

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, TxDOT is studying I-35 from Georgetown to Buda in a process referred to as Mobility 35; and

WHEREAS, the I-35 Capital Area Improvement Program (CAIP) currently being conducted by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to rebuild the downtown Austin segment (Segment 5) of I-35; and

WHEREAS, in October 2013, Senator Watson helped appoint representatives of community groups to participate in the I-35 Downtown Stakeholder Working Group to recommend solutions to mobility, safety and connectivity challenges along the interstate corridor in the downtown Area; and

WHEREAS, this represents an opportunity to not only improve congestion, but also make central Austin safe and more connected, in keeping with Austin's community vision outlined in the adopted *Imagine Austin* Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the placement of entrance and exit ramps has a significant impact on the freeway's overall design, as well as the possibility to reconnect cross streets for all modes of transportation; and

WHEREAS, there are millions of square feet of residential, hotel, office and retail projects now in the planning stages and under construction in downtown and in east Austin; and

WHEREAS, depressing the main lanes of I-35 provides future opportunities for caps (or lids); and

WHEREAS, TxDOT's work on Klyde Warren Park cap in Dallas is now seen as a huge economic and cultural generator for the region; and

WHEREAS, TxDOT's current I-35 CAIP Implementation Plan shows one alternative with the main lanes of I-35 depressed below grade through downtown.; and

WHEREAS, since 1997, Austin community and grassroots organizations have been vocally advocating for a depressed I-35 through downtown Austin, including a formal request from the Downtown Austin Alliance which notes the DAA's primary priority with regard to the design of I-35: "Remove the barrier to East Austin and reconnect the grid with depressed traffic lanes;" and

WHEREAS, community groups representing 23,000 citizens of Austin again wrote letters to TxDOT in 2013 requesting further study of depressing and potentially capping I-35; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin and the Urban Land Institute will be doing a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) on I-35 through downtown per Resolution 20140807-100 scheduled for February, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Austin, both now and for the past 17 years, have indicated a strong and documented preference for TxDOT's "Depressed" Alternative and rejected TxDOT's "Modified Existing" Alternative also known as the elevated alternative; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City Manager is directed to communicate the City of Austin's preference that the "Modified Existing" Alternative, also known as the elevated version, not proceed in the National Environmental Policy Act, "NEPA", process.

Further, the City Manager is directed to request a briefing from TxDOT for a presentation and consideration of recommendations of the Downtown Stakeholder Working Group on November 20, 2015.

ADOPTED: _____, 2014

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk