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# WILLIAMS DRIVE STUDY

Final Study - Executive Summary



# Acknowledgments

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The Project Team also acknowledges stakeholders that participated in this study including businesses, major and non-profit organizations, property owners, developers, and real estate brokers.

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# Executive Summary

**In recent years** the City of Georgetown and its community members have undertaken a number of studies to spur the redevelopment of the Williams Drive corridor, both as a gateway and as an entire corridor. This study is the first to consider both transportation and catalytic development sites, prioritizing the safe and convenient travel of vehicles, transit riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians along with development visions. It is the culmination of a year-long community planning process. It proposes context sensitive multimodal operational improvements, streetscape changes, and mixed-use development concepts that will transform how people travel and live within and along the corridor.



## PLANNING CONTEXT

The Williams Drive Study was informed by a number of local plans, policy documents, and guidelines. Specific recommendations and concepts were developed within the context of CAMPO's Platinum Planning Program that prioritizes multimodal transportation, mixed land use, housing choices, environment, economic development, and equity. Key planning documents and guidelines that were reviewed include:

- 2003 Williams Drive Corridor Study
- 2005 Williams Drive Gateway Redevelopment Study
- 2006 Williams Drive Gateway Redevelopment Master Plan
- 2030 Comprehensive Plan
- 2014 Overall Transportation Plan
- The Mobility35 Implementation Plan
- 2015 Sidewalk Master Plan
- 2040 CAMPO Regional Transportation Plan

# EXISTING CONDITIONS AND OUTREACH



The existing conditions analysis yielded a number of key findings, which guided the development of concepts and recommendations.

## KEY FINDINGS



### Traffic Congestion/Circulation

- Traffic congestion and circulation is a significant concern. Congestion, particularly at the intersection with I-35, is a key challenge and is currently under design through a separate TxDOT initiative. The lack of alternative connections also highlights the constraints that Williams Drive operates under on a daily basis.



### Traffic Operations & Safety

- Traffic Operations & Safety along the corridor is highlighted by a lack of access management, with corridor-wide center turn lanes and over 150 curb cuts. The unsynchronized traffic signal timing leads to an interrupted vehicle flow and underutilized capacity.



### Redevelopment and Reinvestment Barriers

- Redevelopment and reinvestment opportunities are challenged by City and State development requirements, as well as fragmented ownership amongst neighboring parcels. The current zoning also presents barriers, as it is not tailored to suit the corridor and its land use potential.



### Pedestrian/Bicycle Improvements

- Multimodal transportation opportunities along Williams Drive will be enhanced with transit service beginning in 2017. Transit will operate within the southeastern section of the corridor with a single route circulating from Downtown out Williams Drive on an hourly headway.
- Pedestrian activity and bicycle ridership are almost non-existent along the corridor today. Fast-moving traffic dominates the street, creating an unpleasant environment for other users. Williams Drive does not currently have any bicycle lanes, but wide shoulders are present along sections of the corridor. Sidewalks are narrow and intermittent. The vehicle-oriented design of the corridor has limited the attractiveness of biking and walking. Major barriers, such as I-35, also present both a physical and psychological obstacle.

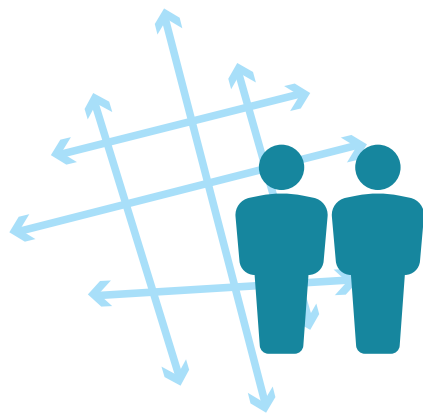


### Aesthetic Enhancements

- Development along the corridor has evolved through various iterations of zoning codes, leaving signage, landscaping, frontage usage, parking, etc. that do not conform to current code.







## COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM

This study was developed around a comprehensive outreach program to capture input from the larger Williams Drive community, as well as key regional stakeholders. The input was used to confirm and refine a cohesive corridor vision, as well as provide feedback at key stages in the project to guide the development of alternatives and final recommendations.

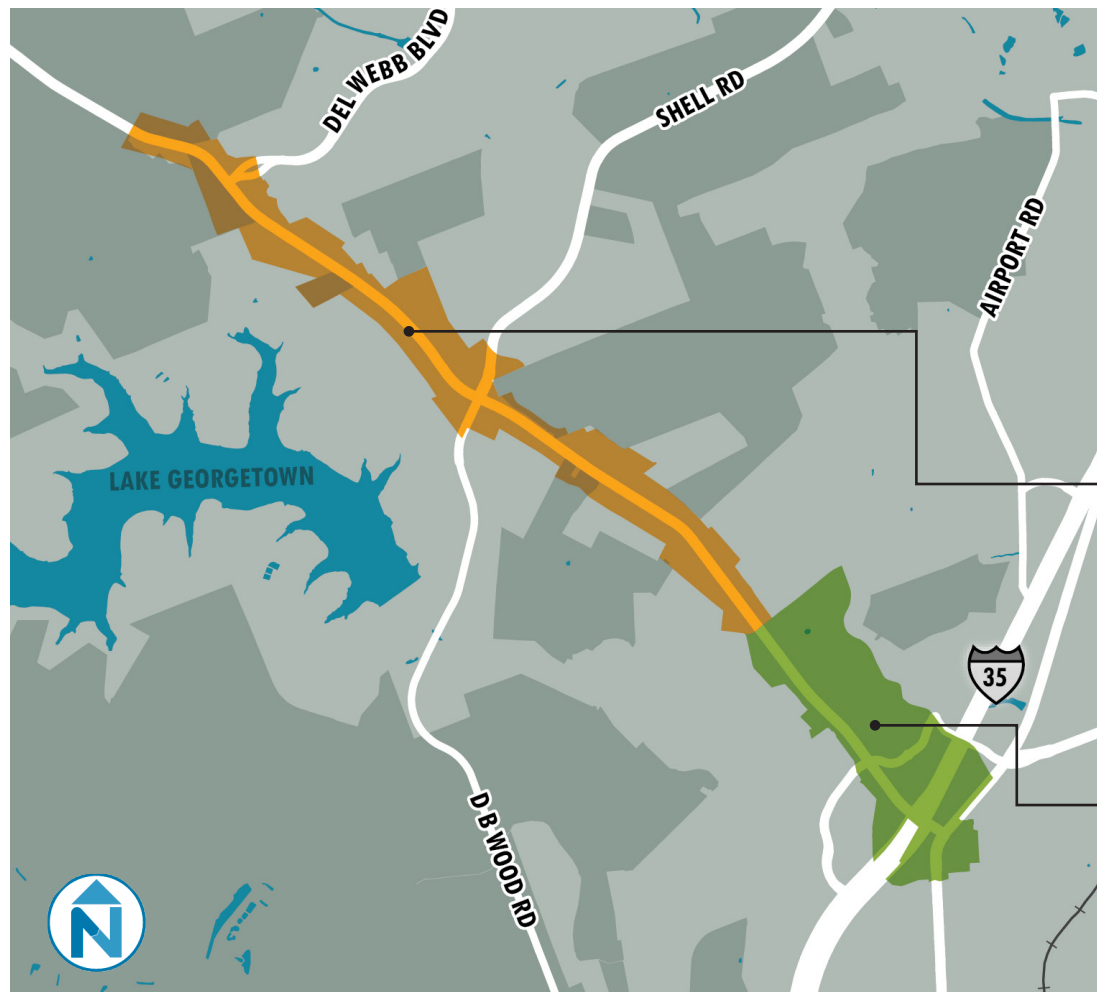
The major components of the outreach program included:

- City and CAMPO websites and project-specific collateral
- Eblasts and press releases
- Community survey and wikimap
- Week long design charrette
- Four public workshops
- Multiple presentations to City Council, Georgetown Transportation Advisory Board, and Planning and Zoning Commission



# CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FIGURE ES-1: WILLIAMS DRIVE PLAN AREAS



The recommended concepts for corridor improvements are expected to provide optimal benefits in terms of multimodal mobility, safety, economic vitality, and urban design along Williams Drive. For the purpose of this study, the corridor was divided into two separate zones: the Corridor and the Center Area. This enabled the creation of concept plans more tailored to the unique needs of different segments of Williams Drive.

**CORRIDOR PLAN:** Development of a context-sensitive plan for Williams Drive (Lakeway Dr to Jim Hogg Rd), which addresses **access management strategies, multi-modal transportation elements, safety and operational improvement.**

**CENTER AREA PLAN:** Development of a plan for a **vibrant mixed-use center and gateway** (Lakeway Dr to Austin Ave and includes land out to Northwest Blvd).



## CORRIDOR PLAN

The overriding goal for the Corridor Plan is to create a functional and usable mobility corridor. Key features include:

### Improve the Functionality of the Corridor



1. Coordinate traffic signal timing.
2. Enhance roadway network connections.
3. Narrow travel lanes depending on the character of different portions of the roadway.
4. Ensure intersection design improves both vehicular and pedestrian safety and aids corridor efficiency.
5. Evaluate posted speed limits.
6. Improve sidewalk design across driveways.
7. Provide frequent pedestrian crossing locations to support a walkable environment.
8. Where feasible and context appropriate, consolidate and reduce the number of driveways and add medians along the corridor.
9. Continue to require cross-access between neighboring developments.
10. Promote shared parking opportunities.

### Expand Bike and Pedestrian Options Along the Corridor



11. Fill in the gaps and complete the sidewalk system.
12. Implement a variety of bicycle facilities along the corridor and surrounding street network, as appropriate.

### Enhance the Character and Aesthetics of the Corridor



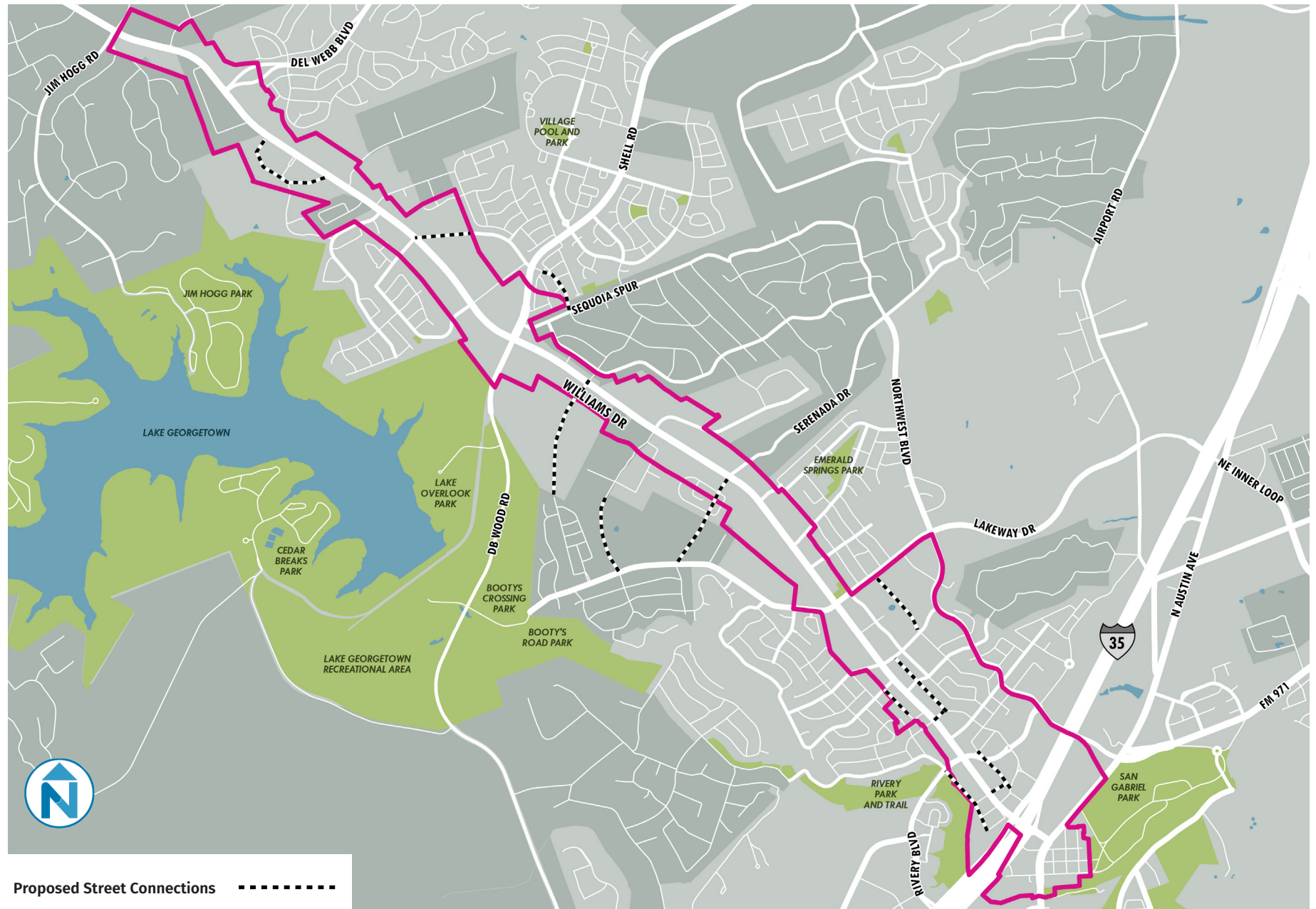
13. Require enhanced landscape buffers along the edge of the public sidewalk.
14. Develop landscape buffers that are more responsive to the varying character of the roadway.
15. Require improved lighting and signage on private property.
16. Add planting strips with street trees between the sidewalk and the roadway.
17. Require parking to be placed at the rear of the parcel.

FIGURE ES-2: PROPOSED BICYCLE FACILITIES MAP





FIGURE ES-3: NEW CONNECTIONS MAP





## CENTER AREA PLAN

The overriding objective for the Center Area Plan is to create a vibrant, mixed-use, walkable activity center. Key features include:

### **Make Connections Through and Within the Center Area**



1. Improve connections between parcels.
2. Use deep sites to create a network of streets (not just a corridor).
3. Create a safe bicycle route.
4. Connect to the adjacent river trail.
5. Fill in the sidewalk gaps.
6. Close redundant curb cuts.
7. Create transit stops.
8. Implement traffic calming on parallel connections.

### **Enhance the Urban Form and Character of the Area**



9. Encourage mixed-use development.
10. Strengthen subarea identity.
11. Create new open spaces within large development sites.
12. Use the amenity of the river to organize new development.
13. Develop enhanced standards for landscaping and signage.

### **Use Catalytic Sites to Promote a New Form of Development**



14. Create a context sensitive, mixed-use center that extends toward the Downtown area.
15. Promote transit-supportive development densities.
16. Widen sidewalks and add street trees and lights.
17. Pull buildings up to the street.
18. Slow down the traffic on Williams Drive to enhance operations and safety.

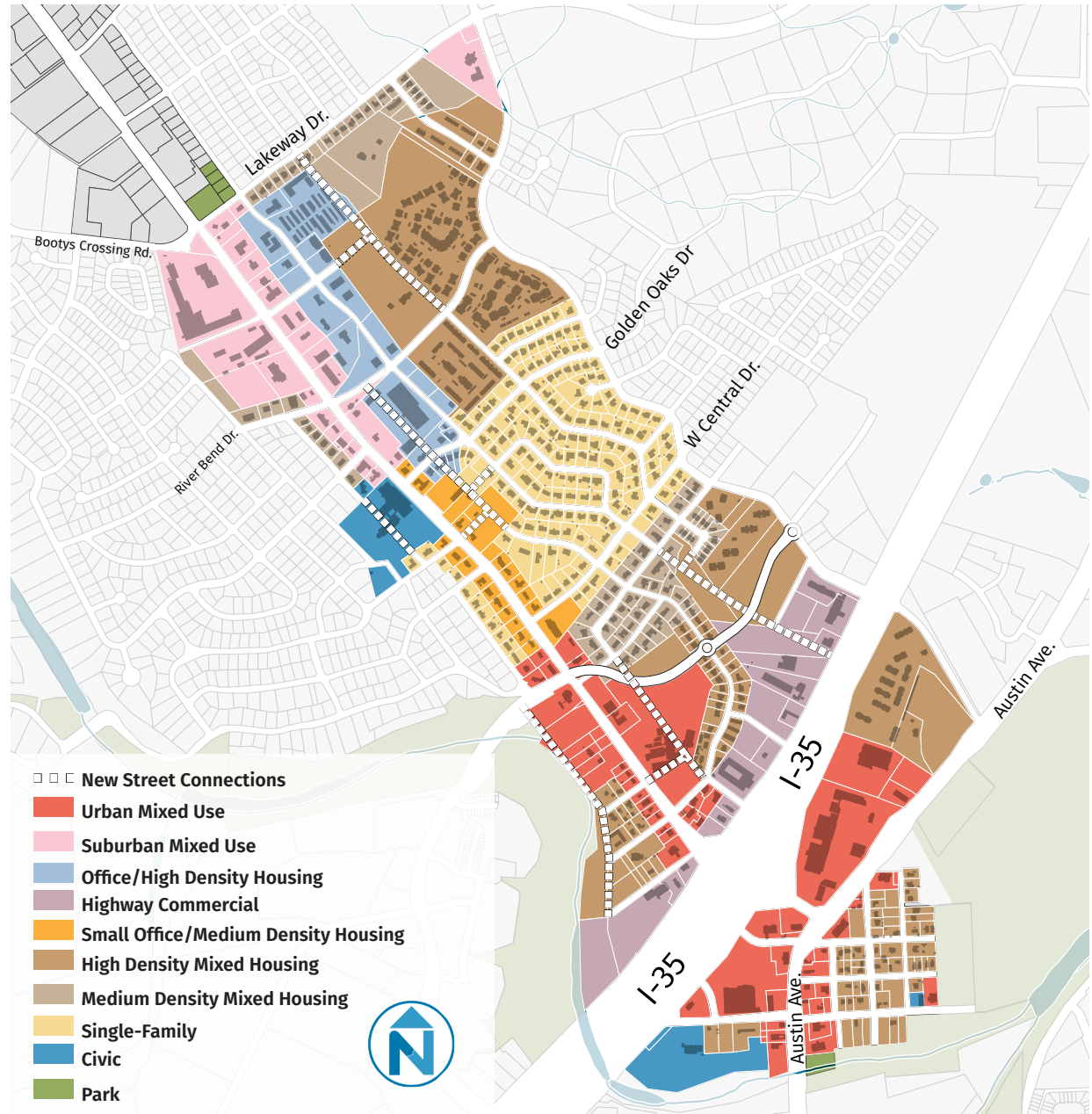
## CATALYTIC SITE & FUTURE LAND USE

During the charrette week, a future land use map and corresponding proposed zoning districts were prepared based on input from citizens and analysis by the consultant team. The land use map is the basis for all land use recommendations.

It was clear that there was too much commercial zoning within the center area, especially in locations with little traffic where retail is not viable. Each of the new zoning districts establish approved building types, heights, and setbacks as well as generalized uses.

Through this process, development concepts were also advanced for the Georgetown Independent School District (ISD) site at the southeast corner of the Williams Drive/Rivory Boulevard intersection. The future development concepts for this site establish a phased, market feasible approach enabling the site to redevelop over time.

FIGURE ES-4: FUTURE LAND USE MAP





# IMPLEMENTATION

Full implementation of the corridor improvements will take place over time. In some cases, designs need to be further refined and developed, and several recommendations require additional study. Nevertheless, the City is prioritizing multimodal improvements and development initiatives for Williams Drive and is planning to implement various aspects of the recommendations as soon as possible. A phased implementation plan was developed to guide this process, but the plan should be adjusted over time as conditions evolve and funding becomes available.

To this end, the City proposed a mix of priority projects for short-term implementation. This includes projects focused on improving traffic congestion and operations, reducing barriers to redevelopment, improving the streetscape along the corridor, and enhancing accommodations for bicycle and pedestrian users. The maps in Figure ES-5, Figure ES-6, and Figure ES-7 identify the locations of these priority projects. Details about each project can be found in the final chapter of this report.

FIGURE ES-5: CENTER AREA SHORT-TERM PROJECTS

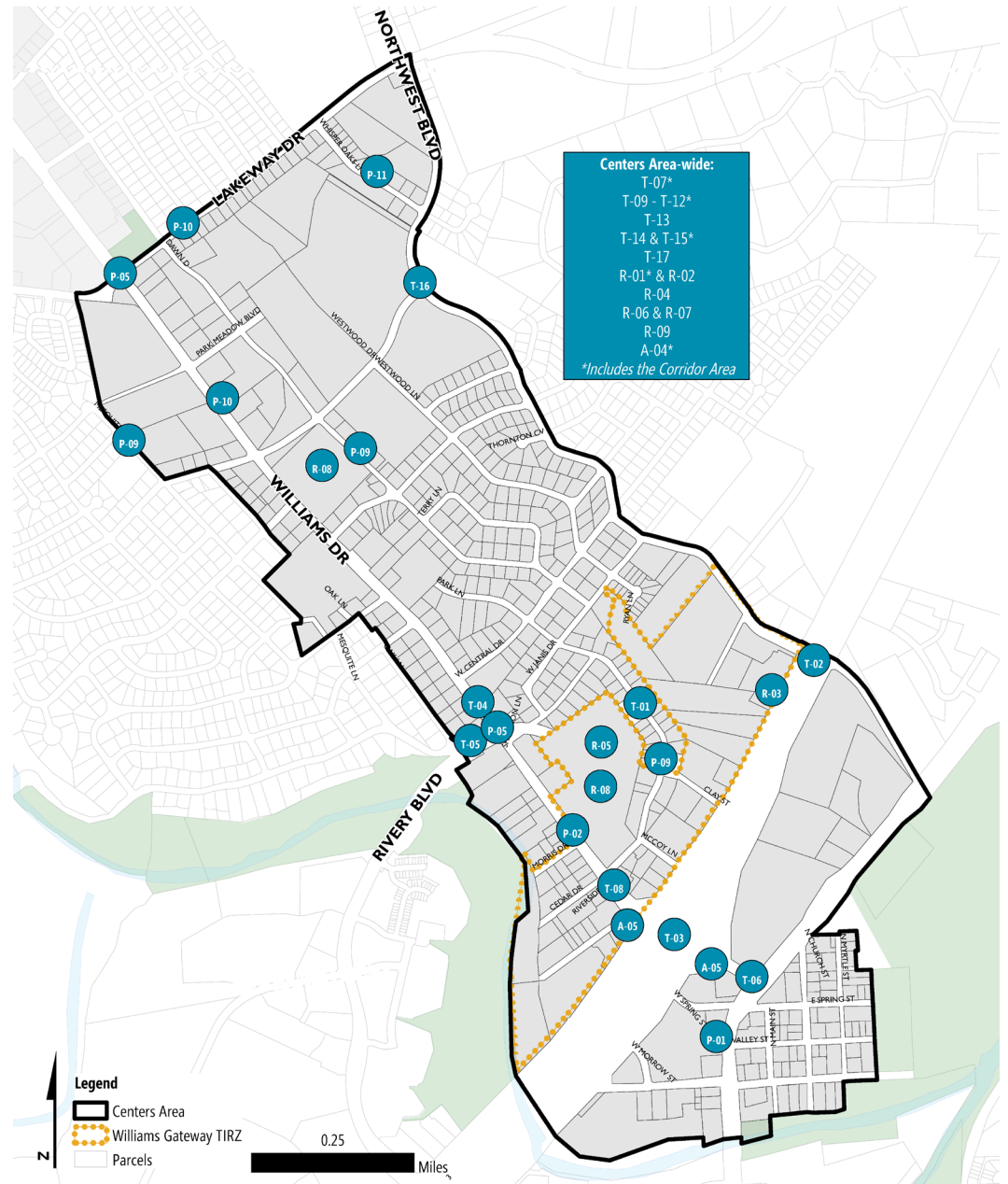


FIGURE ES-6: CORRIDOR PLAN SHORT-TERM PROJECTS - JIM HOGG RD TO SHELL / D B WOOD RD

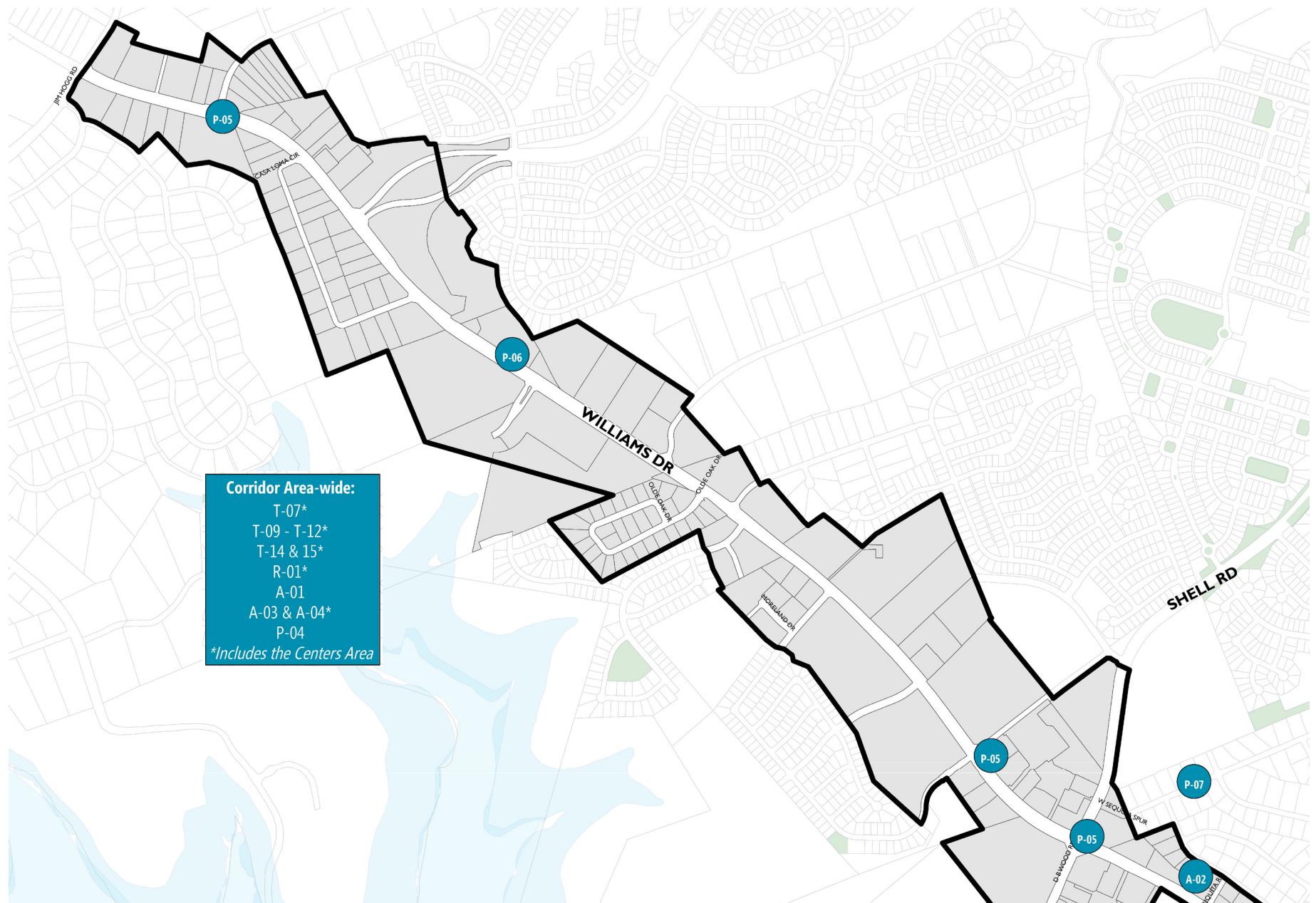


FIGURE ES-7: CORRIDOR PLAN SHORT-TERM PROJECTS - SHELL / D B WOOD RD TO LAKEWAY DR

