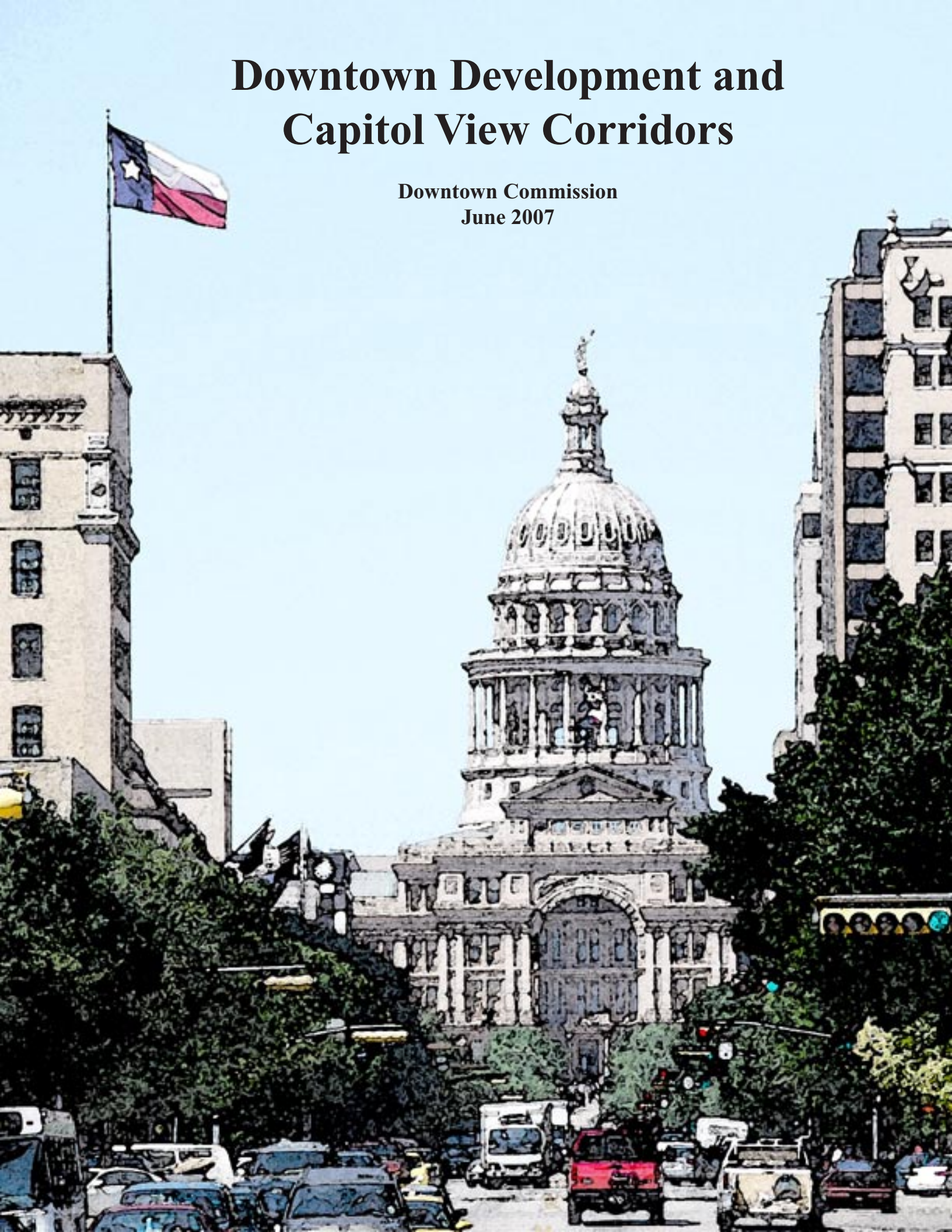
Downtown Development and Capitol View Corridors

Downtown Commission
June 2007



Cover Photograph: Michael Knox, 2007

Downtown Commission

To: Mayor Will Wynn and Council Members

From: Downtown Commission

Subject: Downtown Development and Capitol View Corridors

Date: June 27, 2007

On August 3, 2006, the Downtown Commission submitted a report to Council concerning Downtown development that described the limited supply of land available for redevelopment and outlined issues that the City would need to address in order to meet our goal of having 25,000 residents living downtown within ten years. Our report found that the supply of developable land Downtown is limited horizontally by the constraints of a relatively small area surrounded by physical barriers, the Capitol complex, and existing residential neighborhoods. Most of Downtown is already developed with improvements that are not likely to be removed at current price levels for land. In parts of Downtown, the supply is also limited vertically by Capitol View Corridors from various view points around town.

We provided an overview of the report at your meeting on September 28, 2006. At that meeting, you asked that the Downtown Commission follow-up on the report and address three issues:

- A revised map for Downtown Developability that would show all government owned surface parking and garages in a distinct color;
- An evaluation of property along the east side of IH-35, particularly the thresholds leading to Downtown; and
- An inventory and evaluation of the Capitol View Corridors, in particular the view corridors from highways.

This memorandum contains our report on the Capitol View Corridors. This report is the first comprehensive review of the view corridors since they were adopted in 1983. The other issues will be addressed in a separate memo.

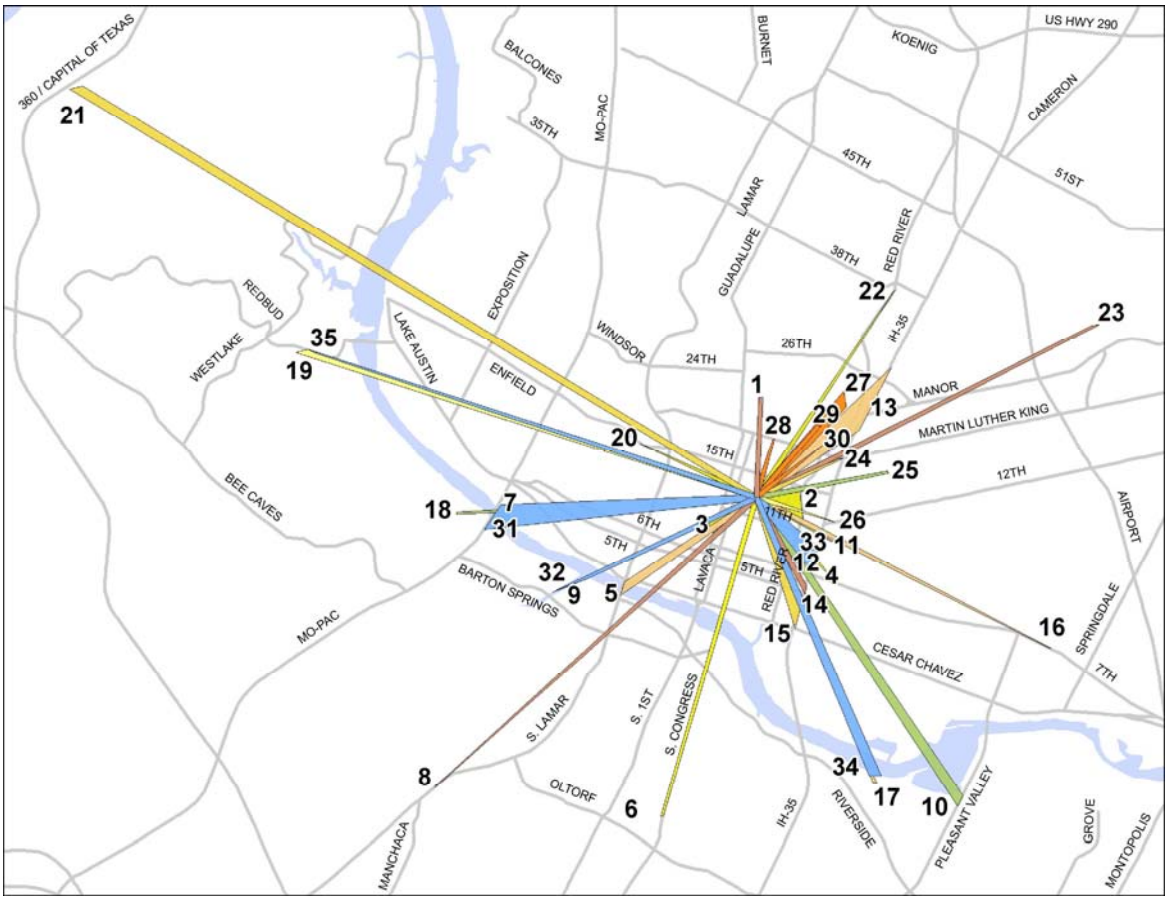
CAPITOL VIEW CORRIDORS

This memorandum will provide you with the background on the issue, a description of the methodology we employed in our review, limitations of our review,

and a summary of our conclusions. Attached are evaluations of each of the view corridors.

Background

A view corridor is a plane that extends from a defined view point or points to the base of the Capitol dome. The center of the Capitol dome is at 653 feet above sea level. No structure is permitted to pierce the plane. In some cases, the view points lie on a stretch of road, a segment of the hike and bike trail, or other fairly long stretch. As an example, the base of the triangular plane established by View 12 extends along the north-bound lanes of IH-35 between the Police and Courts Building to East 10th Street, for approximately three city blocks. In other cases, such as Corridor 4, the view from the front porch of the French Legation, the corridor is only a few feet wide at the defined view points.



Some of the corridors were established by the Texas Legislature and some by the City Council. The State corridors are codified under Texas Government Code Ch. 3151. The City corridors are defined under Chapter 25-2 Appendix A. In general, there are 30 corridors. However, the City has adopted some corridor definitions that differ from the State definitions, so that some lists show a total of 35 corridors. The corridors identified by the State are as follows:

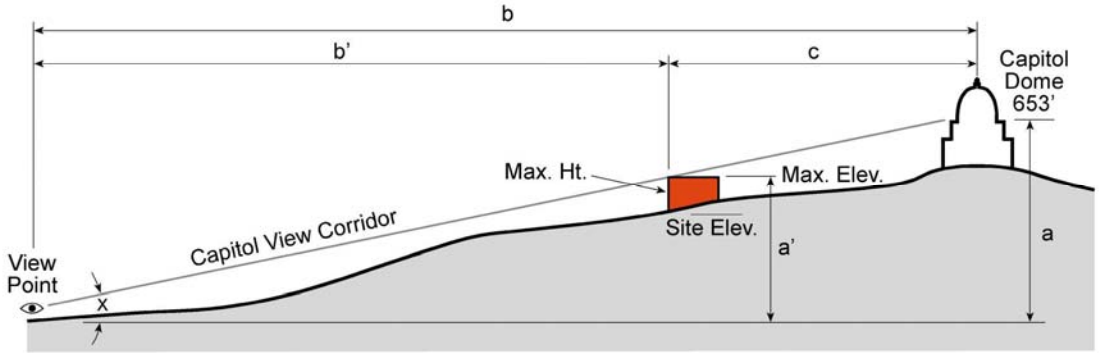
1 - South Mall of UT;
2 - Waterloo Park;
3 - Wooldridge Park;
4 - French Legation;
5 - Lamar Bridge;
6 - South Congress at East Live Oak;
7 - Mopac Bridge;
8 - South Lamar at La Casa Drive;
9 - Barton Creek Pedestrian Bridge;
10 - Pleasant Valley Rd at Lakeshore Drive;
11 - East 11th Street Threshold;
12 - North-Bound lanes of IH-35 between Municipal Police and Courts Bldg and W. 10th;
13 - South-Bound lanes of the Upper Deck of IH-35 between Concordia College and MLK Overpass;
14 - North-Bound lanes of IH-35 between Municipal Police and Courts Bldg and Waller Creek Plaza;

15 - North-Bound lanes of IH-35 between 3d St. and Waller Creek Plaza;
16 - E. 7th St. Bridge over Texas-New Orleans Railroad Corridor;
17 - Longhorn Shores;
18 - Zilker Clubhouse;
19 - Red Bud Trail;
20 - Enfield Road;

21 - Capital of Texas Hwy;
22 - 38th & Red River;
23 - Mueller Airport;
24 - MLK & IH-35;
25 - Oakwood Cemetery;
26 - East 12th & I-35;
27 - LBJ Library;
28 - North Congress at MLK;
29 - Field level of Memorial Stadium Practice Center; and
30 - Entrance terrace, UT Swim Center.

The City and State have conflicting definitions for five of the view corridors: 7, 9, 14, 17, and 19. And, four of the view corridors have been established by the State but not by the City: 27, 28, 29, and 30.

The effect that a particular view corridor has on the developability of the land beneath it is a function of the height and the width of the plane and the land crossed by the view corridor. A broad and low plane imposes extensive limitations on development. Whereas, a plane from a higher elevation, a plane along a city street, or a plane that primarily crosses publicly owned land does not impact the supply of developable land. The two-block project that is currently being planned by Novare on the blocks bounded by 5th, 6th, Guadalupe, and Nueces streets is an example of how a developer can sometimes work creatively around the corridors and produce a viable project.



Designation of the Original View Corridors

In February 1983, the Planning Department of the City of Austin produced a draft document entitled Capitol View Preservation Study (http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/downtown/downloads/Capitol_View_Preservation_Study.pdf). That document described the methodology used by the Planning Department staff in evaluating some sixty potential view corridors. The criteria for the corridors detailed in the 1983 document involved a weighing of three factors:

- The view type: Is the view pedestrian or vehicular? Is it sustained or a glimpse?
- The view frame: What is actually in the view?

- The viewpoint: What is the viewpoint and does it have particular significance by itself?

Of the sixty potential corridors the staff evaluated, their analyses of eleven were included in the draft. Some of these eleven are now included in the current thirty view corridors. Others were not adopted or were adopted only in part. Several corridors not included in the 1983 document have since been added. The Downtown Commission has only limited knowledge of the ultimate process by which the final selections were made, but understands that the process entailed extensive discussions and deliberations over a period of several years.

Methodology for this Report

In order to remain consistent with the original methodology, the Commission has re-evaluated each corridor using the same criteria. In addition, we attempted to assess any changes that may have occurred to the view frame or the corridor since 1983. In some cases, views have been partially obscured by foliage and tree growth over the last two decades. Photos were taken near each view point in order to document the current view frame and to provide a comparison to the photos from the 1983 document. Obviously, no single photograph can measure the full quality and value of an entire corridor; but these photos do give some indication of the scale, perspective, and quality of the views as they currently exist. These photos were taken in February 2007, and it is likely that several of the views will be diminished when there are more leaves on the trees.

We began with the assumption that you should actually be able to see the Capitol from each of the designated view corridors. A member of the Development Committee of the Commission was assigned to evaluate each corridor. That member produced a draft evaluation which was then reviewed by the full Committee, and the Committee compiled the evaluations into a draft report. The draft report was first presented to the Commission on March 21, 2007. The Development Committee preliminarily approved the draft report on March 28, 2007 and circulated the report to interested parties and boards & commissions and advertised the report for public comment. The report was made available online, through the City's website and at www.capitolviews.info, and presentations on the report were provided to the Downtown Austin Alliance and the Austin Neighborhoods Council. Additionally, the Austin American-Statesman, the Austin Chronicle, and other media outlets published several stories on the draft report. Following review of the comments received, the Commission then considered and approved this final report on June 20, 2007.

Limitations

Under ideal conditions, the benefits of each individual view corridor to the public should be compared to the costs of creating and maintaining it. While it is clear that the citizens of Austin, and all Texans, treasure the capitol views, the benefits are subjective and therefore difficult to quantify. The costs are made up of two components: the loss of

potential ad valorem tax base to the various taxing entities and the missed opportunities to increase density and provide for additional housing downtown. The costs cannot be calculated precisely because the tax base may simply be moved to another location within the taxing jurisdiction and not lost. Also, the widths and heights of the corridors vary greatly, and the corridors often cross only a corner or other portion of a lot or block. In some cases, such as the Novare project described above, developers may be able to utilize land that is burdened with a view corridor by creatively designing their projects around corridors. Likewise, the activity that might be generated can move and possibly end up in an area where the activity is equally desirable. Or, it could go into another jurisdiction or into an area in which development activity is not desired. These factors make it extremely difficult to assign a numerical value either to the cost or the benefit of the views.

When the corridors were created, no compensation was paid to any landowner. It is probably unlikely that a claim for a taking because of the view corridors could be successful at this date, but it is an issue that could be addressed in an assessment of the costs or any consideration of substituting one view corridor for another. The Commission expresses no opinion on the viability of any such claim. However, the City should carefully evaluate any changes to the corridor boundaries for any takings concerns.

Because of the uncertainties of the cost/benefit analysis, the Commission decided that any quantitative economic analysis was beyond the scope of the Commission's work. The commission may want to request that City staff conduct such an analysis. Therefore, the recommendations are based mainly on the relative quality of the views from the corridors themselves compared to a qualitative assessment of the impact of the corridors on development activity.

Previous decisions have allowed exemptions for some development. There are exemptions under state law for construction associated with the University of Texas' Darrell K. Royal – Texas Memorial Stadium, redevelopment of the 11th Street corridor, and redevelopment of the former Mueller airport site (Texas Government Code § 3151.003).

There also have been discussions of rebuilding IH-35 below grade. If that project goes forward, the views from IH-35 would need to be re-evaluated.

Summary of Recommendations

Our recommendation is for "No Change" for 19 of the 30 view corridors. The remainder are recommended for improvements, re-evaluation, modification, or further study based on current criteria to be established by this Council. Our recommendations can be grouped into five categories: highway corridors, negative effects, reconciling state and city definitions, adjustment for new development, and improvement/protection corrections.

Highway Corridors

- 7 – Mopac Bridge. We recommend that the northern end of the view point be moved slightly southward to the north boundary of View 18 - Zilker Clubhouse because the view points along Mopac north of Town Lake provide only marginal views.
- 15 – North Bound IH-35 between 3d Street and Waller Creek Plaza. The Pickle Federal Building intrudes on the left portion of this view, and obstructs a portion of the protected view between Trinity Street and IH-35. We recommend that the southern boundary of this corridor be set so that the Pickle Building is no longer in the view.

Negative Effects

- 3 - Wooldridge Park. We recommend that the City work with the County and other stakeholders toward a plan for modifying or deleting this corridor to allow redevelopment of the underutilized lots on Blocks 108 & 126, between Guadalupe & Lavaca and 9th & 11th streets. This corridor, defined by viewpoints about four blocks from the Capitol, is not oriented toward the park, and it inhibits the redevelopment on Blocks 108 & 126 immediately east and northeast of the park, which are currently dominated by surface parking and drive-through uses. Travis County is evaluating one of these blocks as a potential site for a new courthouse.

Reconciling State and City Definitions

- 7 – Mopac Bridge. We recommend that the southernmost viewpoint of the City's corridor be moved from the south shore of the lake to coincide with the southernmost viewpoint of the state's corridor near Stratford Drive.
- 17 - Longhorn Shores. The City's corridor lies entirely within a larger state corridor. We recommend that the City corridor be redefined to coincide with the larger state corridor.
- 19 – Red Bud Trail. The City's corridor extends onto the grounds of the Ullrich Water Treatment Plant and offers no public benefit. We recommend that the City corridor be redefined to coincide with the state corridor.

Adjustment for New Development

- 23 – Robert Mueller Airport. The vantage point is located at the former entrance to the terminal. Redevelopment of the site will obscure this view. We recommend that the City work with the Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Plan Implementation Advisory Commission to consider identifying one or more view points to preserve within the Mueller area.
- 27 – LBJ Library. Part of this view has been obstructed by an expansion of the Darrell K. Royal-Memorial Stadium, which was allowed under 2001 legislation. We recommend that the corridor be redefined to omit the portion of the view that has been obstructed.

Improvement / Protection

- 8 - South Lamar at La Casa. It is difficult to see the Capitol from this point and the visual frame is cluttered. We recommend that the City investigate whether

action can be taken to clear away the current obstructions of the view. If not, we recommend that the view point be moved to a point further south on Lamar, near the Broken Spoke, in order to preserve actual views of the capitol.

- 10 - Pleasant Valley at Lakeshore. Landscaping has been placed in the park in front of the view point and now blocks the view. The Parks and Recreation Department should maintain the vegetation in order to preserve the view.
- 25 – Oakwood Cemetery. The described elevation needs to be corrected from 662 feet to 562 feet.
- 26 - East 12th at IH-35. This view is currently cluttered by a maze of signs, poles, and wires. We recommend that the City undertake measures to clear away the clutter.

We also recommend that the City form a joint task force with representatives from the County and the State to review these recommendations and to consider how the view corridors may be better protected from signs, utilities, and other obstructions.

In addition, due to the several errors that we have identified in the descriptions, we recommend that the City staff conduct a detailed review of the legal descriptions for the view corridors.

Disclosure

Several members of the Downtown Commission own property and/or reside Downtown. In accordance with the City Code, those members are not participating in any discussions, votes, or decisions regarding corridors affecting their property.

The City's Ethics Officer has been asked to consider this situation, and has provided the following guidance:

> [I]t appears that the 30 view corridors can each be considered on its own merits and that a decision regarding one would not bear on a decision regarding another. In that case, if the corridors can be considered separately, it would be appropriate for you to recuse only on deliberations and votes concerning the corridor in which you have a potential property interest. That would free you to offer your experience to the board on the other matters that would not potentially affect your interest.

Thus, to the extent that the corridors can be considered separately, the Commission concluded that members with property interests downtown are free to participate in the consideration of corridors that do not affect their property interests.

Commissioners with property interests within view corridors are listed below, along with a brief description of the action each has taken.

- Chris Riley's home, which he owns, is located under View Corridor 21, Capitol of Texas Highway. Therefore, he has not participated in any votes, discussions, or decisions regarding that corridor. Additionally, Mr. Riley works for the Rusk Law Firm, P.C., which leases office space from Jeff E. Rusk at 910 Lavaca, which is within View Corridor 3, Wooldridge Park. Mr. Riley has no ownership interest in the law firm, and the law firm has no ownership interest in the property. Mr. Riley is also President of the Austin History Center Association, a non-profit support group for the Austin History Center, which is partly within View Corridor 3. Mr. Riley also manages the Austin Parks Foundation's Giant Chess set that can be seen most Saturdays in Wooldridge Park, which is also partly within View Corridor 3. None of these interests amounts to a substantial financial interest in the view corridor, or in any modification of the view corridor, so Mr. Riley has participated in discussions and decisions regarding View Corridor 3.

- Robert Knight owns property in the vicinity of Cesar Chavez and Red River Streets and on East 2nd Street between San Jacinto and Trinity Streets. He is also a partner in partnerships that own property in the Rainey Street Neighborhood. None of these properties is under a Capitol View Corridor. Mr. Knight intends to acquire an interest in the north half of Block 35, Original City of Austin. A portion of that property is under Corridor 15. In accordance with the suggestion from the City of Austin Law Department, Mr. Knight has recused himself with respect to the discussions and actions that involve Corridor 15.

- Perry Lorenz owns property in the vicinity of Cesar Chavez and Red River Streets. He is also a partner in partnerships that own property in the Rainey Street Neighborhood. None of these properties is under a Capitol View Corridor. Lorenz does own the north half of Block 35, Original City of Austin. A portion of that property is under View Corridor 15. Additionally Lorenz, individually or in partnerships, owns or controls properties in the Southwest quadrant of downtown that are affected by view corridors. In accordance with the suggestion from the City of Austin Law Department, Mr. Lorenz has recused himself with respect to the discussions and/or actions with respect to any view corridors affecting his properties and, for that matter, will not be participating in any discussions surrounding the adoption of the subcommittee's report.

- Tim Finley recused himself from all deliberations and votes concerning the subject matter of this report subsequent to February 14, 2007

- Bruce Willenzik is the owner of the Armadillo Christmas Bazaar and a principal tenant in the Austin Music Hall, which is beneath CVC 8 - South Lamar at La Casa. Mr. Willenzik recused himself from deliberations and votes relating to CVC 8.

1 – South Mall, University of Texas

Type of View: Stationary

Viewpoint: South from the South Mall of The University of Texas at Austin and nine blocks north of the Capitol. The viewpoint is approximately 3,770 feet from the Capitol at an elevation of 594 feet.

View Frame: A very dramatic view framed by Cambridge Towers to the West and the State of Texas office complex to the East. The University of Texas Tower and the dome of the Capitol form a unique and significant urban space relationship of the City of Austin.

Adjacent Views: None

Rationale from 1983 Report: "From the University of Texas South Mall, below the Tower, the Capitol is prominent in Austin's skyline by day, and dominant by night.

"The tree-lined, linear, parklike design of the mall, oriented toward the Capitol, would provide a formal approach, were it not for the slight offset of the street grid at MLK, Jr. Blvd. Nevertheless, the broad expanses of the campus green provide an open viewing and gathering area for students, alumni and visitors.

"The land elevation falls 60 feet for about three-quarters of a mile from the mall to the Capitol. Most of the intervening land between the Capitol and MLK, Jr. Blvd. is State

property, consisting primarily of office buildings and cleared lots. State legislation and cooperation between the City and State prior to construction is necessary for Capitol view protection."

Changes Since 1983: Trees on the South Mall have increased in size.

Recommendation: No change.

2 – Waterloo Park

Type of View: Stationary

Viewpoint: A view of the Capitol from the east along the sidewalk on the west side of Red River and above Waller Creek at 496 feet above sea level. The view from the sidewalk is higher than the view from the field within the park. From inside the park, the view is obscured by trees and buildings.

View Frame: The Capitol dominates the view to the west with the dome seen over the east wing of the Capitol. The foreground is occupied by the creek and the park. In the middle ground, buildings to the north and south frame the view. The view also benefits Brackenridge hospital on the east side of Red River.

Adjacent Views: 11 – East 11th Street threshold and 16 – East 7th Street Bridge over the Texas & New Orleans Railroad run along the southern border of the view; 25 – Oakwood Cemetery runs along the north border of the view; and 26 – East 12th Street at IH-35 crosses through the southern portion of the park.

Rationale from 1983 Report: "From Waterloo Park views are framed by vegetation in the foreground and State office buildings in the middle ground. The topography falls 70 feet from the Capitol to Waller Creek within the park in less than one-half mile, and the combination of height, proximity and uncluttered framing contributes to the impression of Capitol dominance that is so distinctive in this corridor.

"Waterloo Park is the recreational link between the State office complex, the University of Texas's entertainment facilities, the Brackenridge Hospital Complex, and the cultural resources of Symphony Square and Symphony Plaza. Viewpoints are numerous and varied throughout the park; creekside, Frisbee field, hike and bike trail and pavilion.

"Two crucial undeveloped blocks adjacent to Waterloo Park are owned by the State of Texas. Coordination of building plans with State agencies and State legislation are needed to assure that new construction adheres to view protection height allowances."

Changes Since 1983: The State has constructed a parking garage west of the park that, together with other developments, has cluttered the framing of the Capitol view. Due to the construction and tree growth, the viewpoints within the park are generally obscured. The park space is generally underutilized except for large events.

Effect: This view corridor crosses two State-owned blocks between the capitol and Waterloo Park. It has been suggested that these blocks could be redeveloped in conjunction with the installation of a streetcar line along San Jacinto between Downtown and the redevelopment at the former Mueller Airport.

Recommendation: No change at this time. In the event that the state chooses to redevelop the blocks west of the park, this issue could be revisited.

3 – Wooldridge Park

Type of View: Stationary.

Viewpoint: This corridor is defined as a triangle with its base near Wooldridge Park and its peak at the capitol dome. The base of the triangle is four blocks southwest of the Capitol. One corner of the base is at the southwest corner of Wooldridge Park (the northeast corner of 9th & San Antonio streets), at an elevation of 515 feet above sea level (see diagram on page 16). The other corner of the base is on Guadalupe, near the entrance of the Faulk Central Library, at an elevation of 536 feet above sea level. From those two points, the corridor plane extends upward toward the capitol dome, about 2100 feet to the northeast. Viewpoints within the corridor include the north and east entrances of the Austin History Center, the Guadalupe sidewalk along the eastern edge of Wooldridge Park, and the southeast end of the path that cuts diagonally through the park.

View Frame: From Wooldridge Park and the north side of the History Center, most views of the Capitol are partly obscured by trees. But along a short part of Guadalupe, the dome rises prominently above the parking lots and drive-through banks to the northeast. The 1983 report noted that "[t]he Westgate Building competes for dominance of the scene. Small banking facilities with large graphics and a preponderance of parked automobiles add further distraction."

Vehicular traffic on Guadalupe is southbound, and does not benefit from the view. The dome is visible from some points along Lavaca (which is northbound), but those views are not protected; even low-rise development, such as the Carriage House at the Governor's Mansion, blocks views for Lavaca traffic.

Adjacent Views: The corridor is flanked on the north by the 9 - Barton Creek Pedestrian Bridge and on the south by 8 - South Lamar at La Casa Drive Corridor. Additionally, 5 - Lamar Bridge Corridor cuts over the middle of the Wooldridge Park Corridor, setting a higher height limit due to the fact that it originates about a mile to the southeast.

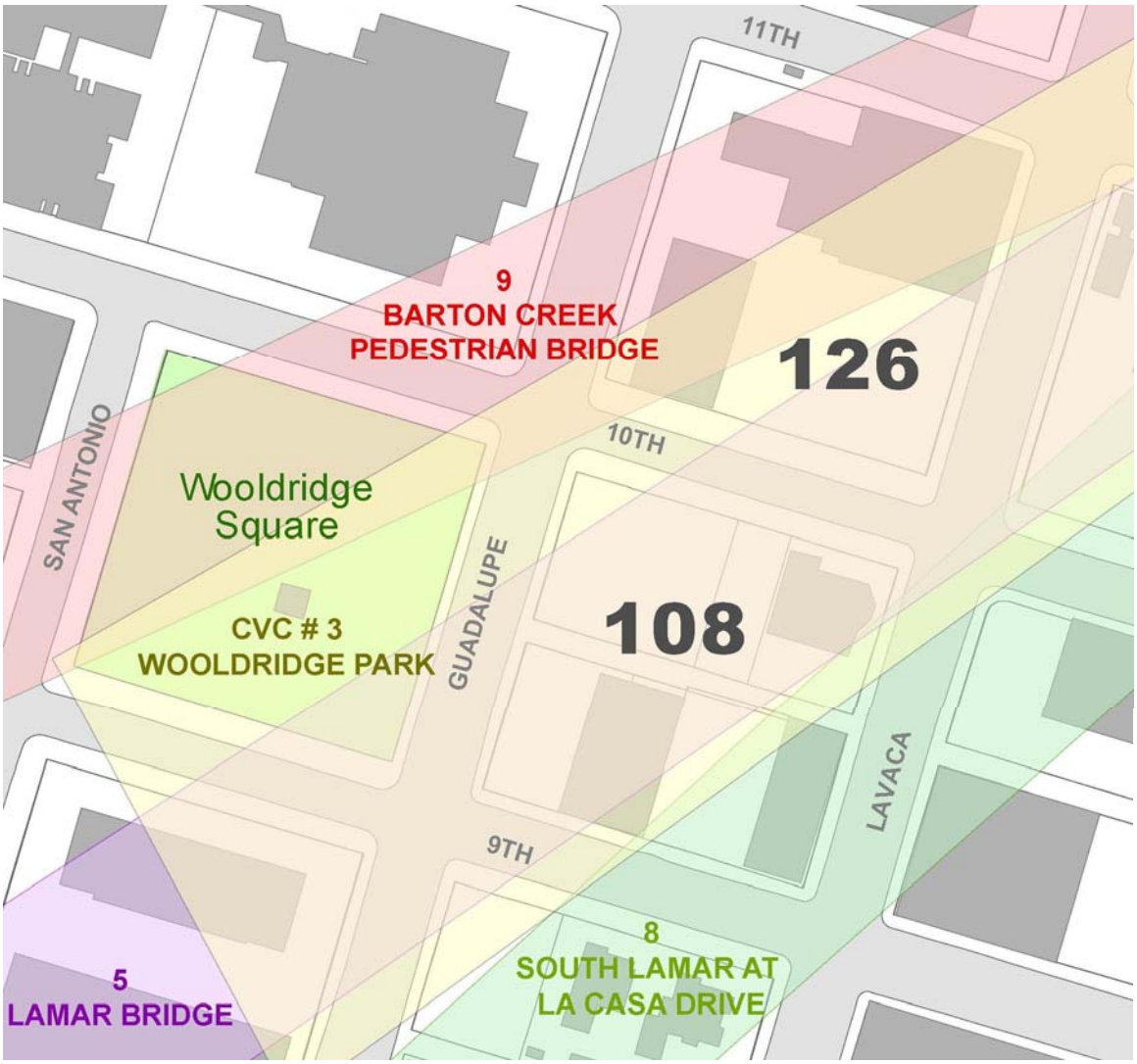
Rationale from 1983 Report: The 1983 Report focused on the significant buildings in the area: "The view corridor covers an area rich in civic, cultural, historic and recreational amenities: The Governor's Mansion, Travis County Courthouse, Austin Public Library, Austin History Center, the Bremond Block, Hirschfeld House and a Moonlight Tower."

The1983 Report also noted the uses on Blocks 108 and 126, directly east and northeast of Wooldridge Park, and expressed hope that they would be redeveloped: "Two blocks of underutilized land separate the Governor's Mansion from Wooldridge Park. Currently occupied by banking facilities and parking lots, these blocks should be developed in a way that enhances historical connections and provides a continuum among public amenities." The report proposed height limits of 9 to 22 feet on Block 108, and 18-19 feet on Block 126.

Changes Since 1983: There has been very little change in the area since the corridor was enacted, other than the construction of the Criminal Justice Center on the block northwest of the park. Conditions in Wooldridge Park itself have deteriorated to some extent; the park does have Sunday evening concerts in the summer and Giant Chess on Saturday afternoons throughout the year, but otherwise it draws few regular users other than the homeless. The park is no longer the community gathering place it was for most of its existence.

Effect: The corridor places height limits on nearby blocks that effectively preclude any redevelopment of the surface parking and drive-through uses that exist today. On Block 108, directly east of Wooldridge Park, the corridor imposes a height limit of about 5 feet at the corner of 9th and Guadalupe, guaranteeing the preservation of the non-conforming drive-through that predates the corridor. On Block 126, directly north of Block 108, the corridor imposes a height limit of about 11 feet at the corner of 10th and Guadalupe, rising to a maximum of about 28 feet at the northeast corner of the block. These limits

have created difficulties for Travis County officials, some of whom have expressed interest in locating a new courthouse on Block 126.



Recommendation: Work with the County and other stakeholders toward a plan for deleting or modifying the corridor to allow redevelopment of the underutilized lots on Blocks 108 and 126. As the 1983 report recognized, the existing uses on those lots do not appropriately complement the public amenities in the area. Other corridors impose height limits of 60 to 75 feet on these blocks, leaving the door open to a healthier mix of uses in the area. Eliminating or modifying the corridor would promote the goals expressed in the 1983 report, and would better serve the park and other nearby amenities. Redevelopment of those blocks could provide more activity and uses in the neighborhood between the park and the Capitol.

4 - French Legation

Type of View: Stationary and Dramatic Glimpse

Viewpoint: The elevation of the viewing station at the French legation porch is slightly below the base of the dome at 539'. The viewpoint is approximately 3780' to the east and south of the Capitol. The French Legation grounds house a museum and events center. The grounds are open to the public Tuesday through Sunday.

View Frame: The primary view of the Capitol building is from the French Legation front porch. The view is framed by the Legation porch, Waller Creek Plaza Building, the Municipal Police & Courts Building and vegetation. Because of the relatively high viewpoint afforded by the location, the dome is seen without perspective distortion and as the highest and most prominent form on the skyline. The glowing image of the Capitol Dome is particularly dramatic at night. The Capitol view from the French Legation porch has been used as a backdrop for commemorative photographs celebrating both public and private events.

Adjacent Views: Adjacent views are 11 - 11th Street Threshold, 16 - the East 7th Street Bridge and 10 - Pleasant Valley at Lakeshore. Overlapping views to the west are 12 - North bound IH-35 between the Municipal Police & Courts Building and W. 10th Street.

Rationale from 1983 Report: The location afforded an unobstructed view of the dominant Capitol Dome when not obstructed by vegetation.

Changes Since 1983: The view continues to be dominated by the Capitol Dome. The French Legation continues to be an important part of Austin's historical and cultural fabric.

Effect: The French Legation viewpoint height is 539 feet looking up at the Capitol Dome base at 653 feet. The view corridor is narrow and overlapped by the broader View 12 – North-Bound lanes of IH-35 between Municipal Police and Courts Bldg and W. 10th.

Recommendation: No change.

5 - Lamar Bridge

Type of View: Threshold. The Capitol is visible as a traveler approaches downtown from the South. With the closing of the Lamar Bridge to pedestrians, the number of viewers has been reduced along Lamar. Some of the opportunity to view has been replaced by views from the Pfluger Bridge, but those views are more limited.

Viewpoint: The viewpoint is 1.6 miles southwest of the dome and is approximately 1,000 feet in length running from the intersection of Lamar and Riverside on the south to access ramp for Sandra Muraida Way on the north. It is from ground level, approximately 700 feet above sea level.

View Frame: The view from the Lamar Bridge includes Town Lake, the Pfluger Bridge, and the railroad bridge in the foreground, the Seaholm Plant, and other buildings in mid-range with the Austin Skyline framing the view. The dome is not a dominant element in the view. At both the north and south ends, the view is partially obscured by vegetation.

Adjacent Views: There are no overlapping or adjacent views.

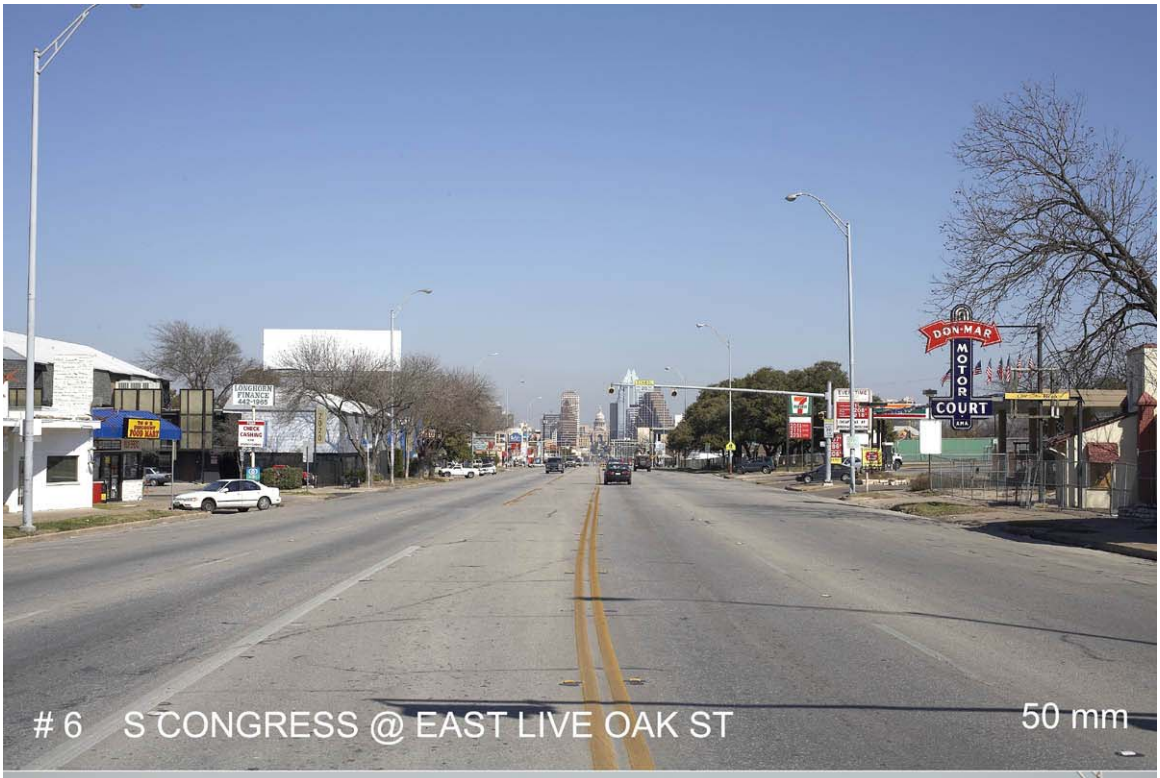
Rationale from 1983 Report: This corridor is not specifically discussed in the 1983 report.

Changes Since 1983: The character of the neighborhood in the middle ground of the view has changed significantly since 1983. The automobile dealerships that dominated the area have been replaced by mid- and high-rise buildings that frame the corridor,

particularly from the north end. The construction of the Pfluger Bridge has provided new view points adjacent to this view. Whereas, the removal of pedestrian access to the Lamar Bridge has limited viewers to automobile passengers.

Recommendation: No change.

6 – South Congress at East Live Oak



Type of View: Sustained Approach

Viewpoint: The viewpoint is 2.4 miles south of the Capitol at an elevation of 574 feet. The view is directly in front of a motorist and remains in view for a considerable time as the vehicle progress northward on Congress Ave.

View Frame: The view is framed by the street surface in the foreground and by the businesses along South Congress. In the distance, the view is framed by the high-rise office buildings along North Congress. There is an unfortunate traffic signal that aligns directly above the dome.

Adjacent Views: There are no adjacent views.

Rationale from 1983 Report: "The historical significance, drama and power of this view are unequalled in Austin as well as in Texas. Therefore, Congress Avenue heads any list of Capitol view corridors. Designated in 1939 as the ceremonial entry to the heart of the city, the breadth of the avenue assures a view of the Capitol dome as the traveler approaches from the south."

Changes Since 1983: This corridor was not described in the 1983 report

Recommendation: No change.

7 – MoPac Bridge

Type of View: Threshold

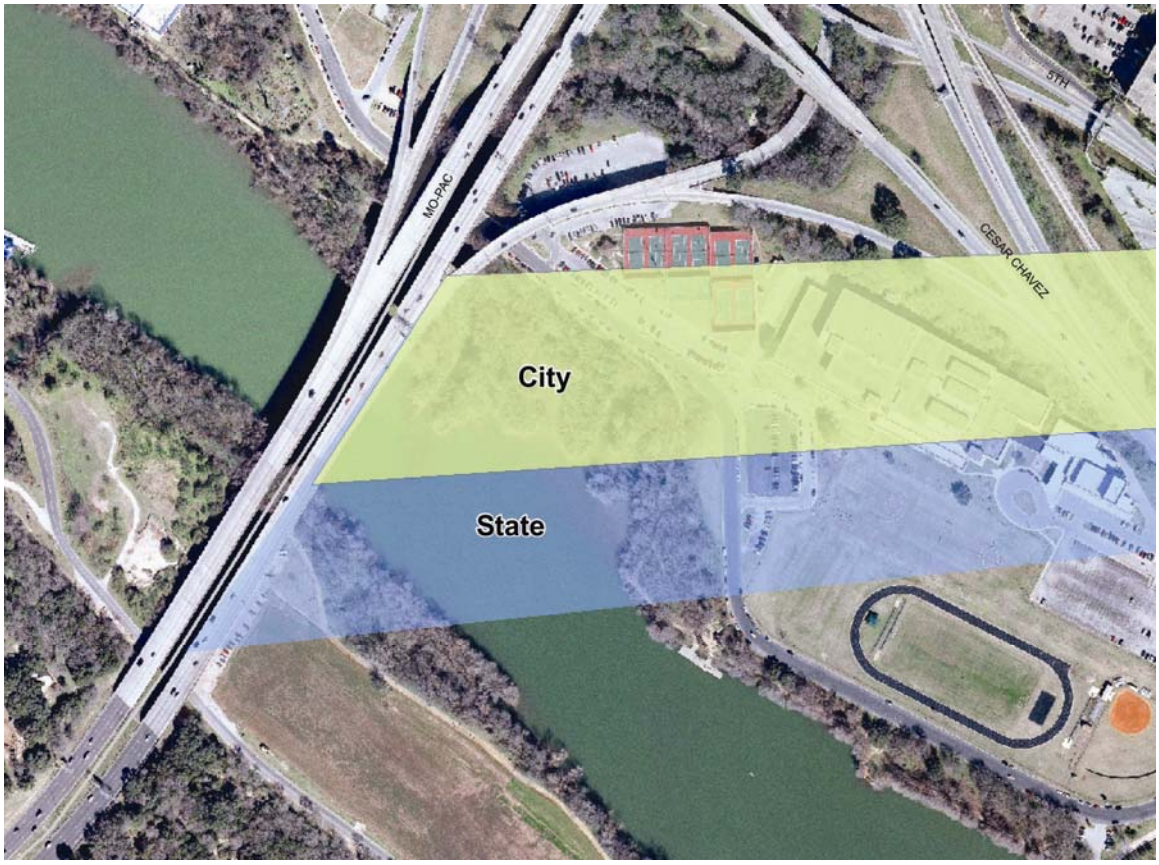
Viewpoint: An elevated view of the Capitol from the southwest as automobile travelers along MoPac approach and cross the river. The corridor does not protect views from the pedestrian bridge beneath MoPac. The designated corridor begins as MoPac passes the Garden Center in Zilker Park and crosses over Stratford Drive at an elevation of 485 feet above sea level and continues across the lake to the exit ramps to Cesar Chavez Boulevard and West 5th Street at an elevation of 498 feet. This is the widest of all the view corridors. The corridor as defined by the City is narrower and begins at the south bank of the river.

View Frame: The Capitol is prominently seen with the lake, Zilker Park, and Austin High School in the foreground during the day and particularly at night. The northern end of the view is partially obscured by vegetation, and after crossing the lake, a viewer's attention is drawn either north along MoPac or along the exit ramps.

Adjacent Views: 18 – Zilker Clubhouse overlaps a portion of this view near the center of the MoPac Bridge.

Rationale from 1983 Report: "Zilker Park, two miles from the Capitol, offers a panoramic view of downtown Austin from numerous vantage points. . . . At the MoPac Bridge, the dome reemerges into view. A thin ribbon of sky separates it from Westgate. Highrise development south of the Capitol appears as a cluster at a substantial distance to the right of the dome. … The CBD portion of the Zilker Park View Corridor contains the lowrise commercial and residential area west of Lamar, Duncan Park and a portion of Shoal Creek and the commercial/residential mix between Lamar and San Antonio. The development potential of parking lots to the northeast of the Travis County Courthouse and a 4th Height and Area-zoned block bounded by Rio Grande, Nueces, 10th and 11th Streets pose the greatest threats to the Zilker Park View Corridor."

Changes Since 1983: It is unclear what parking lots were referred to in the 1983 report. The block between Nueces and Rio Grande is west of the Criminal Justice Center and retains a similar mix of low rise commercial uses as it did in 1983. Further development downtown has balanced the view such that the development is no longer seen at "a substantial distance" from the capitol. During the last two decades, trees have grown up along the northern edge of the view.



Effect: This view corridor crosses 11th & 12th streets at San Antonio, northeast of the County Courthouse; continues to cross West Avenue between 9th & 11th streets; crosses Lamar from 9th Street to south of 8th Street; and crosses 5th & 6th streets between Walsh and West Lynn. The neighborhoods between the Capitol and Lamar are characterized by

former residences that have been converted to commercial uses. West of Lamar, residential uses predominate north of 6th Street and commercial uses predominate along 5th & 6th streets.

Recommendation:

(1) The City should expand its corridor to align its southern boundary with the southern boundary of the State's corridor, which originates near Stratford Drive.

(2) We recommend that the northern end of the view point be moved slightly southward to the north boundary of View 18 - Zilker Clubhouse because the view points along Mopac north of Town Lake provide only marginal views. This modification would have only an incidental effect on the view and would provide some opportunities for taller developments--particularly along West 5th & 6th streets, where this corridor currently imposes height limits in the range of 38 to 41 feet. This modification would allow those properties to be built up to a height of approximately 60 feet, a height that the Old West Austin Neighborhood has recently agreed to for a project between West 5th & 6th streets.

8 – South Lamar at La Casa

Type of View: Threshold

Viewpoint: The viewpoint is the northbound lanes of South Lamar Blvd. at the intersection of La Casa, three miles southwest of the Capitol at an elevation of approximately 600 feet.

View Frame: The view of the skyline including the capitol is directly in front of the vehicle. The view frame consists of the roadway in the foreground, the businesses and signage along Lamar in the mid range with a small sliver of skyline visible above the businesses. The view of the dome itself is obscured by foliage and cluttered with signs. It is not a very good view of the Capitol. There is no particular significance to the viewpoint. In the downtown area, the corridor passes over the Seaholm site, and several blocks that are redevelopment candidates. In one case, Novare, the developers of Block 51, have been able to design a structure that achieves a high density by creatively designing around the corridor.

Adjacent Views: There are no adjacent view corridors. There is a better view of the dome from a few blocks south on Lamar, near The Broken Spoke (see photograph below).

Changes Since 1983: This corridor was not described in the 1983 report.

Recommendation: Investigate whether action can be taken to clear away the current obstructions of the view. If not, consider moving the vantage point further south on

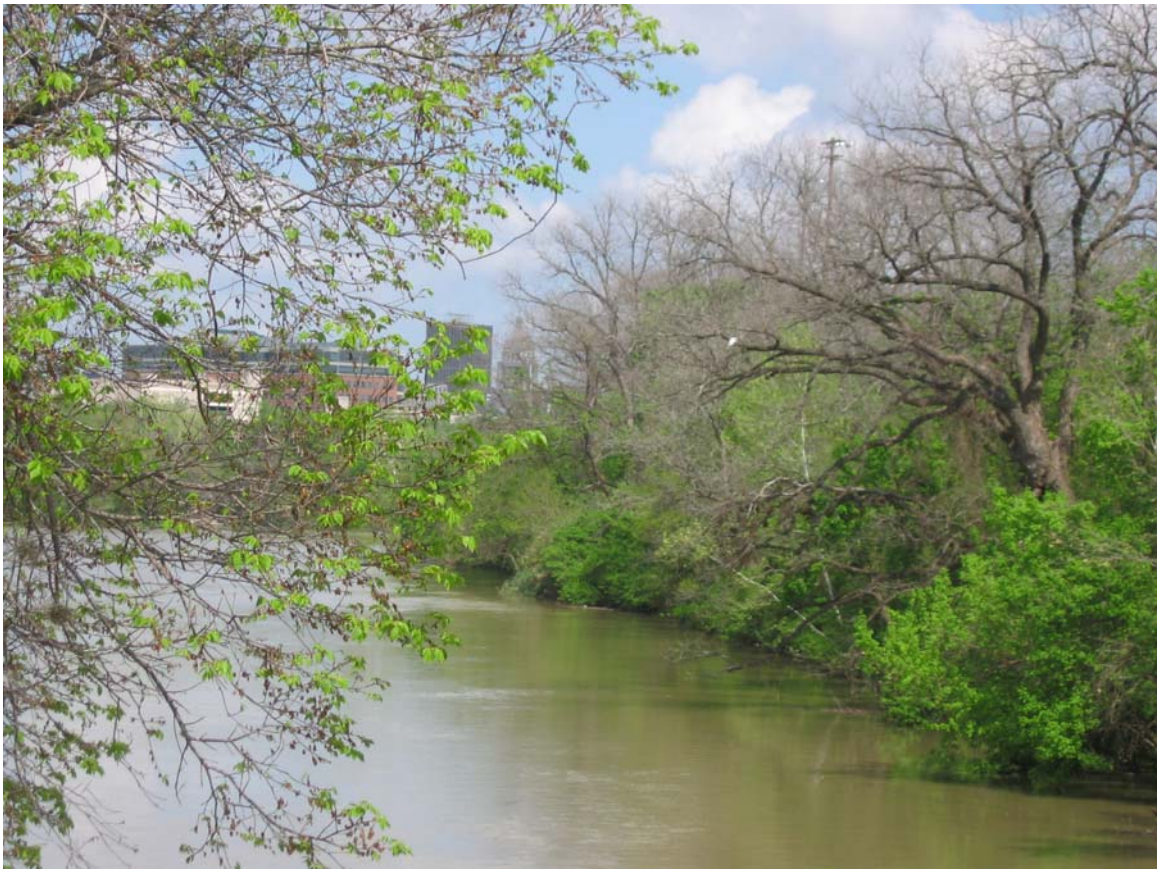
Lamar, near The Broken Spoke. In either case, the City should seek assistance from participants in the ongoing South Lamar Neighborhood Planning effort.

9 – Barton Creek Pedestrian Bridge

Type of View: Dramatic Glimpse

Viewpoint: A low view of the Capitol from the southwest from the Barton Creek Bridge on the Town Lake Trail. The view is best seen from the western half of the bridge. The viewpoint is in Zilker Park and along the popular and heavily used Town Lake Trail. The viewpoint is just downstream from Barton Springs and is just west of the restaurant row along Barton Springs Road.

View Frame: The view of the Barton Creek Bridge on the Town Lake Trail with the Capitol in the distance is one of Austin's iconic views. The view is framed in the foreground by the vegetation along the banks of the creeks. The Capitol is seen from across the lake with high rise development to the east.



Adjacent Views: None.

Rationale from 1983 Report: **"**Zilker Park, two miles from the Capitol, offers a panoramic view of downtown Austin from numerous vantage points. . . . The CBD portion of the Zilker Park View Corridor contains the lowrise commercial and residential area west of Lamar, Duncan Park and a portion of Shoal Creek and the commercial/residential mix between Lamar and San Antonio. The development potential

of parking lots to the northeast of the Travis County Courthouse and a 4th Height and Area-zoned block bounded by Rio Grande, Nueces, 10th and 11th Streets pose the greatest threats to the Zilker Park View Corridor."

Changes Since 1983: The view now includes the mid rise developments at 6th & Lamar. It is unclear what parking lots were referred to in the 1983 report. The block between Nueces and Rio Grande is west of the Criminal Justice Center and retains a similar mix of low rise commercial uses as it did in 1983.

Effect: This narrow viewpoint crosses Lavaca at 11th Street where it is also adjacent to Viewpoints 3 – Woolridge Park and 5- Lamar Bridge. The viewpoint crosses 6th Street at the bridge over Shoal Creek and Lamar at the railroad tracks adjacent to 3d Street.

Recommendation: No change.

10 – Pleasant Valley at Lakeshore Drive

Type of View: Stationary

Viewpoint: This view is from the extreme eastern end of Longhorn Shores park over Town Lake. The viewpoint is at street level, 450 feet in elevation, approximately 25 feet above the level of Town Lake, 2.6 miles southeast of the Capitol. This portion of the park is not improved with any facilities other than a segment of the hike and bike trail along the water's edge, landscaping, and an occasional park bench.

View Frame: It was difficult to see the dome from the viewpoint even in January due to natural vegetation (willow trees) along the edge of Town Lake and landscaping (crepe myrtles). During the time of the year when leaves are on the trees, the dome will be completely obscured. From the hike and bike trail along the water's edge there are places where a view can be seen between willow trees.

The view includes Town Lake in the foreground, the Cesar Chavez neighborhood and the Holly Street Power Plant in the mid-range and the Austin skyline in the distance. The dominant feature of the skyline is the Frost Bank Tower. The other vantage point from Longhorn Shores (View 17) offers better views.

Adjacent Views: View 10 does not overlap any other until approximately two blocks east of IH-35 where it begins to overlap corridors 14 and 15, but at a higher elevation. It appears by itself to limit development on the approximate equivalent of five blocks south and east of the dome. View 17 is nearby and west of this vantage point, but it is not immediately adjacent.

Rationale from 1983 Report: This corridor was not included in the 1983 report.

Changes Since 1983: The landscaping appears to have been planted since 1983.

Effect: This corridor crosses Red River around East 9th Street, and impacts the surrounding area. Just east of IH-35, it could have a minor effect on the redevelopment of the Saltillo District. Where the view corridor crosses East 5th Street, about two blocks east of the freeway, it imposes a height limit of about 117 feet. The Saltillo District Master Plan allows for a building of up to 11 floors or 120 feet between IH-35 and San Marcos Street "if it is shown that such a use would result in increased benefits to the Project and the community." Elsewhere in East Austin, the corridor has little if any effect; it imposes height limits of over 70 feet, which are well above the other applicable height limits.

Recommendation: No change at this time. However, the Parks and Recreation Department should consider relocating landscaping and trees to avoid obstructing views from key viewpoints. To the extent that the Downtown Plan finds that greater height limits are desirable in the area around 9th and Red River, this issue could be revisited, as the existing views from the defined viewpoints are marginal.

11 - East 11th Street Threshold

Type of View: Threshold.

Viewpoint: The view is from east of the Capitol from where 11th Street crosses IH-35 at an elevation of 517 feet.

View Frame: This is one of the principal entrances to Downtown from the east.

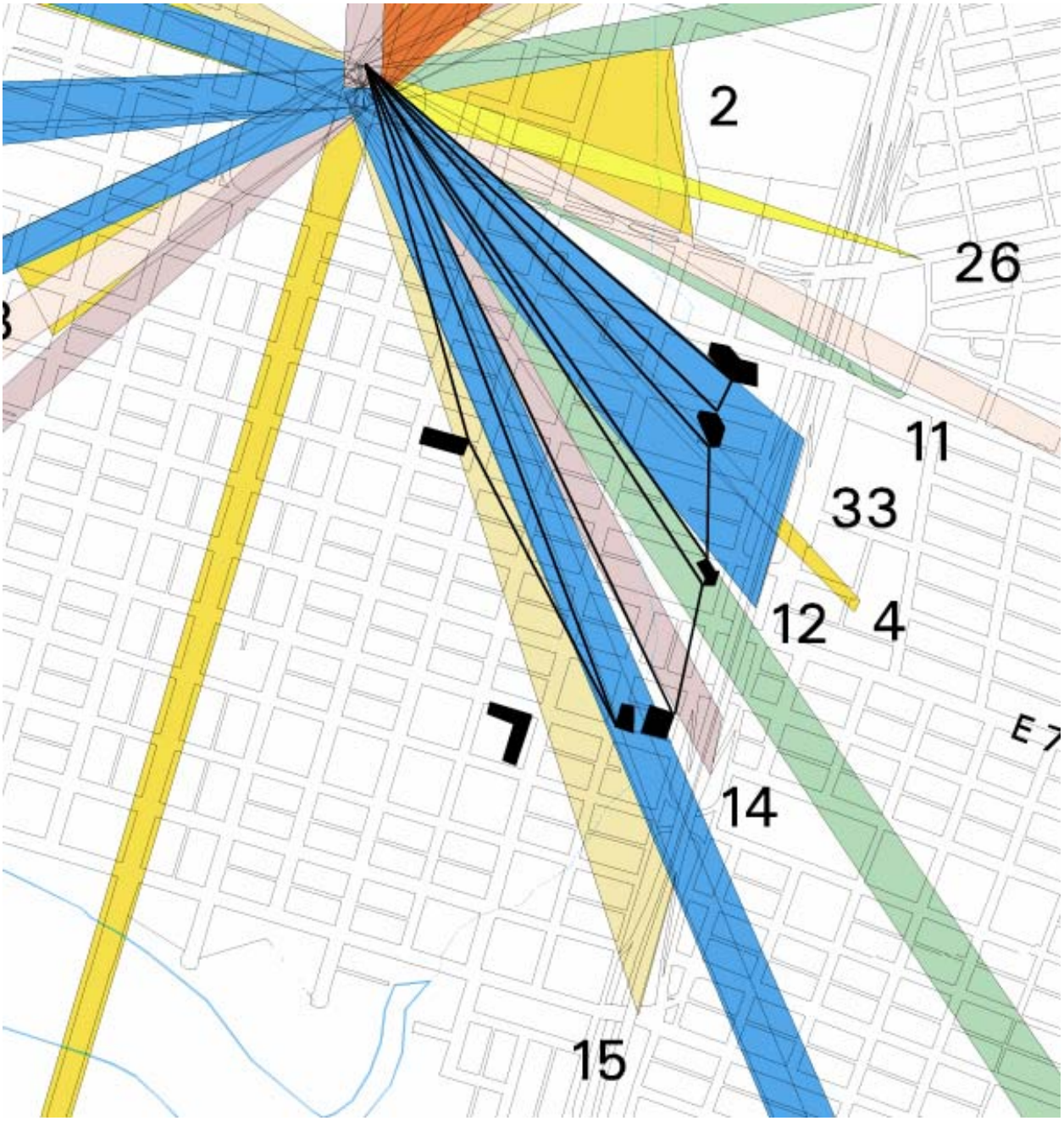
Adjacent Views: 16 – East 7th St. Bridge over Texas-New Orleans Railroad Corridor.

Rationale from 1983 Report: **"**Threshold views from IH-35 intersections at MLK Jr. Blvd., at East 11th Street, and at East 12th St. mark the transition between the CBD and East Austin neighborhoods and roadways."

Changes Since 1983: East 11th Street has been the focus of redevelopment efforts that have resulted in the construction of new residential and commercial buildings and the restoration of existing structures. A gateway arch has been added at IH-35. Under state law, redevelopment of 11th Street below an elevation of 600 feet pursuant to the East 11th and 12th Streets Redevelopment Program is exempt from complying with the view corridors (Texas Government Code § 3151.003(2)). However, any further redevelopment is unlikely adversely affect the view.

Recommendation: No change.

12 - Northbound IH-35 between the Municipal Police and Courts Bldg and W. 10th



View Type: Dramatic Glimpse

Viewpoints: The vantage points for this view along IH-35 run from the Police Headquarters at 7th Street to an office building at 10th St & IH-35. The Capitol can be seen for approximately 2 seconds in light traffic and for approximately 3 seconds in medium to heavy traffic.

View Frame: The view of the Capitol dome to the west is crowded and close to perpendicular to the direction of travel along IH-35. The view is partially obstructed by one billboard and one traffic sign.

Adjacent Views: 4 – French Legation and 10 – Pleasant Valley Road at Lakeshore Drive.

Rationale from 1983 Report: "IH-35 offers Austin's longest series of Capitol views. The Capitol amid the changing panorama of skyline and terrain creates a memorable impression of Texas's capital city.

"Northbound traffic can see the dome beyond the Federal Building from the southern approach across Town Lake until River Street. . . . The view is blocked by the Police and Courts Building at 8th, then continues until the highway descends beneath overpasses at 11th and 12th Streets."

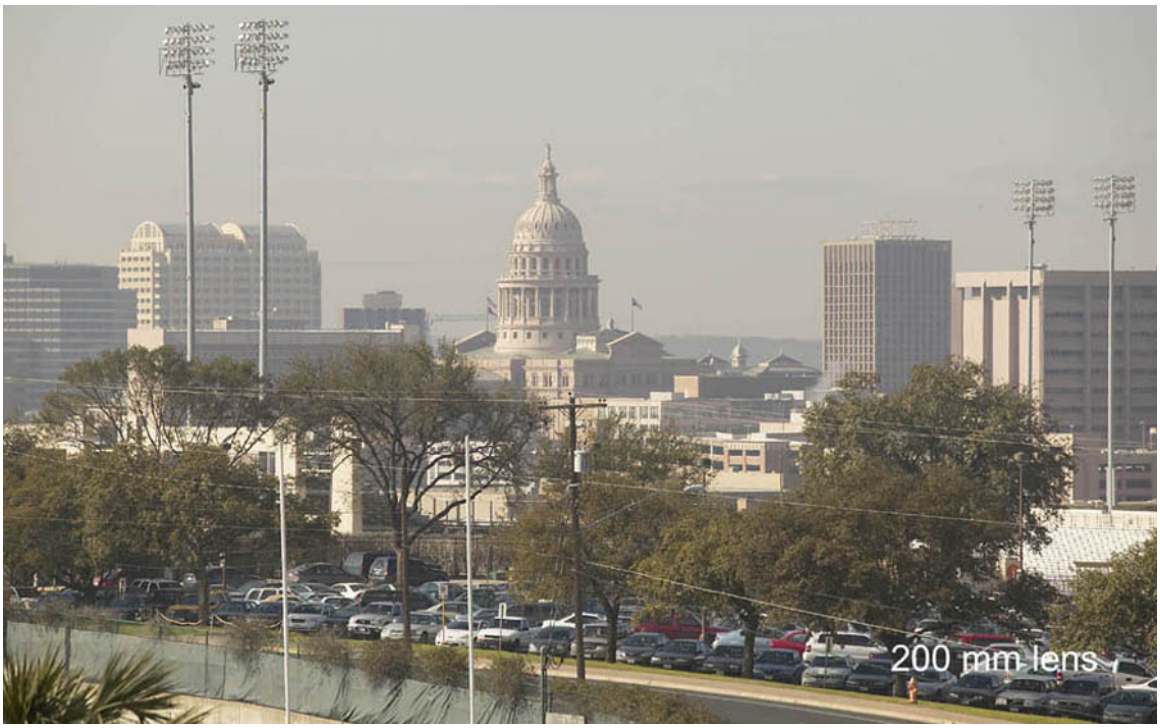
Changes Since 1983: An office building and hotel have been built near IH-35 in the northern portion of the view.

Effect: This view corridor covers six full blocks. Three of those blocks are in the portion of the corridor where the view is obstructed by existing buildings.

Recommendation: The northern portion of this corridor provides only marginal views of the capitol; the view is close to perpendicular to travelers along IH-35, and there are several buildings that break up the views within this corridor. As a result, the Commission considered recommending that the northern boundary of this corridor be aligned with the northern boundary of View 4 – French Legation, which would remove the portion of the corridor where the view is obstructed by existing buildings. The blocks that would be affected by this change, however, are already substantially developed, so the Commission does not recommend changes to the corridor at this time.

The City should also investigate ways to clear signs and other obstructions from the view corridor.

13 – South-Bound Lanes of the Upper Deck of IH-35, Concordia College to MLK, Jr. Blvd.



Type of View: Sustained Approach

Viewpoint: Upper deck of IH-35 Southbound from East Dean Keeton St. to East MLK Jr. Blvd. The viewpoint to the North begins at a distance of 7,045 feet from the Capitol with an elevation of 648 feet. To the South the viewpoint ends at a distance of 4,627 feet from the Capitol at an elevation of 618 feet.

View Frame: The dome of the Capitol is clearly viewed in the context of the City of Austin and The University of Texas campus. The Tower of The University of Texas is viewed to the West and the dome of the Capitol is viewed from the North in the urban center of the City of Austin.

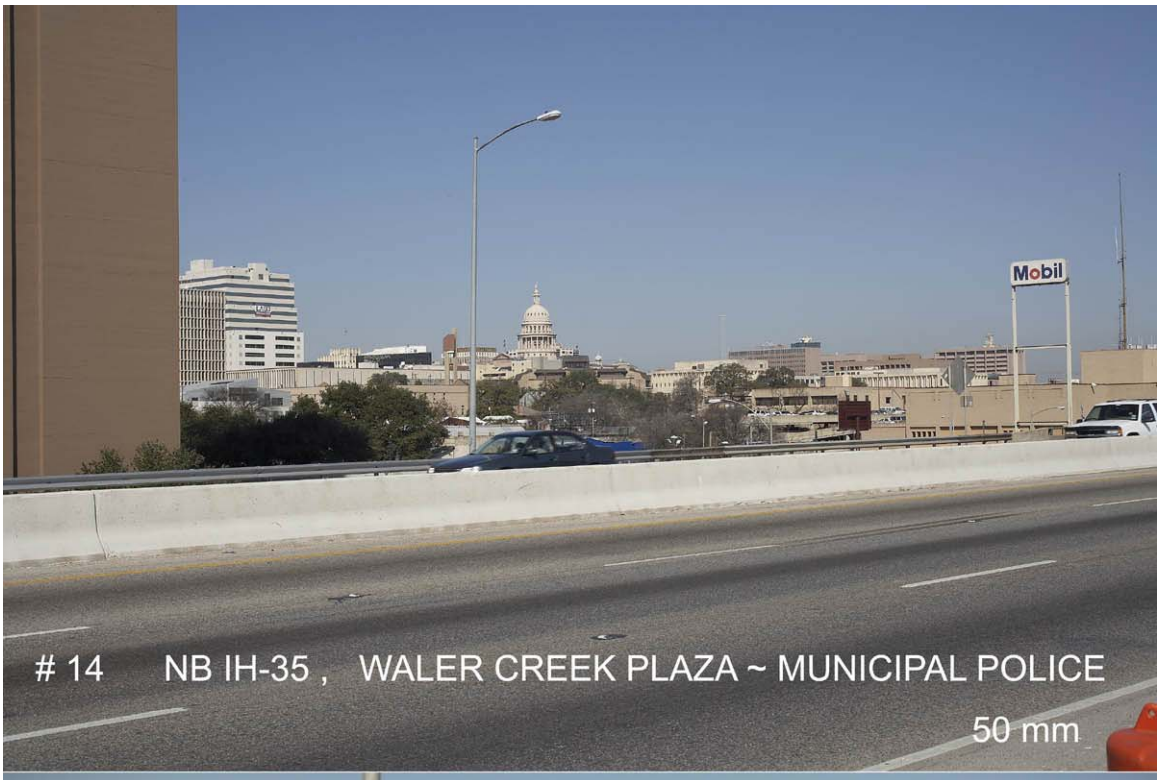
Adjacent Views: A panorama of the city and the hills to the South and West to the horizon.

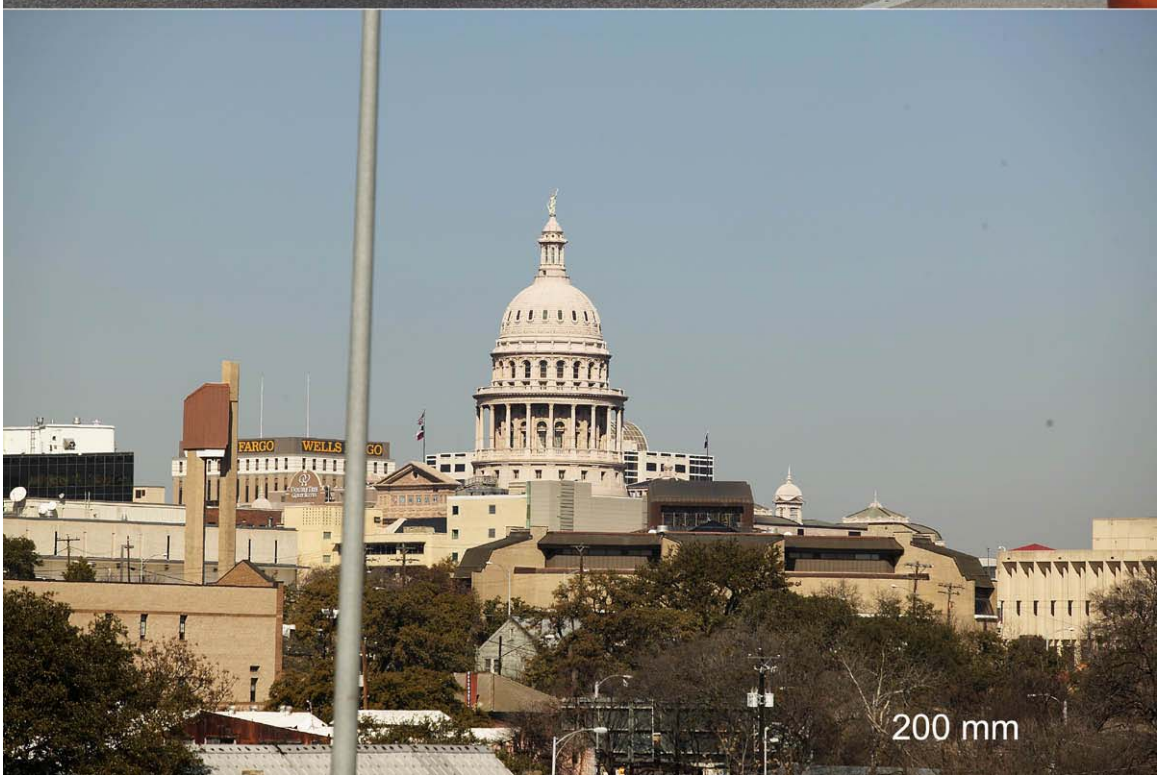
Rationale from 1983 Report: "Southbound travelers on the upper deck see both dome and UT Tower from Concordia Lutheran College until traffic enters the underpass at MLK, Jr. Blvd."

Changes Since 1983: The view of dome of the Capitol has been briefly interrupted by an inflatable dome on the Frank Denius Fields of the University of Texas. Concordia Lutheran College is in the process of moving, and its site is proposed for redevelopment.

Recommendation: No change.

14 - Northbound IH-35 between Municipal Police and Courts Bldg and Waller Creek Plaza





View Type: Dramatic Glimpse

Viewpoints: The viewpoints in this corridor run from the Hilton Garden Inn at 6th Street to the Police Headquarters at 7th Street.
Duration: Approx. 6 seconds (light traffic) to approx. 11 seconds (medium to heavy traffic). Obstructions: 1 Sign

View Frame: The Capitol dome to the northwest is isolated and prominent. The view is dramatic both during the day and night. The view is partially eclipsed on by one sign.

Adjacent Views: There are no adjacent views.

Rationale from 1983 Report: "IH-35 offers Austin's longest series of Capitol views. The Capitol amid the changing panorama of skyline and terrain creates a memorable impression of Texas's capital city.

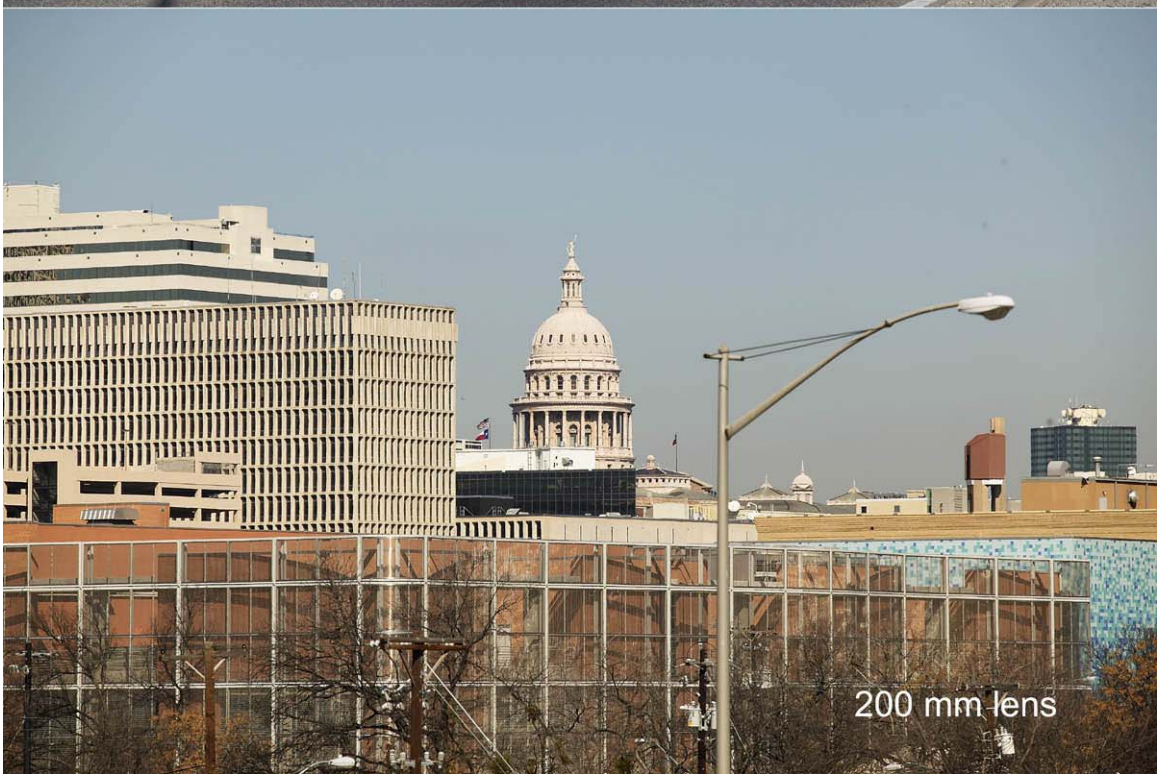
"Northbound traffic can see the dome beyond the Federal Building from the southern approach across Town Lake until River Street. The Capitol commands the skyline from 1st to 7th Street while sightlines pass over Palm Park, Waller Creek and the 6th Street Historic District."

Changes Since 1983: The sign has apparently been added since 1983. The City should investigate whether the sign's placement was illegal.

Effect: This narrow view corridor crosses the majority of four blocks.

Recommendation: No Change. We recommend that the City consider mechanisms to promote the removal or relocation of the signage to enhance the view.

15 - Northbound IH-35 between 3d Street and Waller Creek Plaza



View Type: Sustained approach.

Viewpoints: The Capitol is seen to the northwest between the Hilton Hotel on 5th Street and the Hilton Garden Inn at 5th & IH-35.

View Frame: The dome is isolated and prominent on the horizon, offering a dramatic view both during the day and night. The Capitol can be seen for approximately 9 seconds while in light traffic and for approximately 17 seconds in medium to heavy traffic. The view is partially obstructed by the Pickle Federal Building, two billboards, and one southbound traffic sign.

Adjacent Views: 17 – Longhorn Shores

Rationale from 1983 Report: "IH-35 offers Austin's longest series of Capitol views. The Capitol amid the changing panorama of skyline and terrain creates a memorable impression of Texas's capital city.

"Northbound traffic can see the dome beyond the Federal Building from the southern approach across Town Lake until River Street. The Capitol commands the skyline from 1st to 7th Street while sightlines pass over Palm Park, Waller Creek and the 6th Street Historic District."

Changes Since 1983: The billboards and traffic sign have been added since 1983.

Effect: This corridor crosses one full block and the majority of another four blocks

Recommendation: We recommend that the southern boundary of this corridor be set so that the Pickle Building is no longer in the view. As shown on the map below, the reddish portion of CVC 15 would be removed with this recommendation.

The portion to be removed bisects Blocks 87 and 38 and cuts across the corners of another six blocks. Removing the portion of the view corridor where the view is obstructed by the Pickle Building would allow additional residential or commercial development on these blocks. This recommendation would have no effect on existing views.

The City should also investigate ways to clear signs and other obstructions from the view corridor.

16 - East 7TH Street Bridge over the Texas New Orleans Railroad

Type of View: Sustained Approach

Viewpoint: An elevated view (476') is afforded by the 7th Street Bridge. It is 12,440' east and south of The Capitol.

View Frame: The dome is isolated on the skyline, and is clearly visible, especially at night. The view of the dome afforded by the 7th street bridge defines the Austin skyline to drivers arriving from the east and from the airport.

Adjacent Views: Adjacent views include the east 11- 11th Street Threshold and 26 - East 12th street at IH-35. Overlapping views are 26 - East 12th street at IH-35 and 2 - Waterloo Park.

Rationale from 1983 Report: None.

Changes Since 1983: The view remains unobstructed. The East 7th Street Corridor Project, currently under construction, is designed to enhance pedestrian access to the 7th Street Bridge and further enhance enjoyment of the view.

Effect: The corridor crosses the southwest corner of Waterloo Park (near E.12th & Trinity), and affects the northern halves of the two blocks on the south side of East 12th between Red River and I-35.

Recommendation: No change.

17 – Longhorn Shores

Type of View: Stationary

Viewpoint: The viewpoint is approximately 125 feet in length along South Lakeshore Blvd. 2.5 miles southeast of the dome at an elevation of 435 feet. Lakeshore Blvd. is the south boundary of Longhorn Shores, a linear park along the south side of Town Lake. The hike and bike trail runs the length of the park along the lake front, which is the northern border of the park. The City's definition for this vantage point is narrower and is located close to Lakeshore Drive, rather than the lake.

View Frame: The view is difficult to see because of vegetation--namely a number of live oak trees in the park and Cypress trees across the lake at Festival Beach. When the dome is visible, foreground is the Longhorn Shores Park and Town Lake. The mid-range is foliage in the Cesar Chavez neighborhood. The most predominant structures in the frame are the Hilton and Hilton Garden Inn Hotels. Longhorn Shores is an important park that will serve the needs of the growing population in the Riverside area.

Adjacent Views: The narrower City's defined corridor is above the state corridor for its entire length except for the short distance between the north and south boundaries of Longhorn Shore, where any building would be highly unlikely. Therefore the City's corridor protects only a poor view that is not in need of protection.

Changes Since 1983: There have been no significant changes in the immediate area of the viewpoint since 1983. The Austin skyline, however, has made some significant changes particularly with the construction of the Hilton Convention Center Hotel.

Recommendation: We recommend that the City's corridor be redefined to coincide with the larger state vantage point. This change will have no effect on the view of the Capitol from Longhorn Shores.

18 – Zilker Clubhouse

Type of View: Stationary

Viewpoint: This elevated viewpoint looks across Town Lake and the MoPac Bridge toward the Capitol from the southwest from the plaza in front of the Zilker Clubhouse.

View Frame: The dome is prominent on the horizon to the north of the high rise development downtown and is particularly striking at night. The clubhouse is a public park facility that is a popular site for weddings and other community events.

Adjacent Views: 7- MoPac Bridge

Rationale from 1983 Report: **"**Zilker Park, two miles from the Capitol, offers a panoramic view of downtown Austin from numerous vantage points. . . . At the MoPac Bridge, the dome reemerges into view. A thin ribbon of sky separates it from Westgate. Highrise development south of the Capitol appears as a cluster at a substantial distance to the right of the dome. . . . The CBD portion of the Zilker Park View Corridor contains the lowrise commercial and residential area west of Lamar, Duncan Park and a portion of Shoal Creek and the commercial/residential mix between Lamar and San Antonio. The development potential of parking lots to the northeast of the Travis County Courthouse

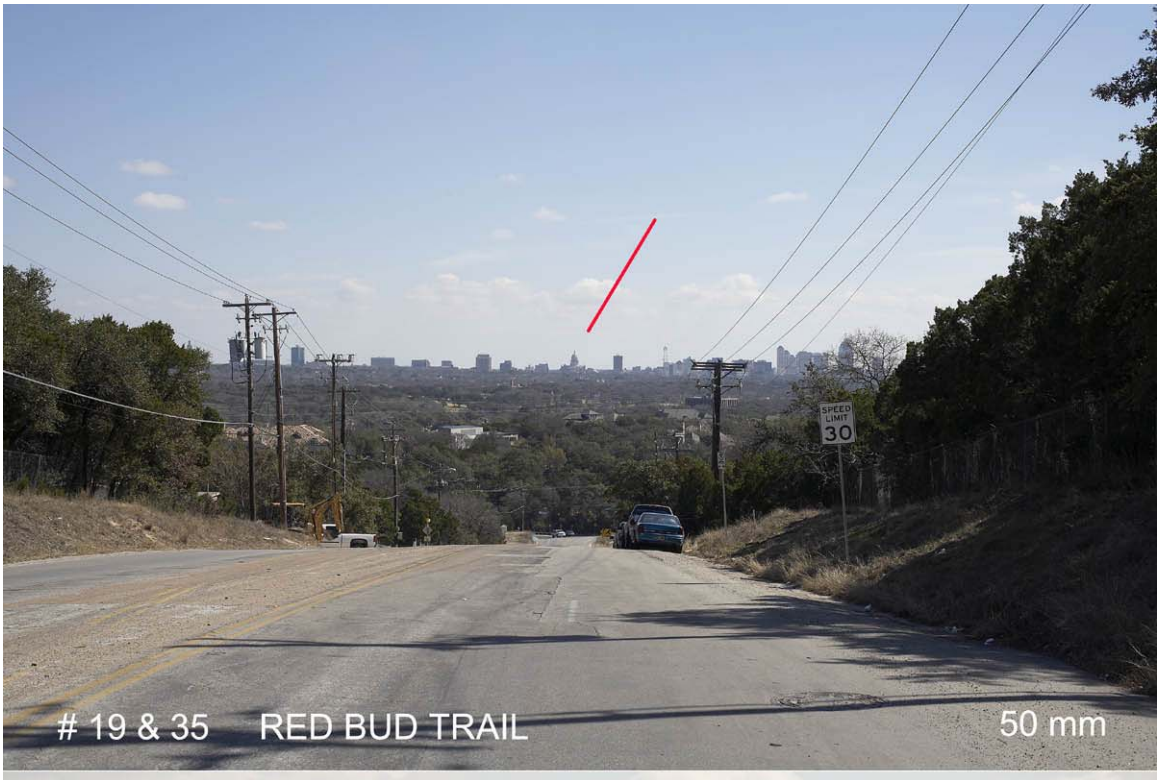
and a 4th Height and Area-zoned block bounded by Rio Grande, Nueces, 10th and 11th Streets pose the greatest threats to the Zilker Park View Corridor."

Changes Since 1983: It is unclear what parking lots were referred to in the 1983 report. The block between Nueces and Rio Grande is west of the Criminal Justice Center and retains a similar mix of low rise commercial uses as it did in 1983. Further development downtown has balanced the view such that the development is no longer seen at "a substantial distance" from the capitol.

Effect: As this view is measured from a narrow viewpoint that is encompassed wholly within the broader Viewpoint 7 – MoPac Bridge, it has little effect on potential development.

Recommendation: No change.

19 – Red Bud Trail



Type of View: Threshold

Viewpoint: The viewpoint is the crest of a hill on Red Bud Trail in Westlake, Texas 3.4 miles west north west of the dome. The City's corridor is broader than the state's and includes all of Red Bud Trail and a sizeable parcel of the Ullrich Water Treatment Plant to the south. From Red Bud Trail, there is a dramatic view directly in front as one tops the hill at an elevation of approximately 690 feet. This is one of the few view corridors from which the view is downward to the base of the dome situated at 653 feet. The Ullrich grounds are not open to the public.

View Frame: The immediate foreground is pavement bracketed by overhead electric lines and foliage. The midrange is foliage in the subdivisions along Stratford Drive and in west Austin. The dome is part of a panoramic view of the downtown Austin skyline that includes most of downtown. As one descends the hill, the horizontal view expands, but is interrupted by power lines and Stratford Mountain. This is a very high and very narrow corridor. It passes over the University of Texas' Breckenridge property, residential areas of west Austin including the Clarksville neighborhood at a height of approximately 100 feet above grade. In the central business district, the corridor passes over the half block on the south side of West 13th street at a slightly higher level than the base of the dome.

Adjacent Views: There are no other corridors in the vicinity of these corridors.

Economic Impact: This is a very high and very narrow corridor. It passes over the University of Texas' Breckenridge property, residential areas of west Austin including the Clarksville neighborhood at a height of approximately 100 feet above grade. In the central business district, the corridor passes over the half block on the south side of West 13th street at a slightly higher level than the base of the dome.

Changes Since 1983: This corridor was not included in the 1983 study.

Recommendation: We recommend that the City's corridor be revised to coincide with the State corridor. On the map below, the City's view corridor is shown in yellow, and the State's view corridor is shown in blue. In addition, as defined, a portion of the City's corridor extends underground. This recommendation would have no effect on the existing view.

20 – Enfield Road

Type of View: Threshold and Sustained Approach

Viewpoint: The viewpoint is the eastbound lanes of Enfield Road slightly west of the intersection Windsor Road East nine-tenths of a mile west of the capitol at an elevation of approximately 580 feet. The viewpoint is the roadway, but there are sidewalks on both sides of the road.

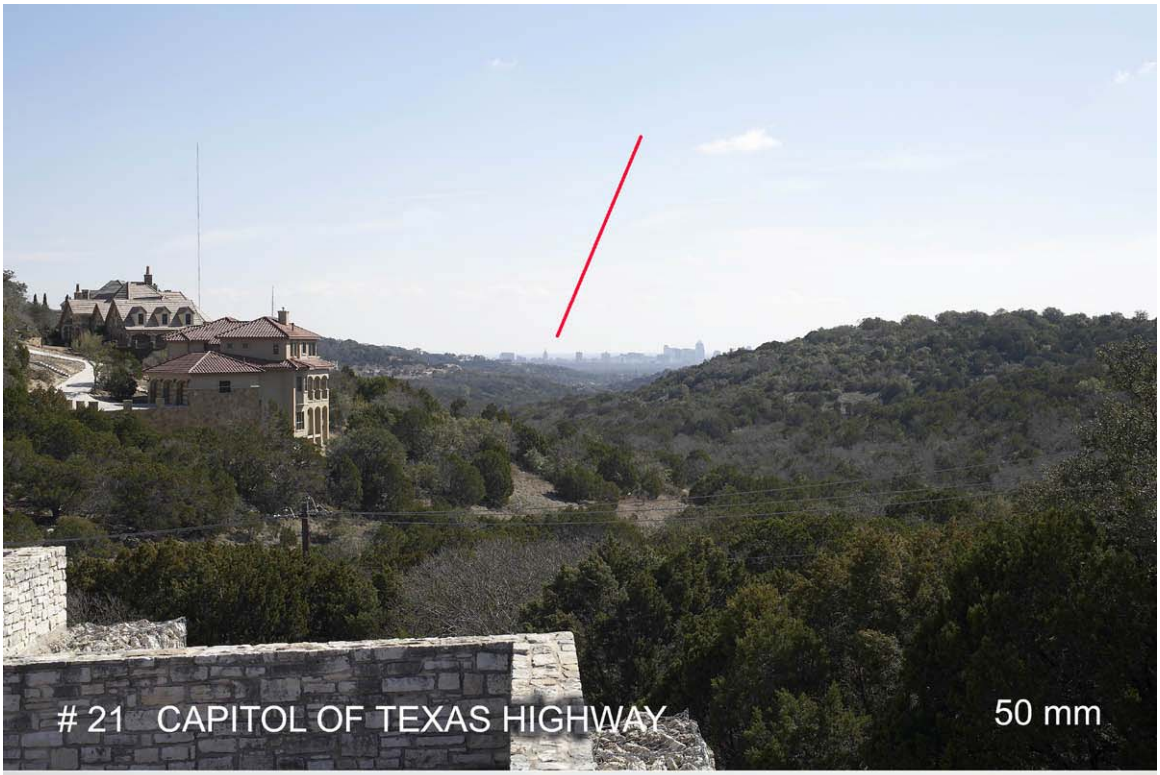
View Frame: From the viewpoint, the view is directly in front of an eastbound vehicle. mature trees in the residential area along Enfield. There are no signs or other clutter other than some traffic signals to distract from the view. In the downtown area, the corridor passes over the blocks between West Ave. and Colorado between 13th and 14th. Several of the properties under the corridor such as the Texas Trial Lawyers Building at 13th and Colorado have already been developed. Further west, there are areas that could be redeveloped, but it is unlikely that they would involve High-rise construction in the foreseeable future.

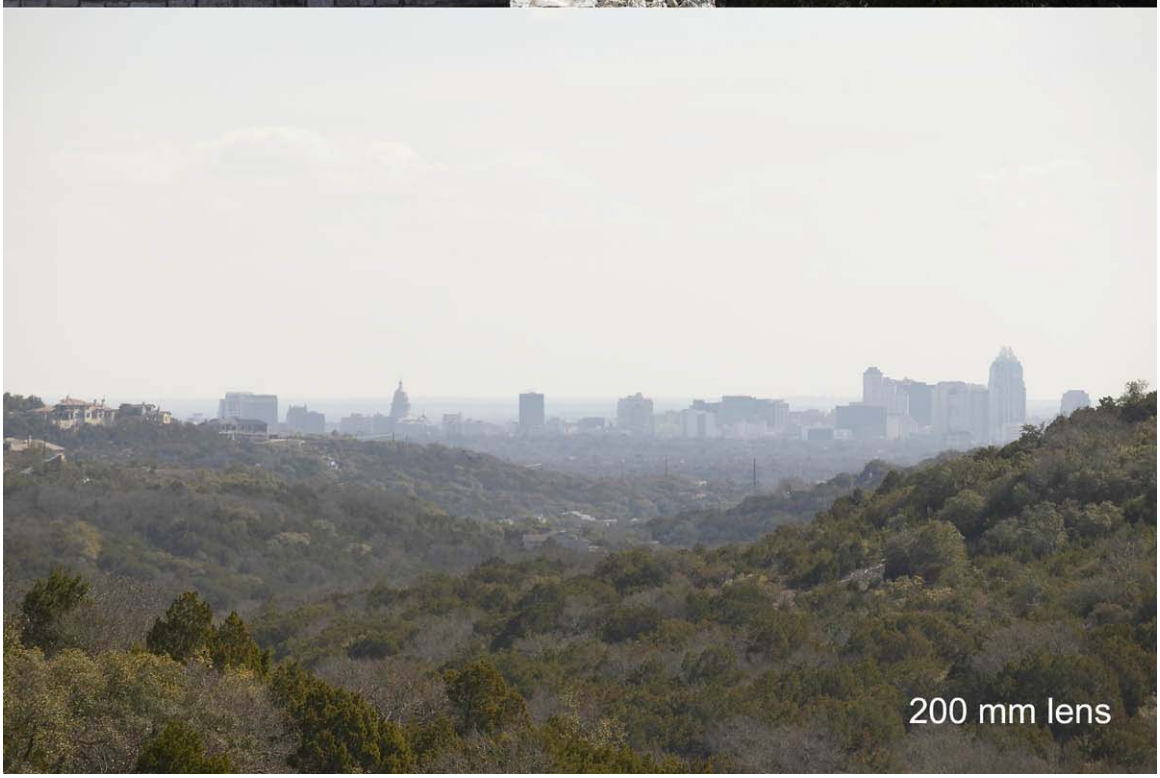
Adjacent Views: There are no adjacent views.

Changes Since 1983: This view was not included in the 1983 report.

Recommendation: No change.

21 - Capital of Texas Highway





Type of View: Stationary and Dramatic Glimpse

Viewpoint: The viewpoint is a Scenic Overlook on the east side of Capital of Texas Highway 5.8 miles northwest of the dome at an elevation of approximately 850 feet. The view is also available from the highway itself at about a 90 degree angle from the direction of travel. This is the most distant protected view of the Capitol and the one from the highest elevation. The scenic overlook is a turnout from the highway specifically designed to allow motorists to stop and enjoy a dramatic view of downtown Austin. It is often used for that purpose.

View Frame: The view frame is the flanks of significant hills that until the last few years were largely undeveloped. The foreground and middle ground are foliage in the residential areas in Westlake and west Austin. Recently several homes have been built that intrude slightly into the frame. The view is a skyline of all of downtown. The dome is clearly visible and particularly spectacular at night when the buildings are lighted.

Adjacent Views: There are no adjacent views.

Changes Since 1983: This corridor was not described in the 1983 report.

Recommendation: No change.

22 – 38th and Red River

Type of View: Sustained Approach.

Viewpoint: A narrow view with Red River Street aligned on the dome of the Capitol. The distance from the dome to the viewpoint is approximately 9,350 feet at an elevation of 609 feet.

View Frame: Framed by the trees on both sides of the street. The University of Texas campus is between the viewpoint and the dome of the Capitol.

Adjacent Views: None

Changes Since 1983: The construction of the upper deck of the Darrell K. Royal Memorial Stadium has eclipsed the Northwest side of the dome of the Capitol.

Recommendation: No change.

23 - Mueller Airport

Type of View: Stationary

Viewpoint: The Mueller Airport view corridor originates at the old flight control tower, northeast of the capital. The viewpoint is relatively low at 603 feet in elevation and relatively far from the dome, approximately 14,208 feet. This is one of the more distant view points east of IH-35.

View Frame: The image of the capitol dome from this location at eye level from the ground is distant, indistinct and low on the horizon. Any development between a ground level viewing station and the dome would block the view. While the dome is fairly isolated on the horizon, visibility is not particularly good. We were not able to get access to the tower, but the UT tower is probably visible from the control deck. The view point originally provided a view of the capitol to people arriving in Austin as they exited from the airport terminal.

Adjacent Views: Adjacent views are 13 - Southbound lanes of IH-35 between Concordia and MLK and 24 - MLK at IH-35. The Mueller corridor overlaps with View 24.

Rationale from 1983 Report: Not addressed in 1983 report.

Changes Since 1983: Mueller Airport has been decommissioned and is currently under constructions to be reused as a mixed use community. The flight tower will be preserved, but no specific use or plan for public access has yet been defined. Under state law, redevelopment of the Mueller Airport is exempt from complying with the view corridors (Texas Government Code § 3151.003(3)).

Effect: This narrow corridor primarily crosses residential neighborhoods before crossing IH-35 and, within Downtown, it crosses land owned by either the state or the University of Texas. Capitol Metro has determined that a pole for the currently proposed streetcar line could extend 3.75 feet above this view corridor.

Recommendation: We recommend that the City work with the Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Plan Implementation Advisory Commission to consider identifying one or more suitable viewpoints to replace the current one, which has become obsolete. Because of the low position of the dome view on the horizon, the eye level public views of the capitol from Mueller will be obscured by the redevelopment of Mueller. Distant views that have been kept clear because of the flat runways will disappear. Only the elevated view from the control tower will be maintained by the Mueller View Corridor.

24 – MLK Blvd at IH-35

Type of View: Threshold

Viewpoint: The MLK view points are at 570 feet in elevation and 3,500 feet northeast of the Capitol. The dome is also clearly visible from the parking lot of the baseball stadium on the east side of IH-35.

View Frame: This is a primary pathway for visitors to the University of Texas. The Capitol is bracketed on the south by the Erwin Center and on the north by the University of Texas Employment Center. The downtown area serves as a backdrop to the dome.

Adjacent Views: 23 - Mueller Airport and 25 - Oakwood Cemetery.

Rationale from 1983 Report: **"**Threshold views from IH-35 intersections at MLK Jr. Blvd., at East 11th Street, and at East 12th Street mark the transition between the CBD and East Austin neighborhoods and roadways."

Changes Since 1983: The University of Texas Employment Center was built in the mid 80s.

Effect: Because this view corridor exclusively crosses lands owned by either the state or the University of Texas, it has no effect on commercial or residential development.

Recommendation: No change.

25 - Oakwood Cemetery

Type of View: Stationary

Viewpoint: The Oakwood view point height is at 662 feet and approximately 5000 feet east and north of the capital. The view is on axis with the main road through the cemetery.

View Frame: The image of the dome is partially eclipsed by the Sam Houston Building on the Capital grounds. The UT Erwin Center frames the view to the north of the Dome. Historic Swede Hill Neighborhood forms the skyline to the south. The dome is clearly visible along the central drive through the cemetery as well as from most of the northern area of the cemetery. Oakwood Cemetery is a forty acre tract established in 1839, originally owned by the Republic of Texas. Many names familiar in Austin history can be found at Oakwood.

Adjacent Views: View 26 - 12th street at IH-35 flanks the Oakwood corridor to the south and View 23 - Mueller Airport is to the north. The Oakwood corridor overlaps with View 2 - Waterloo Park.

Rationale from 1983 Report: "From the State Cemetery and Oakwood Cemetery, the Capitol dome is virtually alone above the tree-lined horizon."

Changes Since 1983: None.

Effect: The corridor overlaps with 2 - Waterloo Park. Consequently, removing this view corridor would have very little effect on future development.

Recommendation: We recommend that the City's described elevation of 662 feet above sea level be revised to correspond with the actual elevation of 562 feet.

26 - East 12th Street at IH-35

Type of View: Threshold.

Viewpoint: The viewpoint at 12th and IH-35 is relatively high – 525 feet, and close, 3000 feet east of the Capitol. East 12th Street is an important east-west connector through East Austin, connecting IH-35 and downtown with Airport Boulevard.

View Frame: The view of the dome is crowded by recent construction by the state. The view is cluttered with electric transmission lines, switching equipment and freeway signs. The dome is only visible at the corner east 12th and IH-35. A motel on the corner of 12th and IH-35 blocks the view from further east on 12th Street. Past the 12th and IH-35 intersection, the new UT building to the north blocks the view.

Adjacent Views: View 16 - the Bridge at 7th street and View 25 - Oakwood Cemetery. The 12th street view overlaps with View 2 - Waterloo Park.

Rationale from 1983 Report: "Threshold views from IH-35 intersections at MLK Jr. Blvd., at East 11th Street, and at East 12th Street mark the transition between the CBD and East Austin neighborhoods and roadways."

Changes Since 1983:

Effect: This narrow view has a minimal effect on development.

Recommendation: No change. However, the current view frame detracts from the beauty of the Capitol by showing it only through a maze of signs, poles and wires. Because this corridor really affords only one, unattractive vantage point, unless the City and state can clean up their clutter, this view isn't worth maintaining.

27 – LBJ Library

Type of View: Stationary

Viewpoint: The West view point is the terrace of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library. The East view point is South of the Sid Richardson Building.

View Frame: The viewpoints are on the East side of the University of Texas campus. A view to the West is the main campus with the Tower as a focal point. The East view is framed by Mike K. Myers Track and Soccer Stadium.

Adjacent Views: View 22 – 38th and Red River and View 29 – Field Level of the Memorial Stadium Practice Center

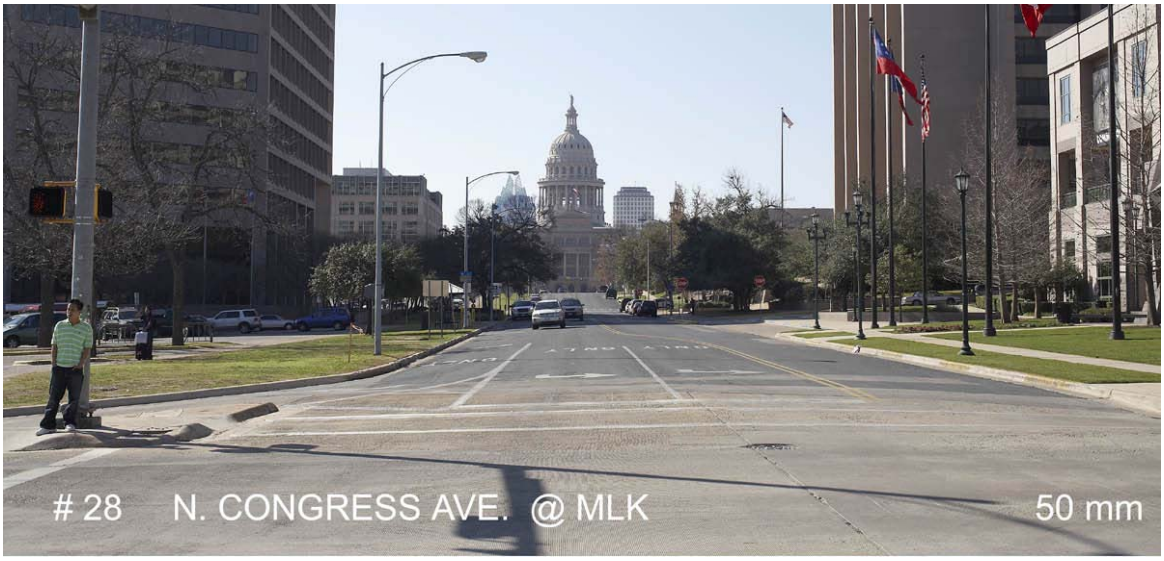
Rationale from the 1983 Report: "The Lyndon Baines Johnson Library is one mile northeast of the Capitol and offers a panorama of the CBD from the north. The view from the LBJ Library is framed and enhanced by landscaped grounds. To the west in the foreground is the monumental Texas Memorial Stadium, in the mid-ground is the Stephen F. Austin Building and the American Bank Tower appears to the right in the background."

Changes Since 1983: The view of the dome of the Capitol from the terrace of the LBJ Library has been completely blocked by the East addition to the Darrell K. Royal Memorial Stadium. Under state law, improvements to the stadium are exempt from complying with the view corridors (Texas Government Code § 3151.003(1)).

However, the East side of the view is still intact with a significant view of the dome of the Capitol.

Recommendation: We recommend that the corridor be redefined to exclude the portion of the view that has been obstructed by the expansion of the Darrell K. Royal-Memorial Stadium.

28 – North Congress at MLK



Type of View: Stationary

Viewpoint: This street-level view is from six blocks north of the capitol.

View Frame: This viewpoint has an unobstructed view up North Congress Avenue to the north entrance of the capitol. Immediately adjacent to the viewpoint are the Bob Bullock State History Museum and the Blanton Art Museum on the University of Texas Campus. The Perry-Castenada Library is two blocks north of the viewpoint. The view toward the capitol is framed by state office buildings.

Adjacent Views: None.

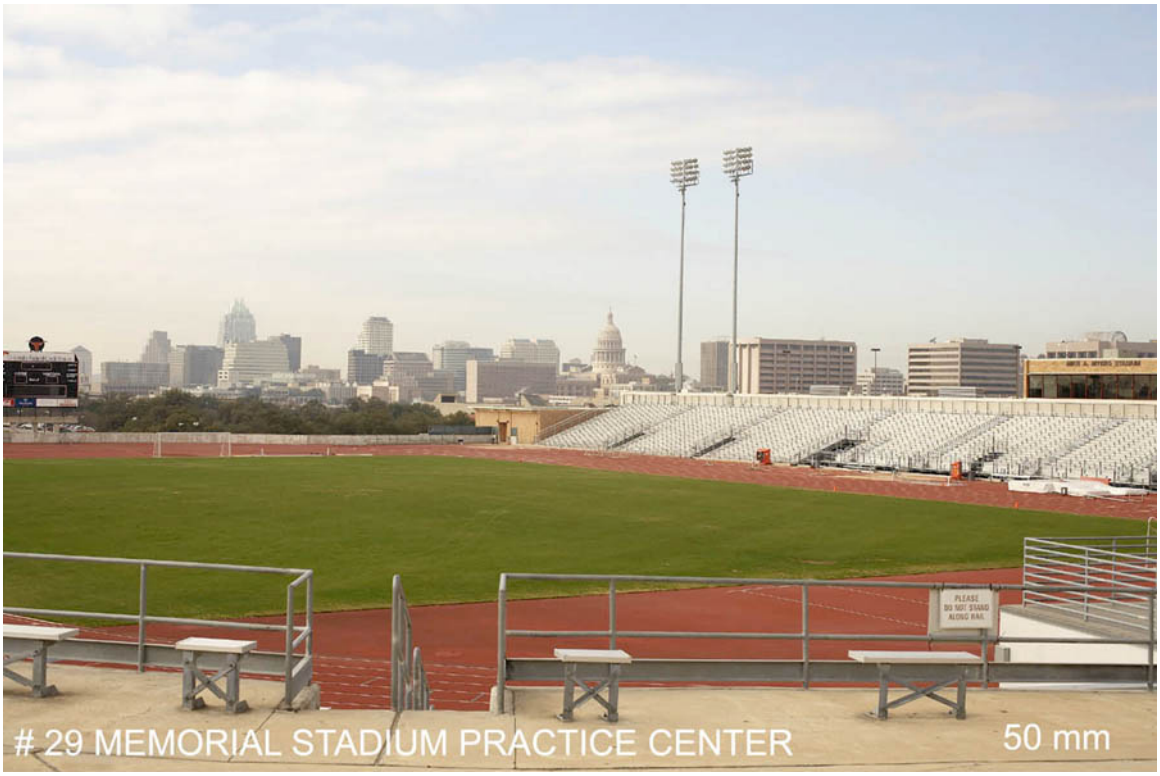
Rationale from 1983 Report: Not covered in the 1983 report.

Changes Since 1983: Both museums have been built since 1983.

Effect: Because the view is along North Congress, there is no impact on development. The state-owned surface parking lot at the southeast corner of North Congress and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard offers a great opportunity for a mixed use development that would offer services to the state workers, university students, and tourists that visit this popular location.

Recommendation: No change.

29 – Field Level of the Memorial Stadium Practice Center



Type of View: Stationary

Viewpoint: Located to the East of the University of Texas campus and West of IH-35. The viewpoint has been enhanced and enlarged because of the new Mike A. Myers Track and Soccer Stadium seating located on the East side of the track field.

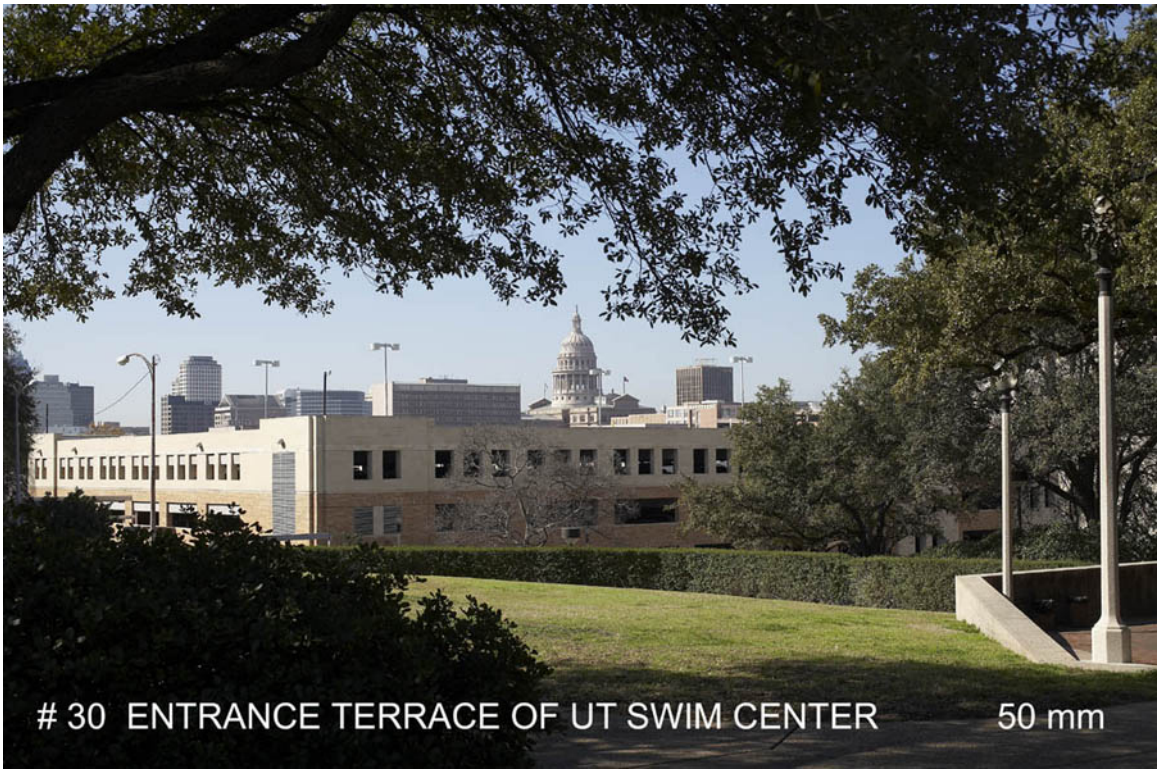
View Frame: The dome of the Capitol is dominant in the view to the Southwest. The dome is framed by the Darrell K. Royal Memorial Stadium to the West and downtown Austin to South.

Adjacent Views: The University of Texas campus and the downtown of the City of Austin make a dramatic view of the dome of the Capitol.

Changes Since 1983: The addition of the Mike A Myers Tract and Soccer Stadium has improved this view and public access to the vantage point.

Recommendation: No change.

30 – Entrance Terrace, UT Swim Center



Type of View: Stationary

Viewpoint: Entrance Terrace of the University of Texas Swim Center.

View Frame: The Capitol dome is framed by two office buildings located on the Capitol grounds. The Trinity Parking Garage on the University of Texas campus is in the foreground.

Adjacent Views: None

Rationale from 1983 Report: Not covered in the 1983 report.

Changes Since 1983: The University has constructed a parking garage on the south side of MLK that now provides a frame below the view of the Capitol.

Recommendation: No change.