the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) is currently considering mobility improvements to the Central Texas IH-35 corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, the current concepts under consideration include leaving the structure as it is (a no-build alternative), elevating parts or all of the highway (elevated alternative), and recessing all or parts of the highway (recessed alternative); and

**WHEREAS**, community stakeholders have brought forward a scenario known as the IH-35 Cut & Cap or Reconnect Austin, which entails recessing a portion or all of the highway and constructing a cap over sections to connect East and West Austin through the edges of downtown from approximately River Street to Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard; and

**WHEREAS**, a shorter, but otherwise comparable project was recently completed successfully in Dallas where a cap was built over the recessed Woodall Rodgers Freeway between Pearl and St. Paul streets to create a new park known as Klyde Warren Park that connects downtown Dallas with Uptown; and

**WHEREAS**, a Cut & Cap alternative for IH-35 could support the community goals in Austin's recently adopted Imagine Austin

Comprehensive Plan and could offer social, connectivity, urban design and economic benefits, in addition to transportation and mobility benefits; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin has demonstrated its commitment to reconnecting East and West Austin through major projects such as the adjacent Waller Creek Revitalization; and

**WHEREAS**, a Cut & Cap scenario alternative has been presented by community leaders to a variety of stakeholders and has generated considerable interest and support including from the Austin Revitalization Authority, Downtown Austin Alliance, Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association, Rainey Street Neighborhood Association, Cherrywood Neighborhood Association, Real Estate Council of Austin and the Central Texas Chapters of the Sierra Club, American Institute of Architects, and Congress for New Urbanism; and

**WHEREAS**, the TXDOT Rider 42 working group approved inclusion of the Reconnect Austin Cut & Cap concept in their transportation modeling efforts for IH-35; and

**WHEREAS**, the viability of Cut & Cap options depends greatly on the strength of the overall economic enhancement created by recessing the freeway, reducing the negative environmental impacts from the current traffic

uses and potentially reclaiming transportation rights of way for new economic opportunities; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

The City of Austin supports the inclusion into the Texas Department of Transportation's IH-35 NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) study process of a fully recessed 'Cut & Cap' alternative for reconnecting East and West Austin between approximately River Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard which maximizes the opportunities for any capped facilities; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,**

The City Manager is directed to engage a professional services firm to perform an economic analysis and provide financing options associated with Cut & Cap scenarios. A preliminary analysis should be prepared for the Rider 42 meeting in July, if feasible, and a full report to Council within 90 days.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,**

The City Manager is directed to present updates on both the mobility and economic studies of IH-35 to the Urban Transportation Commission and Downtown Commission and report feedback and comments to the City Council.

**ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2013    **ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Jeannette Goodall  
City Clerk