



Catch it.

LONE STAR RAIL DISTRICT

Hill Country Alliance Presentation

September 24, 2015

Lone Star Regional Rail – Strategic Considerations

- Lone Star Rail District
- Connectivity/Mobility Issues



LONE STAR RAIL DISTRICT

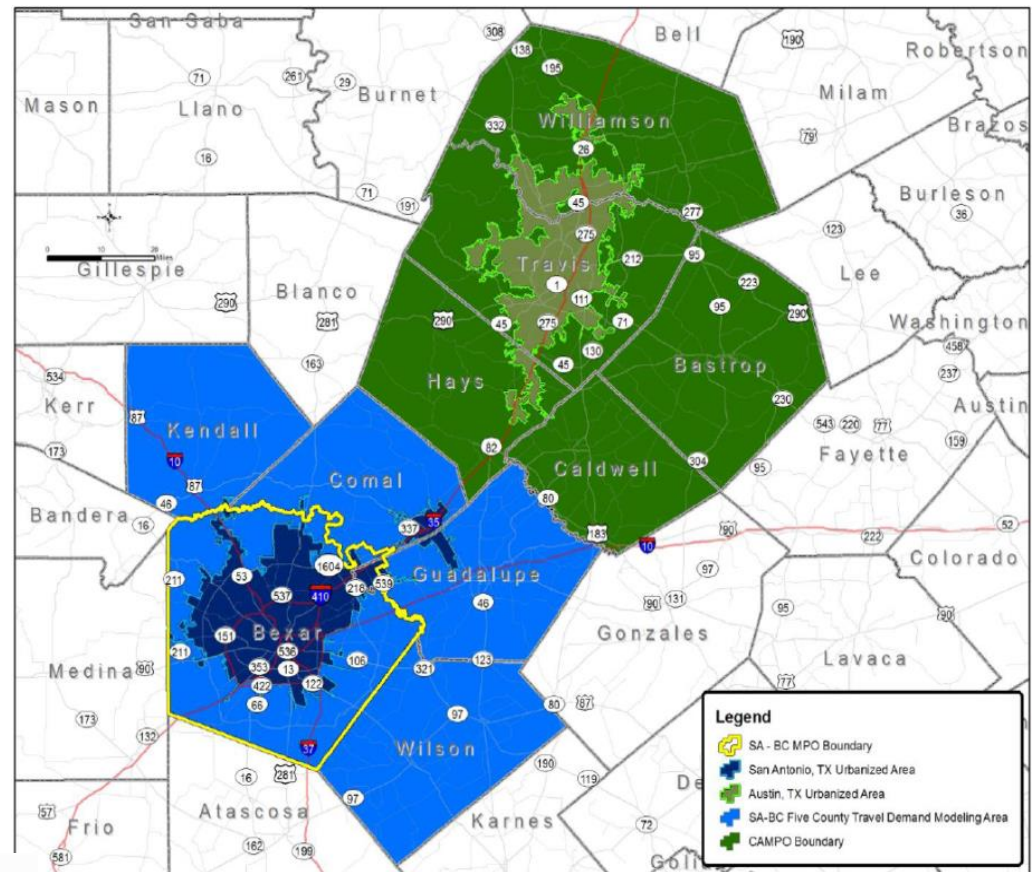
Lone Star Regional Rail – Strategic Considerations

➤ Lone Star Rail District

LONE STAR RAIL DISTRICT

Lone Star Rail District (LSRD)

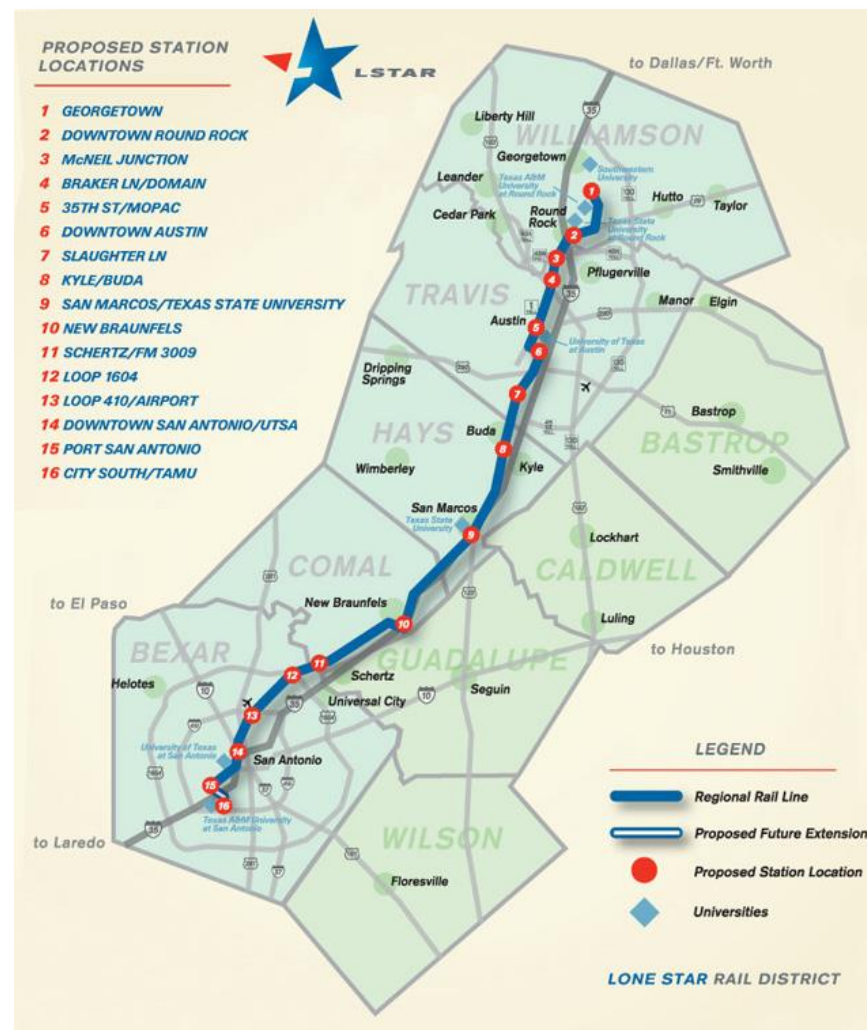
- Independent entity authorized by State of Texas
- Created by cities of Austin & San Antonio and counties of Bexar & Travis in 2003
- San Antonio area has 7 of the 23 seats on the District's Board of Directors
- Mission: Establish regular passenger rail service between Austin and San Antonio



LONE STAR RAIL DISTRICT

LSRD Board of Directors

- **Region's Board Representation:** 23 members representing the political leadership and business community of Central/South Texas, plus "at large" members appointed by the TxTC.
 - **Cities:** Georgetown, Austin, San Marcos, New Braunfels, Schertz, San Antonio
 - **Counties:** Williamson, Travis, Bastrop, Hays, Caldwell, Bexar
 - **Transit Agencies:** Capital Metro, CARTS, VIA, ART
 - **MPOs:** CAMPO, AA MPO
 - **Community College Districts:** ACCD

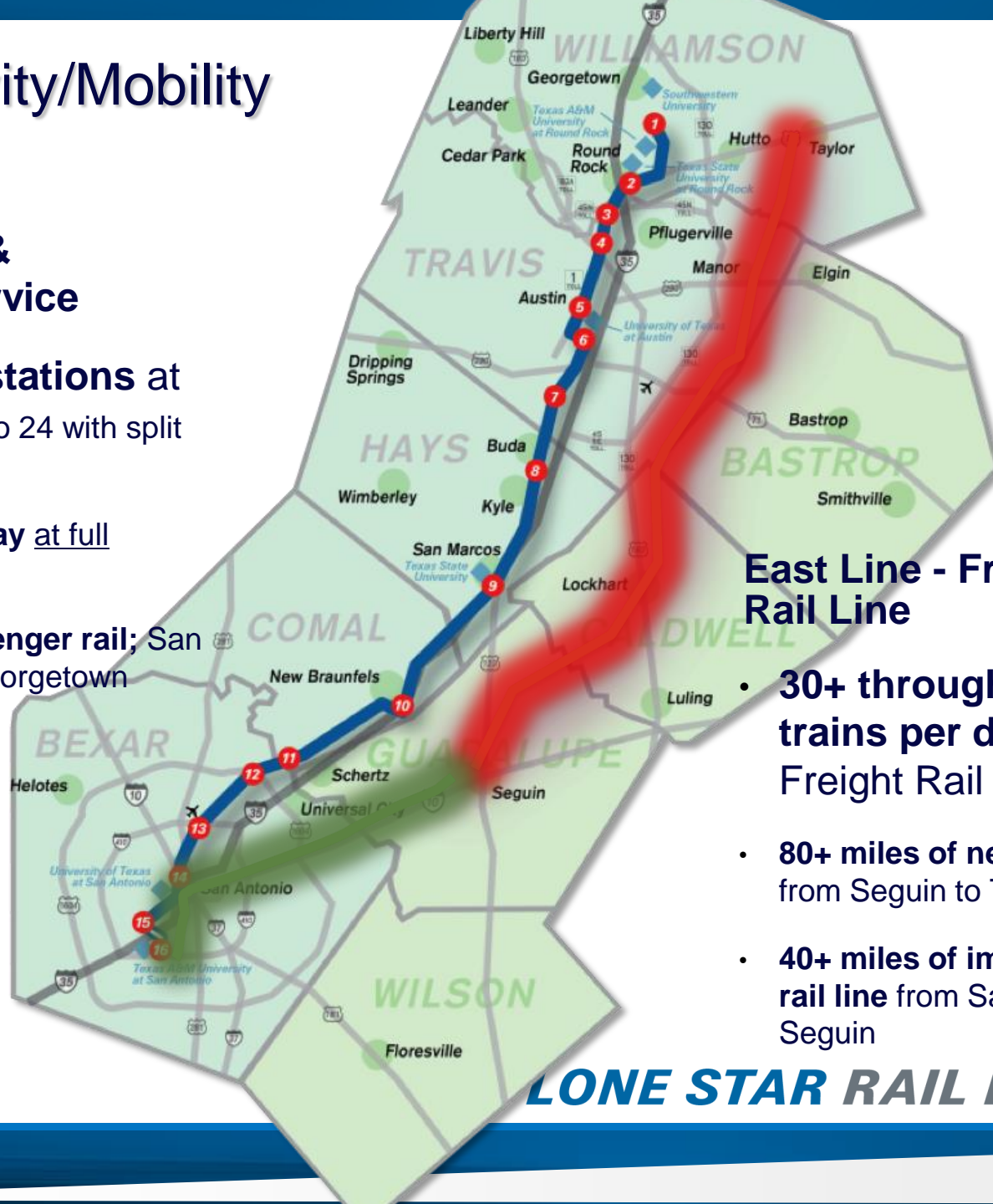


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Connectivity/Mobility

LSTAR Line

- **Local freight & passenger service**
- **Originally 16 stations at full service** (up to 24 with split stations service)
- **32 round trips a day at full service**
- **118 miles of passenger rail**; San Antonio north to Georgetown

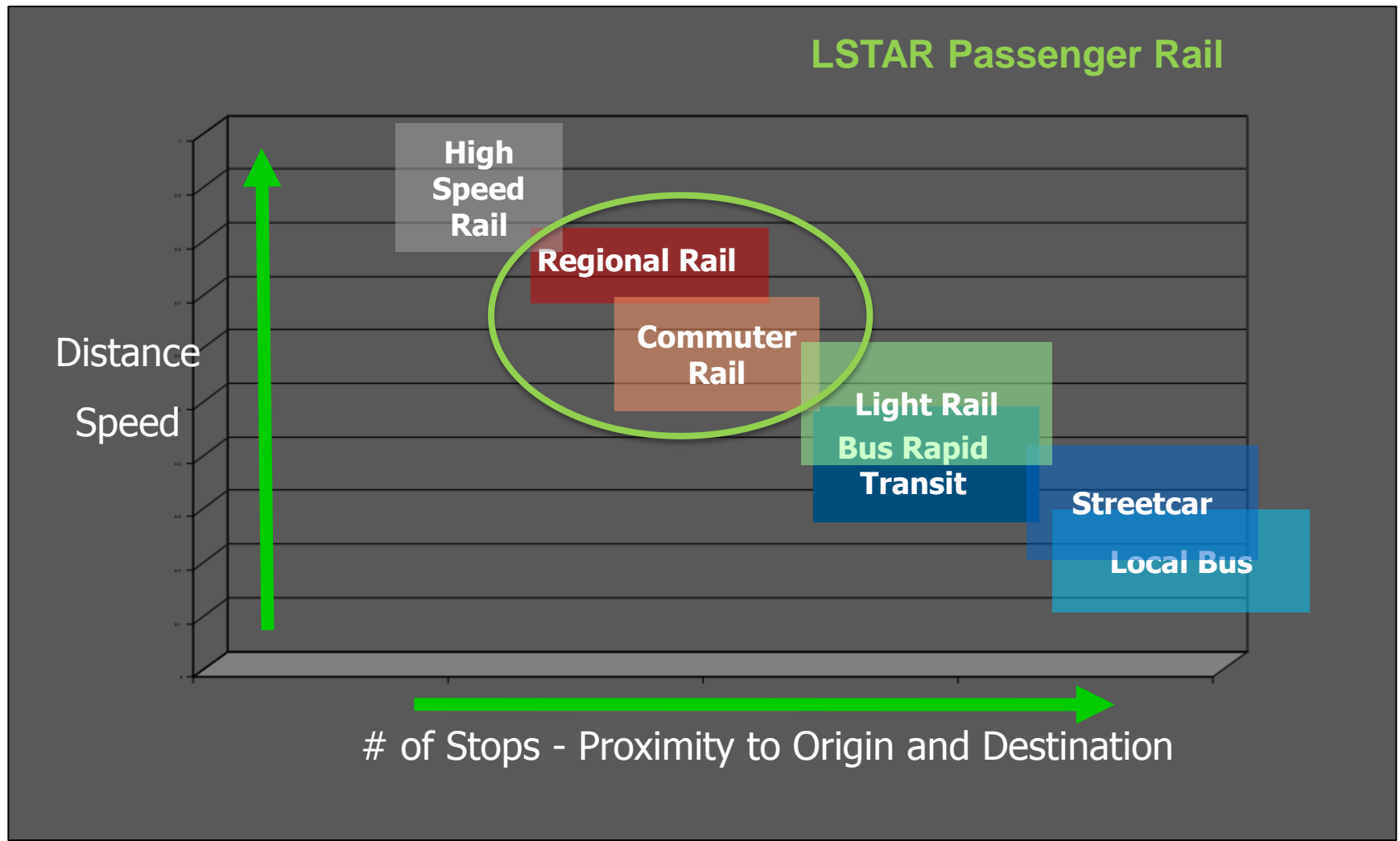


East Line - Freight Rail Line

- **30+ through freight trains per day rerouted to Freight Rail Line**
- **80+ miles of new freight rail line** from Seguin to Taylor
- **40+ miles of improved freight rail line** from San Antonio to Seguin

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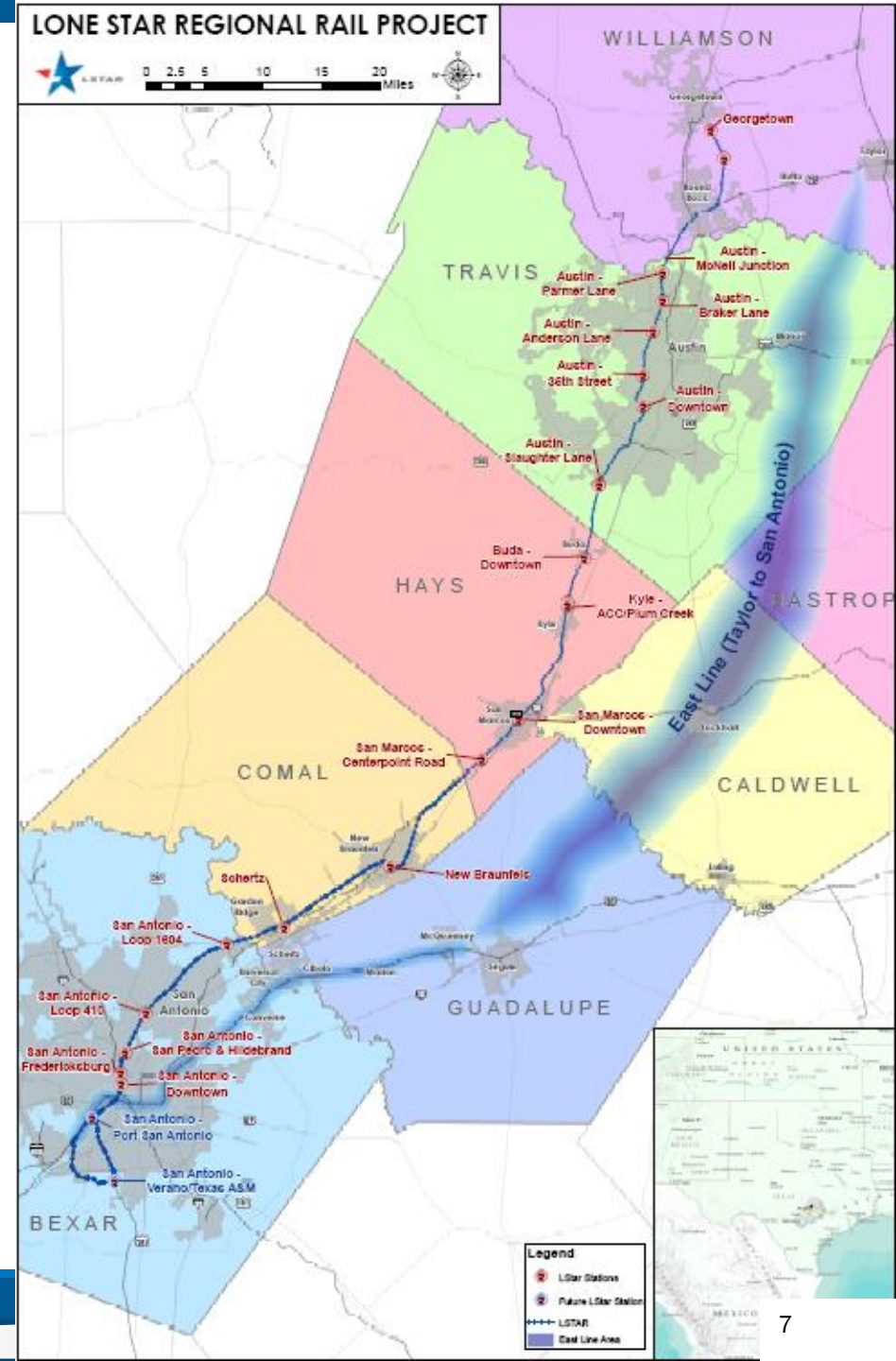
Connectivity/Mobility - Finding the Right Fit



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LSTAR – Potential Stations

- Georgetown (1)
- Round Rock (TBD, 1-2)
- Austin (7)
- Buda (1)
- Kyle (1)
- San Marcos (2)
- New Braunfels (1)
- Schertz (1)
- San Antonio Stations (7)



Lone Star Regional Rail – East Line for Through Freight

Regional Mobility/Access

- Relocation of UP reduces freight rail traffic in city centers
 - “Through” freight trains are longer & slower
(1-2 miles long; avg. 20 mph or less)
 - Passenger trains are shorter & faster (max. 8 cars; avg. 60 mph)
 - Moves “through freight” trains to East Line (approx. 30-40 trains/day)
 - Remaining local freight stays in the corridor (no loss of service)

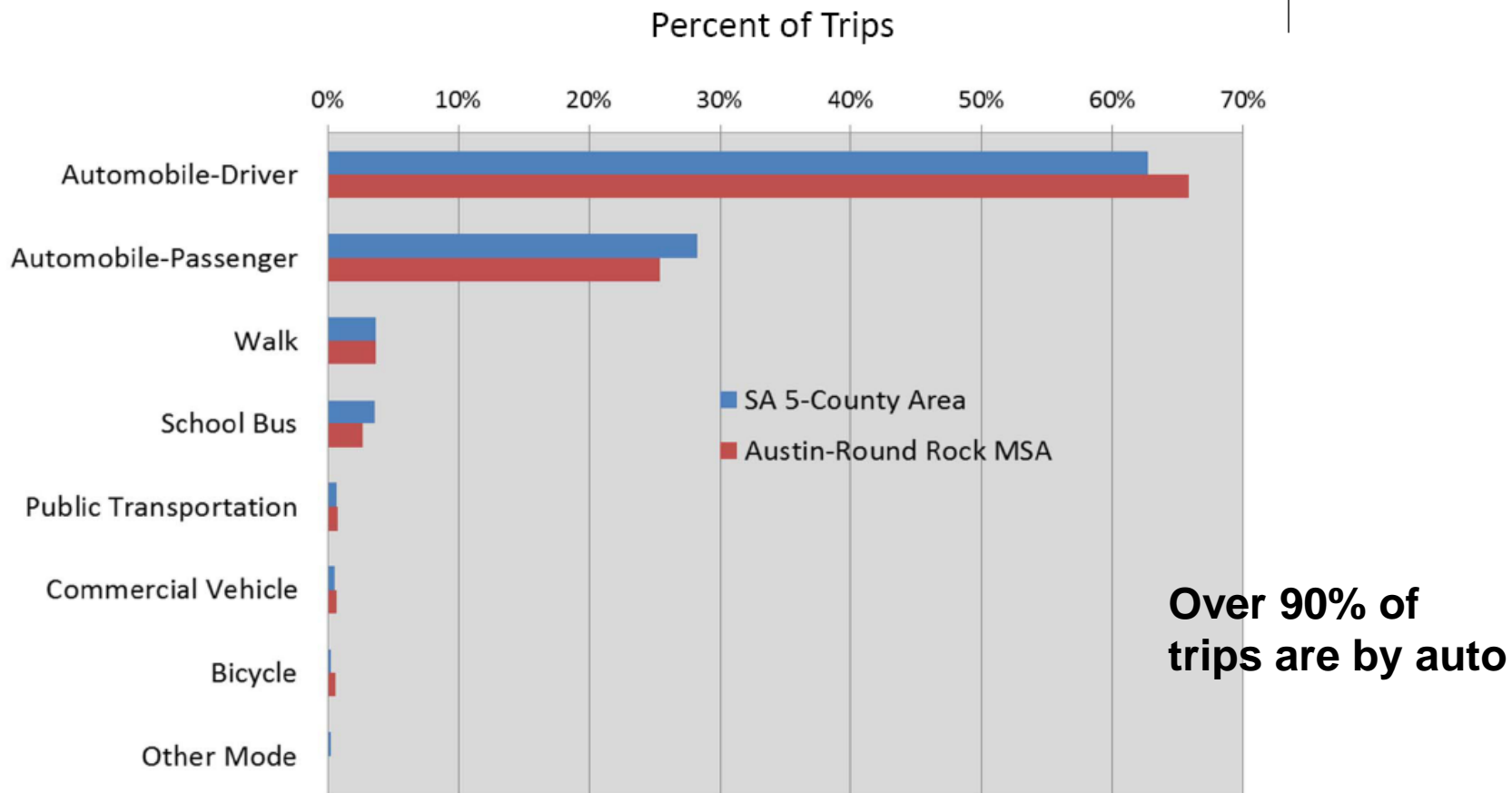


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Lone Star Regional Rail – Strategic Considerations

- **Connectivity/Mobility Issues**

Travel by Mode

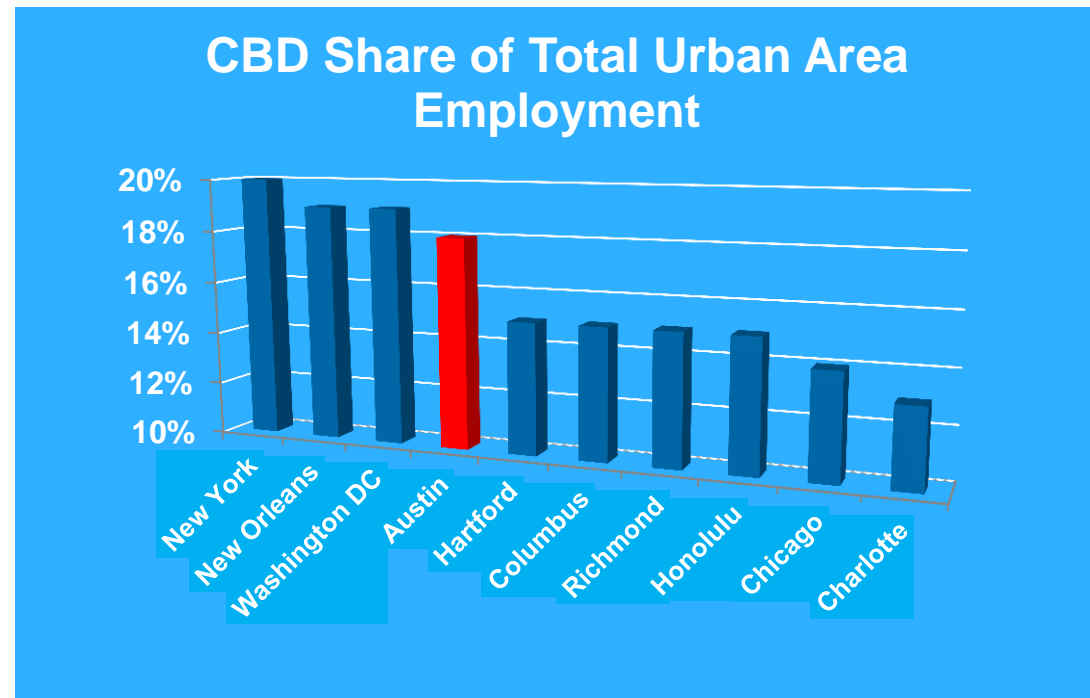


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Connectivity/Mobility

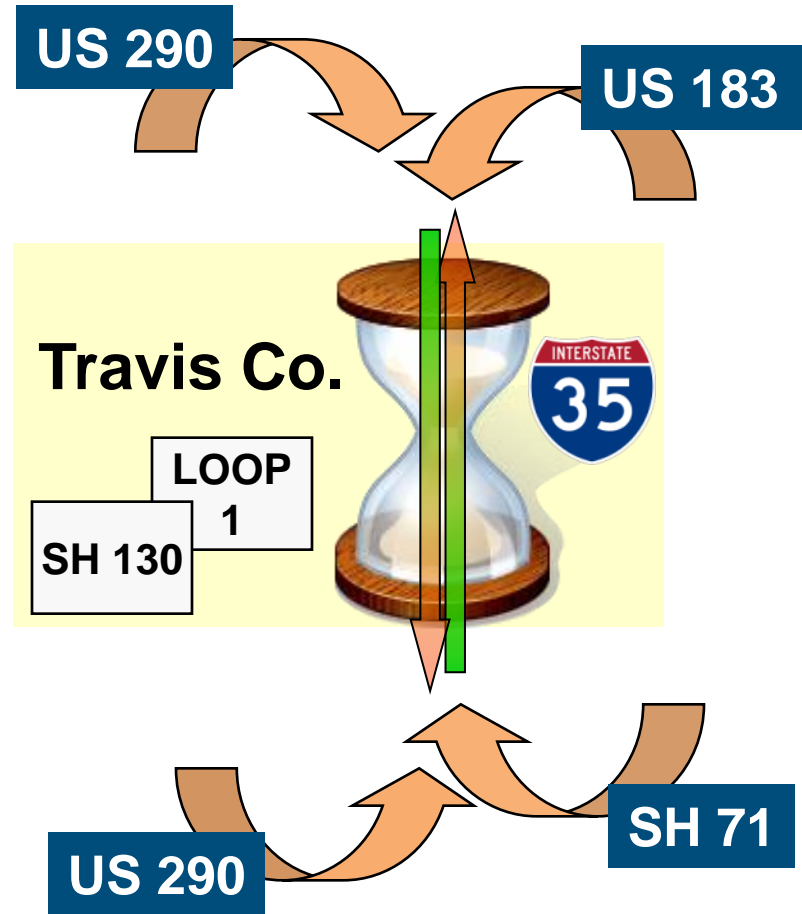
Austin Employment/Activity Concentration in Core

- 2009: nearly 30% of all jobs in the Austin region were located in 78701, 78703, 78704, 78705
- 51,000 students at UT (80% live off campus) and approximately 9,000 at ACC's Rio Grande campus downtown
- 2000: nearly 18% of all jobs in Austin Region were located in Austin's downtown
 - 4th highest % in the nation



Connectivity/Mobility

2009-2011 CAMPO Daily Work Trips		
	<u>Trips</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Hays County</u>		
To Travis Co.	28,880	45%
<u>Travis County</u>		
In County	456,627	92%
<u>Williamson County</u>		
To Travis Co.	89,703	48%
<u>Bastrop County</u>		
To Travis Co.	15,872	55%
<u>Caldwell</u>		
To Travis Co.	4,506	34%
Total Trips	791,504	
Travis Co. Trips	595,588	75%

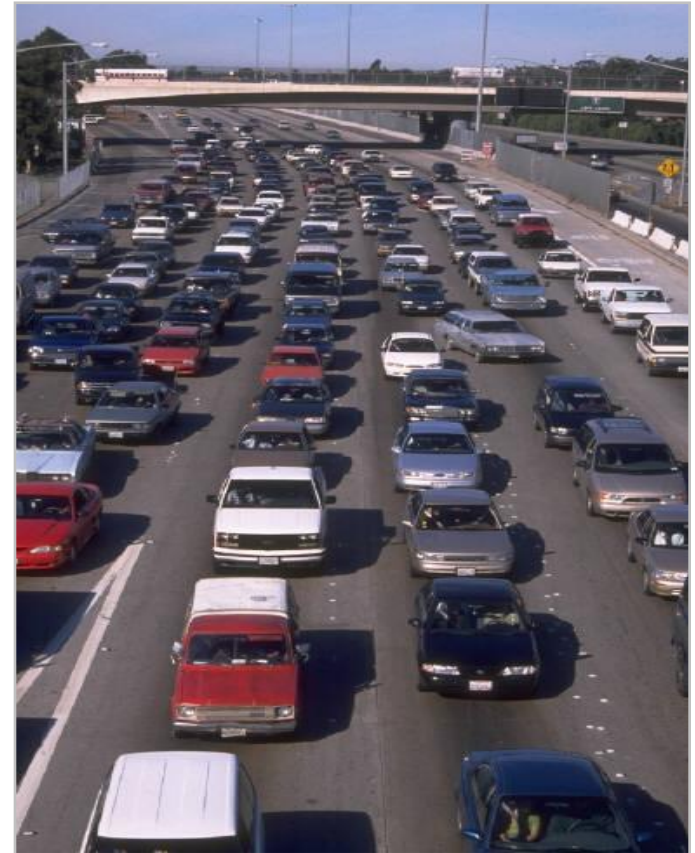


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Connectivity/Mobility

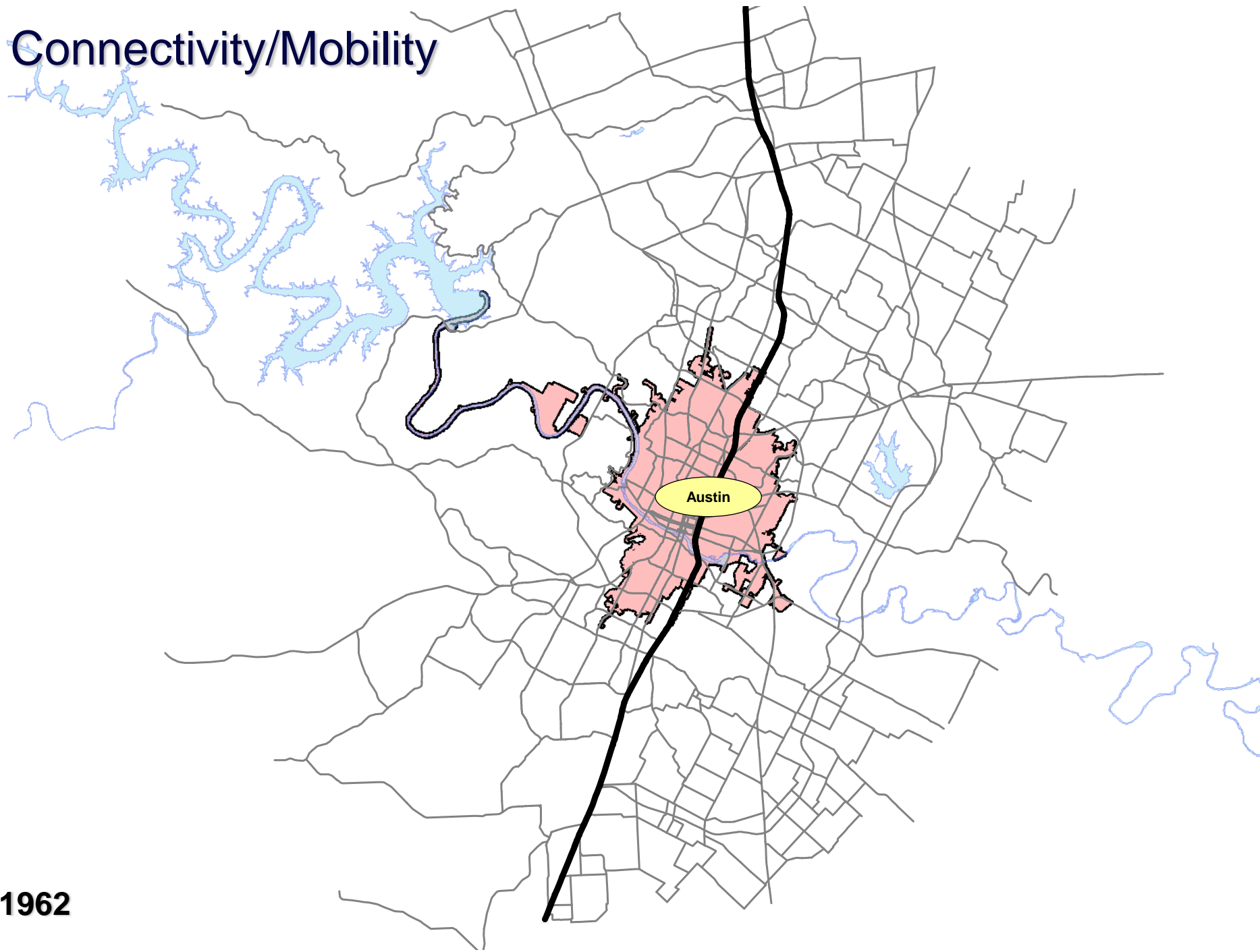
Highway expansion capability is limited

- Right of way established in 1950-1970s
- Alamo Area MPO anticipates adding one million in population
 - Traffic model - avg. daily transportation system capacity overwhelmed between 2020 and 2040
- Capital Area MPO data – 12-14 additional southern lanes needed by 2035



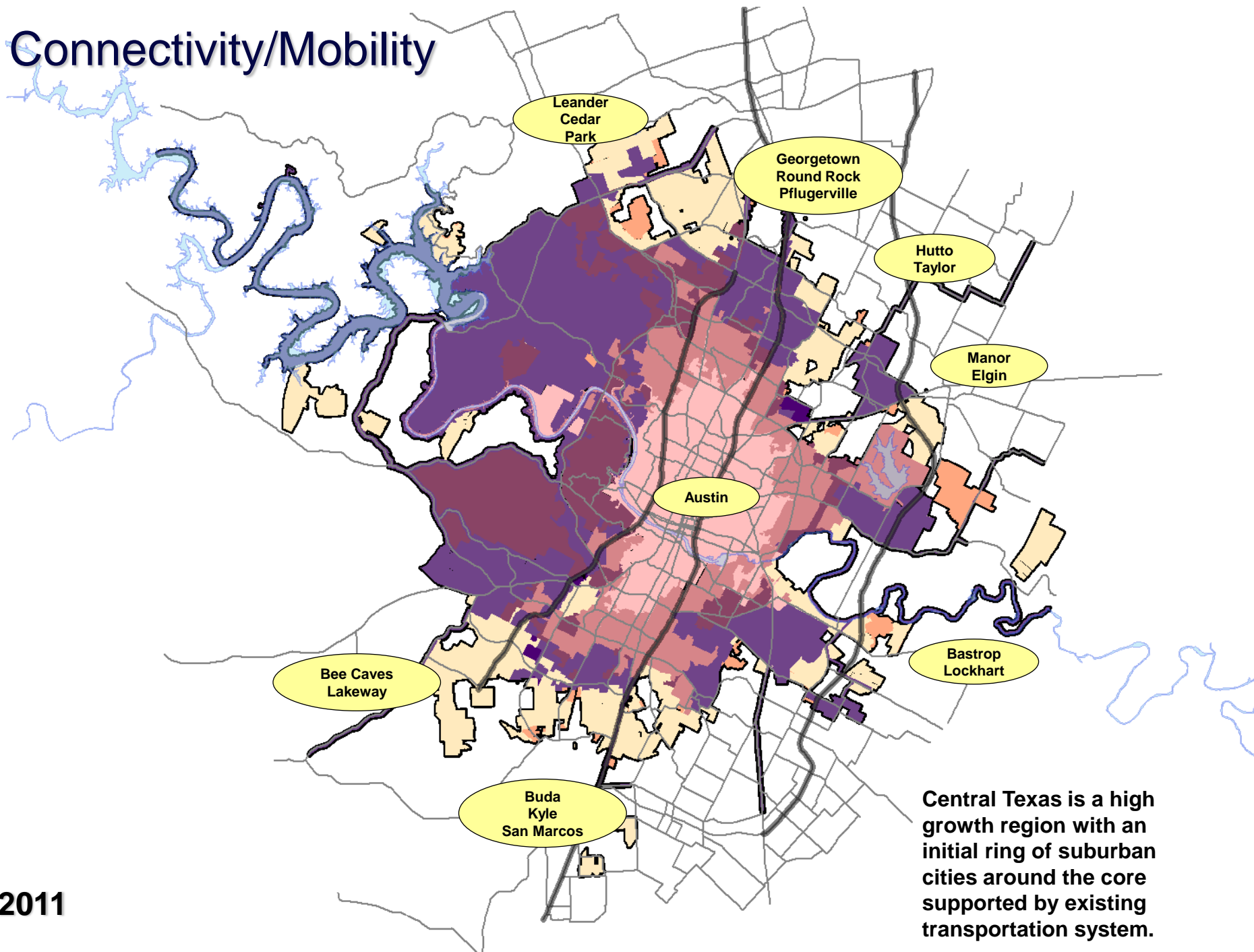
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Connectivity/Mobility



1962

Connectivity/Mobility



Connectivity/Mobility



- Limited capacity in IH 35 corridor
 - IH 35 demand above capacity during morning and evening peaks
 - Peak periods forecast to lengthen

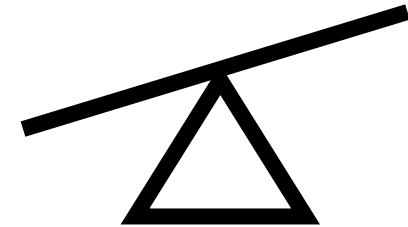
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Connectivity/Mobility

What We've Learned from Other Cities...

✓ **Community Tipping Point**

- 30 minute trip
 - 2 million regional population
- Congestion builds, mobility is limited



✓ **Personal Choices**

- Find alternative route
- Relocate residents/businesses
- Relocate to avoid key destinations
- Choose another mode of transportation

(Cut-through traffic)

(Closer to CBD or affordable area)

(new or expanding centers
or move out of region)

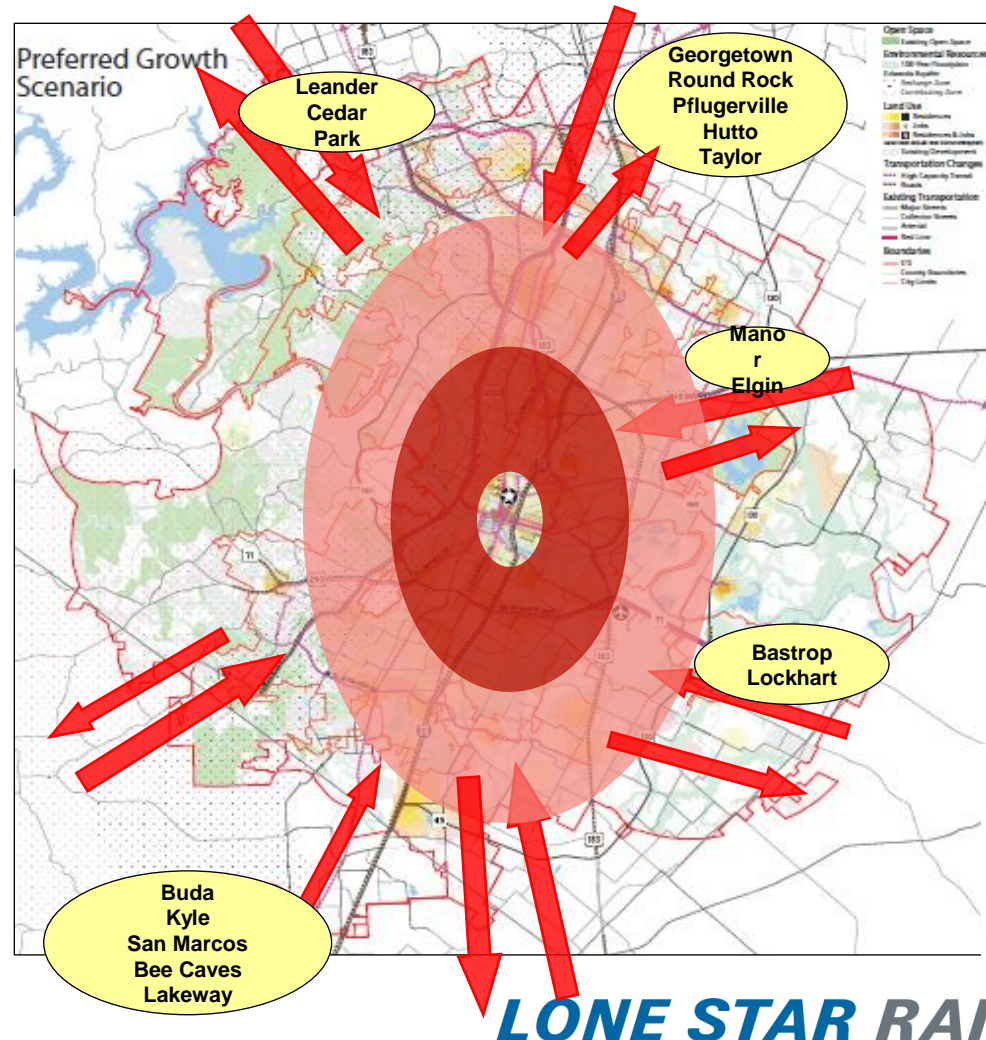
(pedestrian, bikes,
improved commuter transit)

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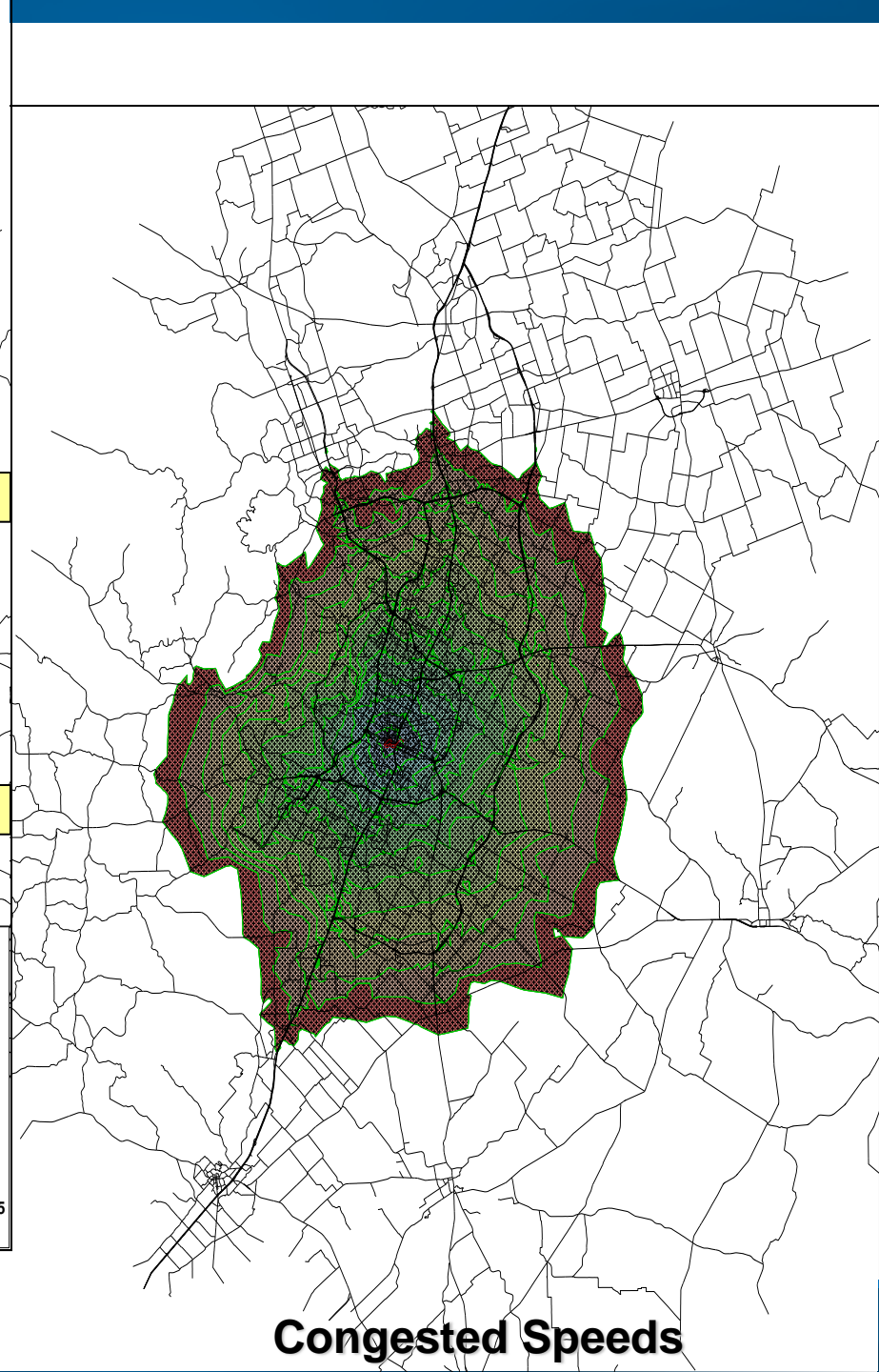
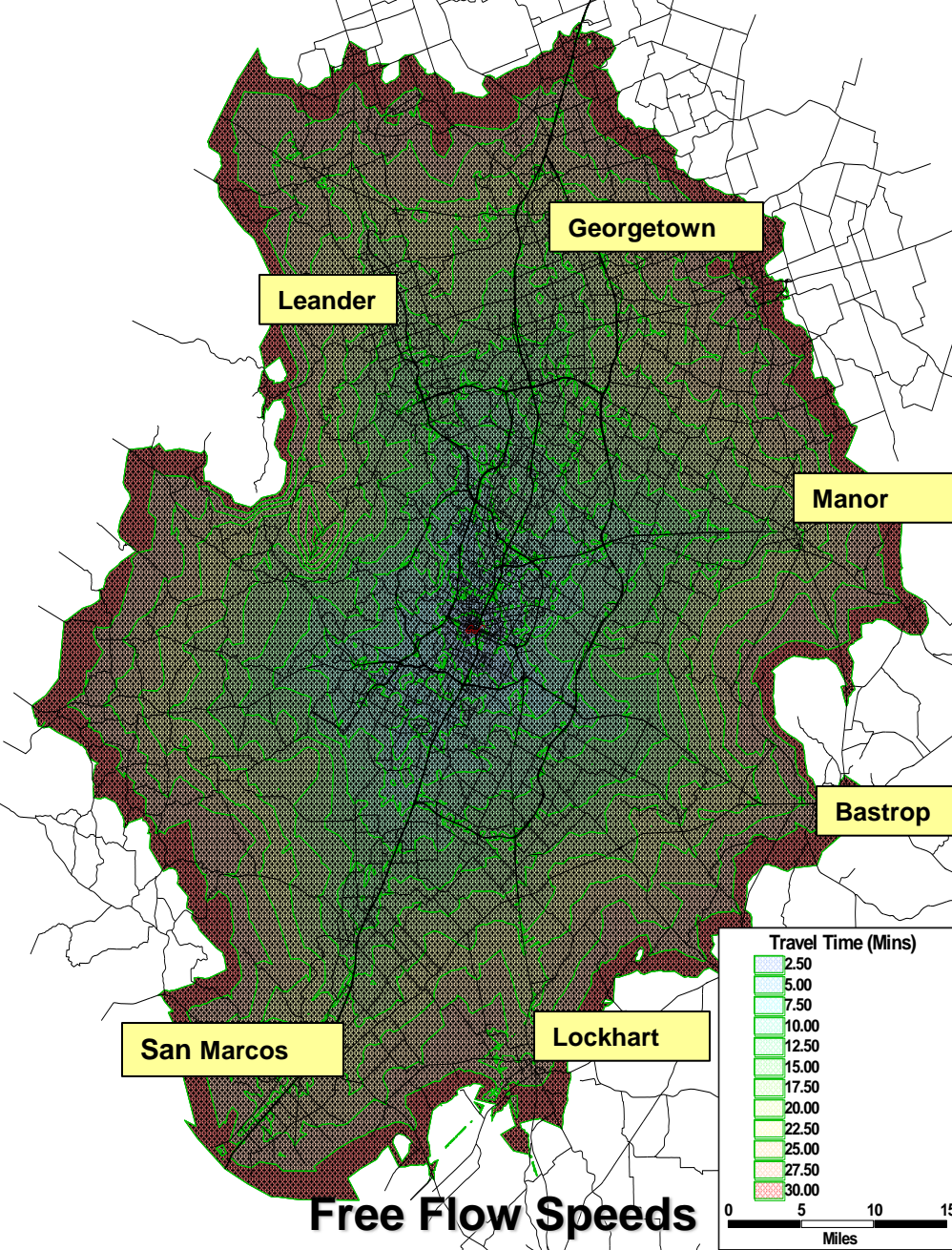
Connectivity/Mobility

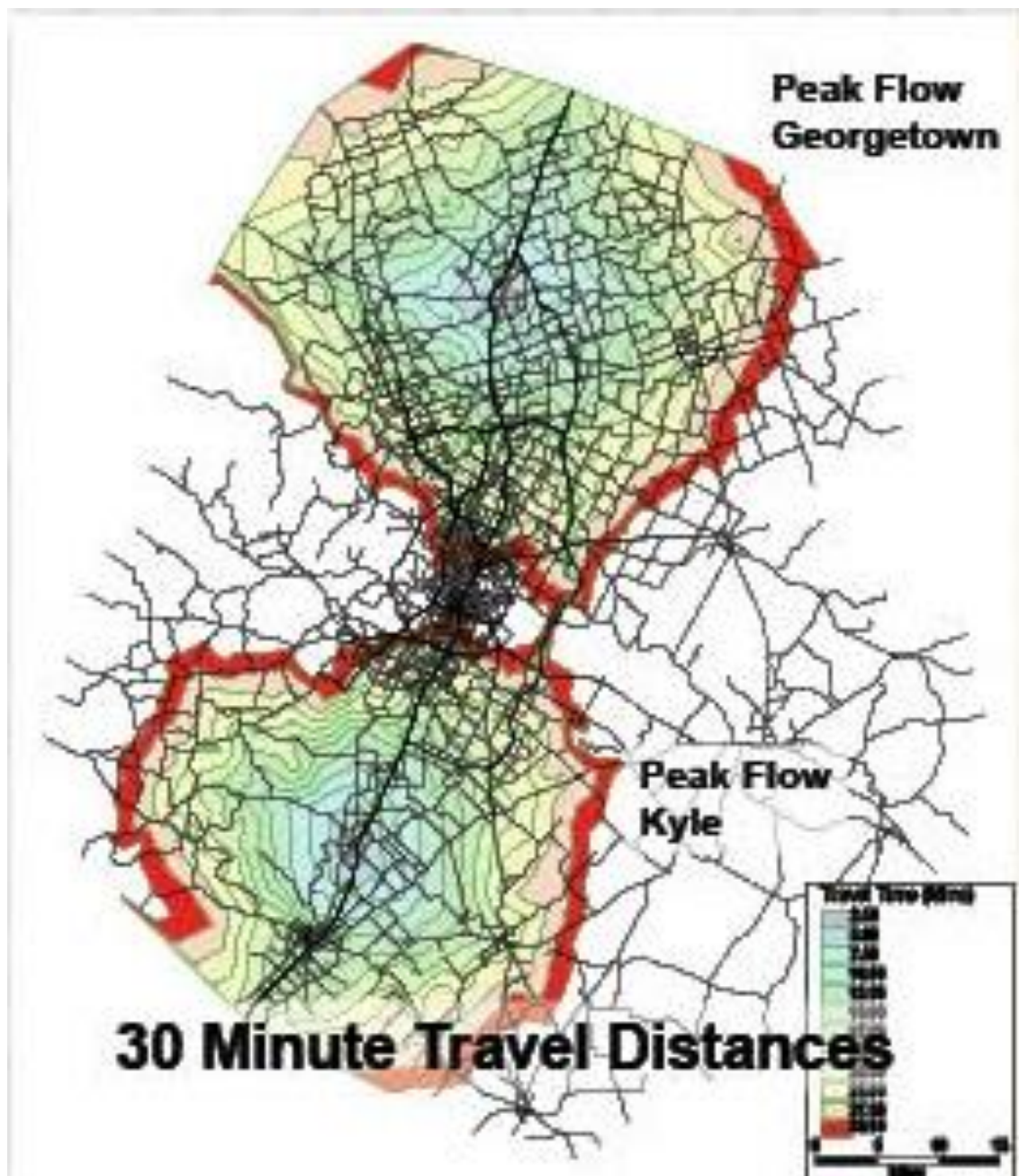
Highway System Funnels Peak Pass-Through and Commuter Traffic Together Through Rings of Congestion ...

Regional growth increases pressure for mobility throughout region



Mature roadway portions of the system meter access to regional economic destinations





Connectivity/Mobility

- **Austin is fastest growing large city in US**
 - Region's growth exceeds 110 people per day



- **Commute time to increase**
 - Round Rock to Central Austin – 3 hours
 - San Marcos to Central Austin – TBD

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Connectivity/Mobility

Current Transportation Issues

- **TTI Mobility Investment Priorities Project** – Long-Term Central Texas IH 35 Improvement Scenarios (Aug. 2013)
 - IH 35 initiatives are short- and mid-term improvements
 - 2035 CAMPO - no large-scale improvements
 - Congestion is high, increasing faster than similar US areas
 - ✓ Austin & San Antonio in 15 most congested
- **Findings**
 - IH 35 congestion will be severe even if substantial capacity is added
 - Long-term solution cannot be capacity-addition alone
 - Central Texas cannot “build its way out of congestion”
 - Need “everything including the kitchen sink”
 - ✓ Operating system improvements
 - ✓ New development patterns
 - ✓ Travel behavior change

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Connectivity/Mobility

Austin Public Impacts

- Mount Calvary Cemetery
- University of Texas
 - Athletic Practice Facilities
 - Mike Myers Stadium
 - Disch-Falk Field
 - Frank Erwin Center & Medical District (Dell Medical School)
 - John W. Hargis Hall
- Oakwood Cemetery
- Univ. Med. Center Brackenridge
- Austin Police Headquarters & Municipal Courts
- Palm Park
- Historic East Austin



Connectivity/Mobility



- **Central Texas lacks highway expansion capacity**
 - Right of way established in 1950-1970s
 - CAMPO data – 12-14 additional lanes needed by 2035
 - TxDOT funding is limited

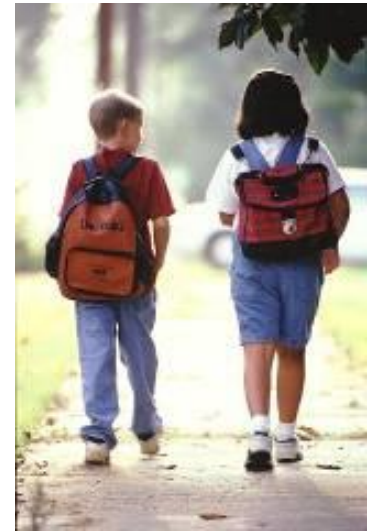
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Connectivity/Mobility – Trends and Impact

Growth Trends

- National shifting to information & service economy
- Convenient walkable mixed-use city centers/destinations
 - Quality of life or “experience” focus
- Communities seeking to diversify housing/life style options
- Flattened national demand for new autos
 - Auto costs projected to increase for fuel & technology improvements
- Employers stressing “work at office” for collaborative relationships
- Location is still key – migration to more affordable second tier urban areas
 - Austin is #1 and San Antonio #3 destinations
 - San Marcos fastest growing city in 2010 census
- Impacts - rents rising, home sales spiking and traffic congestion increasing

Connectivity/Mobility – Multiple Modes and Strategies



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Connectivity/Mobility - LSTAR Regional Rail Benefits

Economic Development

- Induces new station area development /redevelopment
- Can attract diverse types of high value development (TOD or TAD)
- Focuses development within/near activity destinations for walkable neighborhoods – Quality of Life Emphasis
- Links regional employment centers & anchors investment/property values
- Helps retain competitive advantage within region and nationally

Community Development

- Part of a broad vision for community & aligns with community plans/goals
- Reinforces community identity/brand as “connected to region”
- Reduces growth in traffic congestion
- Works well in an integrated bus/rail transit system
- Relocates most freight trains
- Safety and aids in air quality attainment



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