

Executive Summary

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

The alternatives development process targeted problem areas where mobility, safety and comfort deficiencies were identified by the project team and through public engagement. A range of improvement alternatives were identified, in terms of size, scope, and cost, to remediate the identified issues.

Alternatives were identified for the entire length of the corridor (see map, next page); however, three focal areas emerged through the analysis and from public engagement/interest:

- **Downtown (Lake Avenue and 5th Avenue)** – Three improvement concepts were developed and evaluated to enhance pedestrian/bike connectivity across I-35 from the Downtown and hillside neighborhoods to the waterfront. These included the Downtown Waterfront Collective; parkway concept, a concept improving the existing 5th Avenue and Lake Avenue interchanges, and a lid concept between portions of 5th Avenue and Lake Avenue.
- **Thompson Hill through Central Avenue** – Improvement concepts were developed to modify the Boundary Avenue interchange, add a truck climbing lane for southbound I-35 on Thompson Hill through Boundary Avenue, remove I-35 access at Cody Street, and develop interchange alternatives at the Grand Avenue and Central Avenue locations to improve vehicular and bicycle/pedestrian safety, connectivity, and access.
- **I-35 Mainline Intelligent Transportation Systems Improvements** – The majority of crashes on the I-35 corridor were found to occur during times of inclement weather (i.e., rain, snow, ice, or fog). This, coupled with the heavy seasonality of tourism traffic and large events causing unexpected congestion, led the project team to consider Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) improvements like curve warnings, surface warnings, anti-icing technology for bridge decks and variable speed limits.

An ITS Corridor Plan/Variable Speed Limit Study was funded through MnDOT's Innovative Ideas Program and is anticipated to begin in the winter of 2023-2024. This study will further define the feasibility and specifics of ITS improvements for the I-35 corridor.

Range of Improvement Alternatives

