

WELCOME

US 281 at SH 71 Interchange

Public Hearing

Thursday, April 9, 2026

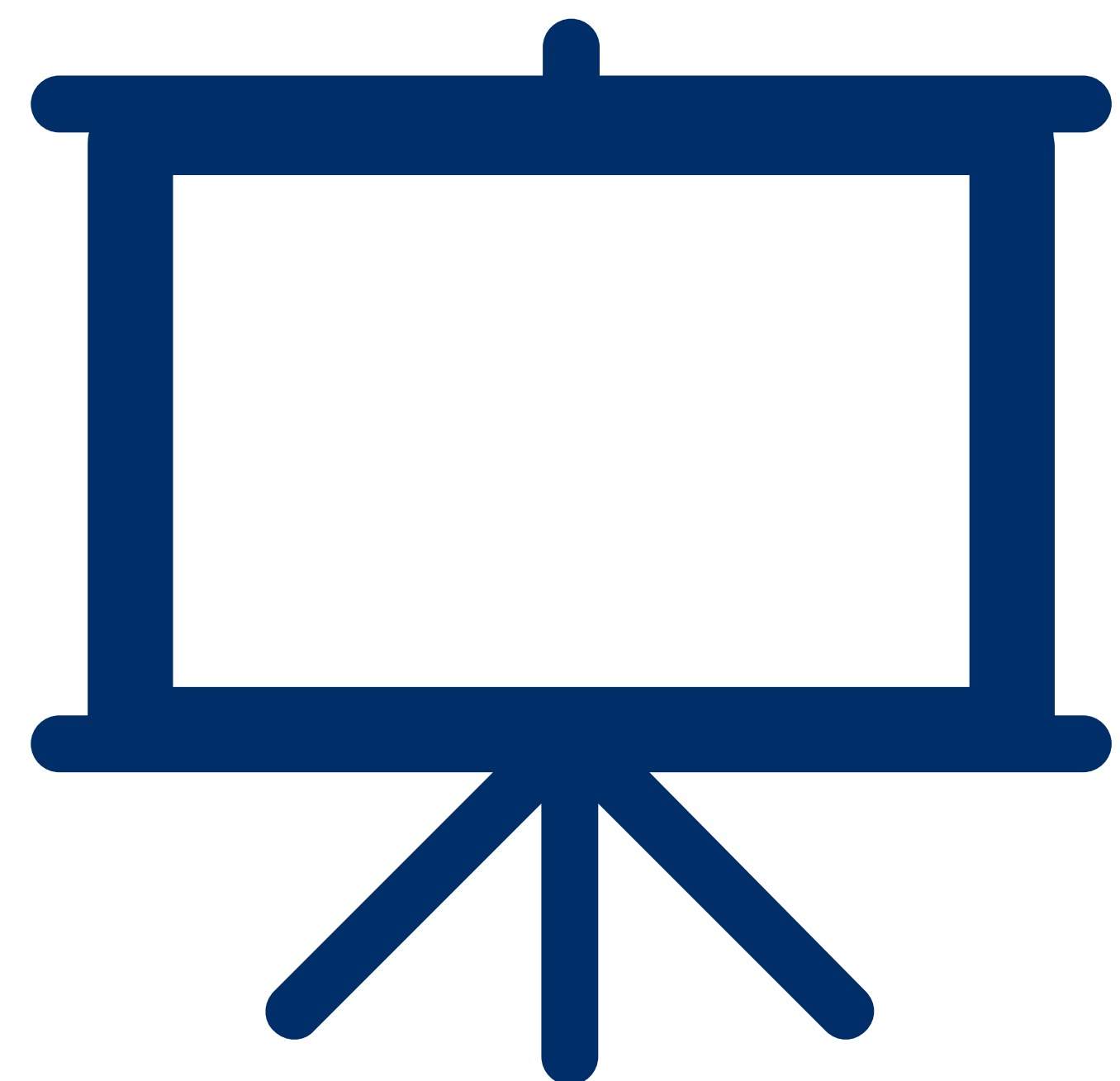
Marble Falls High School Commons Area

**Why am
I here
today?**

- Review project materials and exhibits
- Provide input

You may also view the same presentation and materials presented at this public meeting by visiting www.txdot.gov and keyword search "US 281 at SH 71 Interchange" or scanning the QR code.





Pre-Recorded Presentation

View a pre-recorded presentation to learn about proposed improvements.

No live presentation offered.

You may also view this pre-recorded presentation online at your convenience. Please share with your friends, family and colleagues.

Visit www.txdot.gov,
keyword search:
**"US 281 at 71
Interchange"**



US 281 at 71
Interchange
Project Page

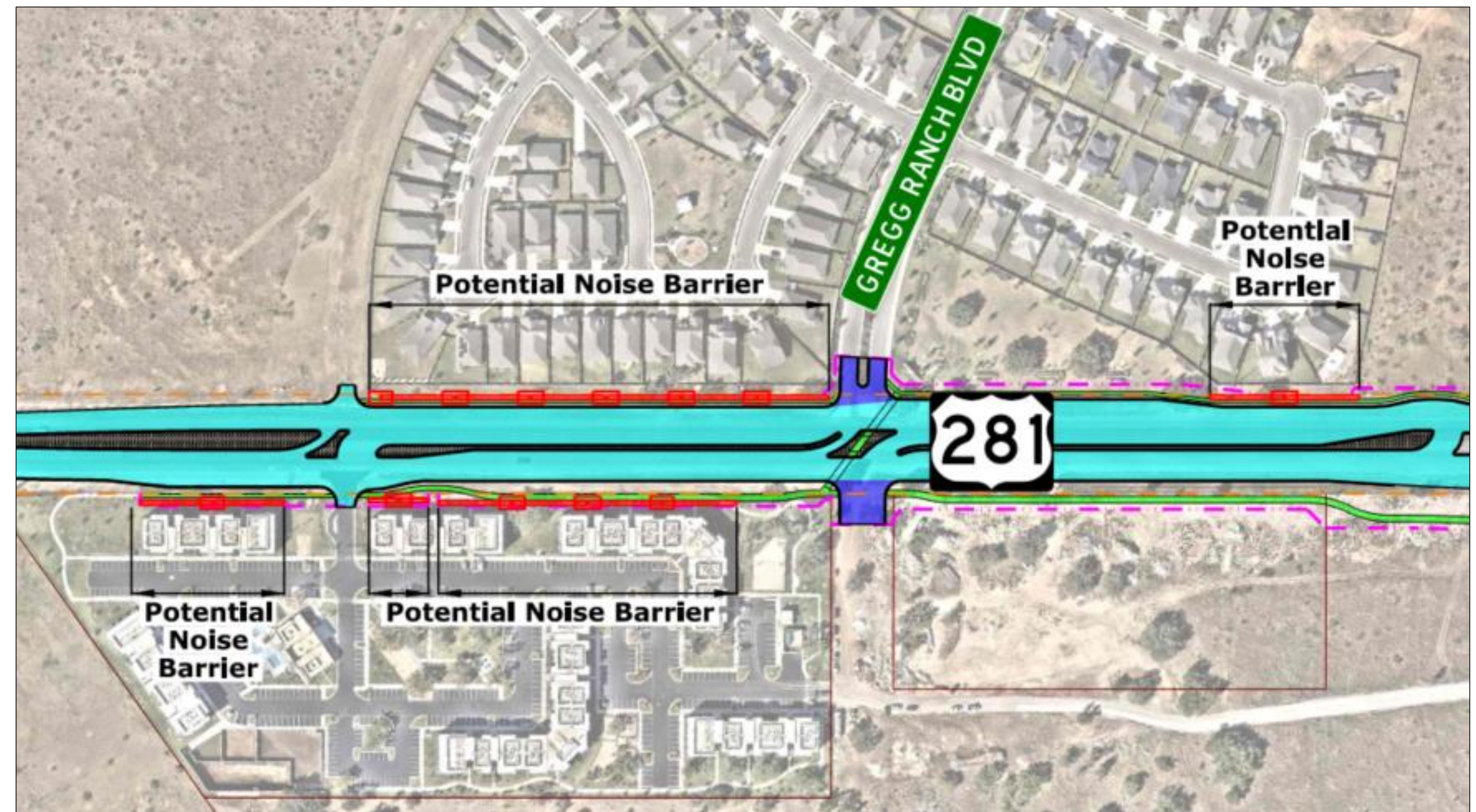
Noise

Traffic Noise Analysis Results:

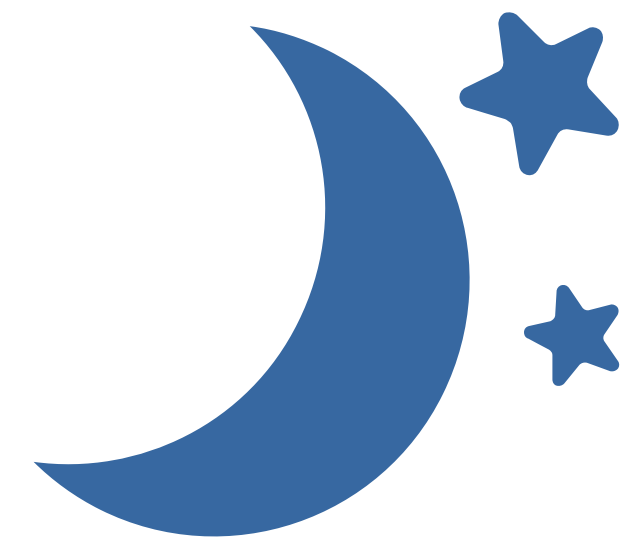
- Two noise barriers are reasonable and feasible along the Gregg Ranch neighborhood
- Two noise barriers are reasonable and feasible along the FLATZ 830 apartments
- Potential noise barriers would be 14 feet tall

Future Steps and Considerations

- The final decision to construct the proposed noise barrier will not be made until completion of the project design, utility evaluation and polling of all benefited and adjacent property owners and residents.
- Appearance of the noise barrier would be determined during the final design stage.
- Phasing of noise barrier installation would be determined during the final design stage. The potential to install noise walls prior to roadway construction will be examined.



Dark-Sky Design



Dark-Sky lighting is a design approach that preserves and protects the nighttime environment that reduces light pollution outside of right of way.

DarkSky International

DarkSky International (formerly the International Dark-Sky Association) is the recognized authority on light pollution worldwide and is the entity which determines whether a certain area qualifies as a "Dark-Sky Place."

The City of Marble Falls could pursue designation as a Dark-Sky Community per its 2024 Comprehensive Plan. Horseshoe Bay was named a Dark-Sky Community in 2015.

- ★ Lighting will be determined in the final design phase should a build alternative move forward. Proposed lighting would follow TxDOT Highway Illumination Manual illuminance level requirements.
- ★ TxDOT has committed to dark sky-sensitive design features which could include:
 - ★ Use of luminaires that are specified to have a Backlight, Uplight, and Glare (BUG) rating where the luminaire has zero uplight to reduce sky glow. Lights would use optics or shielding to prevent uplight and minimize glare and light trespass.
 - ★ Minimizing the number of light fixtures and the height of poles to minimize glare and light trespass extending beyond the transportation corridor.
 - ★ Reduction in intensity of lighting by using LED lights.
 - ★ Lighting with a maximum color temperature of 3,000 kelvin.

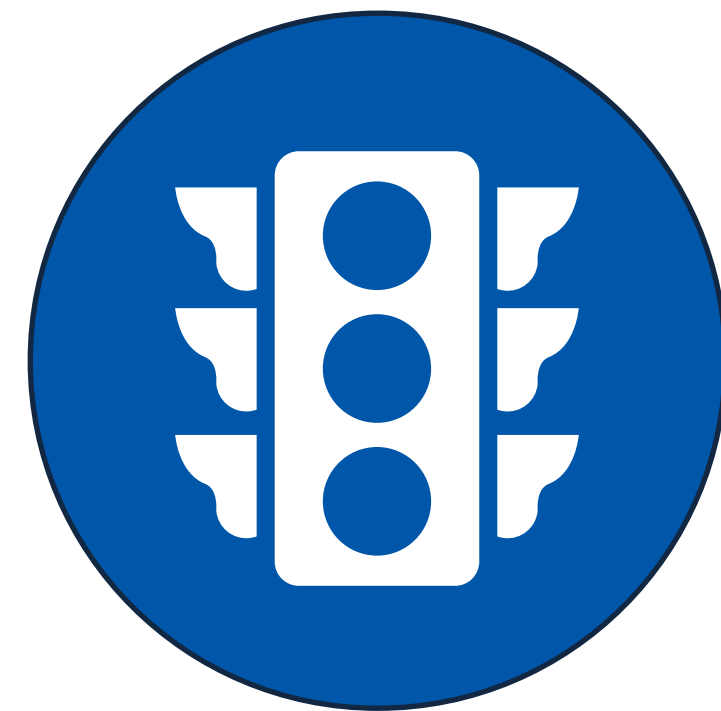
Safety Enhancements

Before Construction of the US 281 at SH 71 Interchange Project



Traffic Signal at Gregg Ranch

Warranted with further build-out of neighborhood



Traffic Signal at Thunder Rock

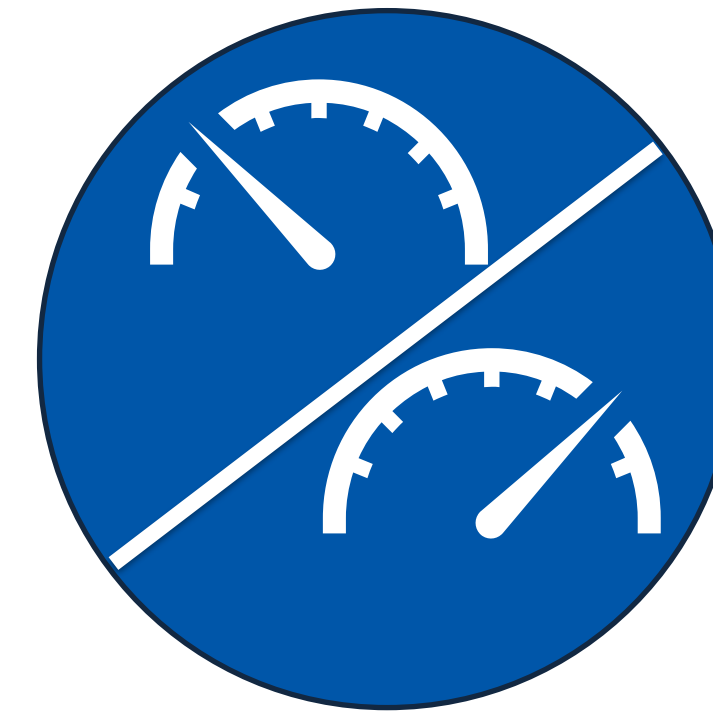
Interim intersection improvements to be evaluated



US 281 Speed Study (2024)

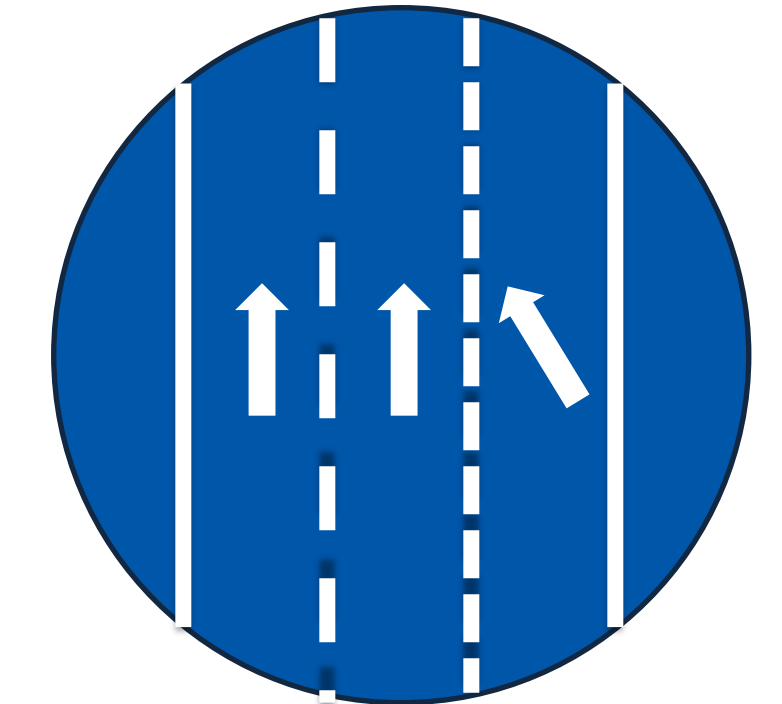
Finding: Keep current posted speed

With the Construction of the US 281 at SH 71 Interchange Project



Frontage Roads

Separates high-speed from low-speed traffic



Auxiliary Lanes

Allows for safer weaving and turning



Divided Median

Reduces head-on collisions



Overpass

Sloped proposed instead of walls to deter camping and loitering



Speed Limits

To be determined after construction

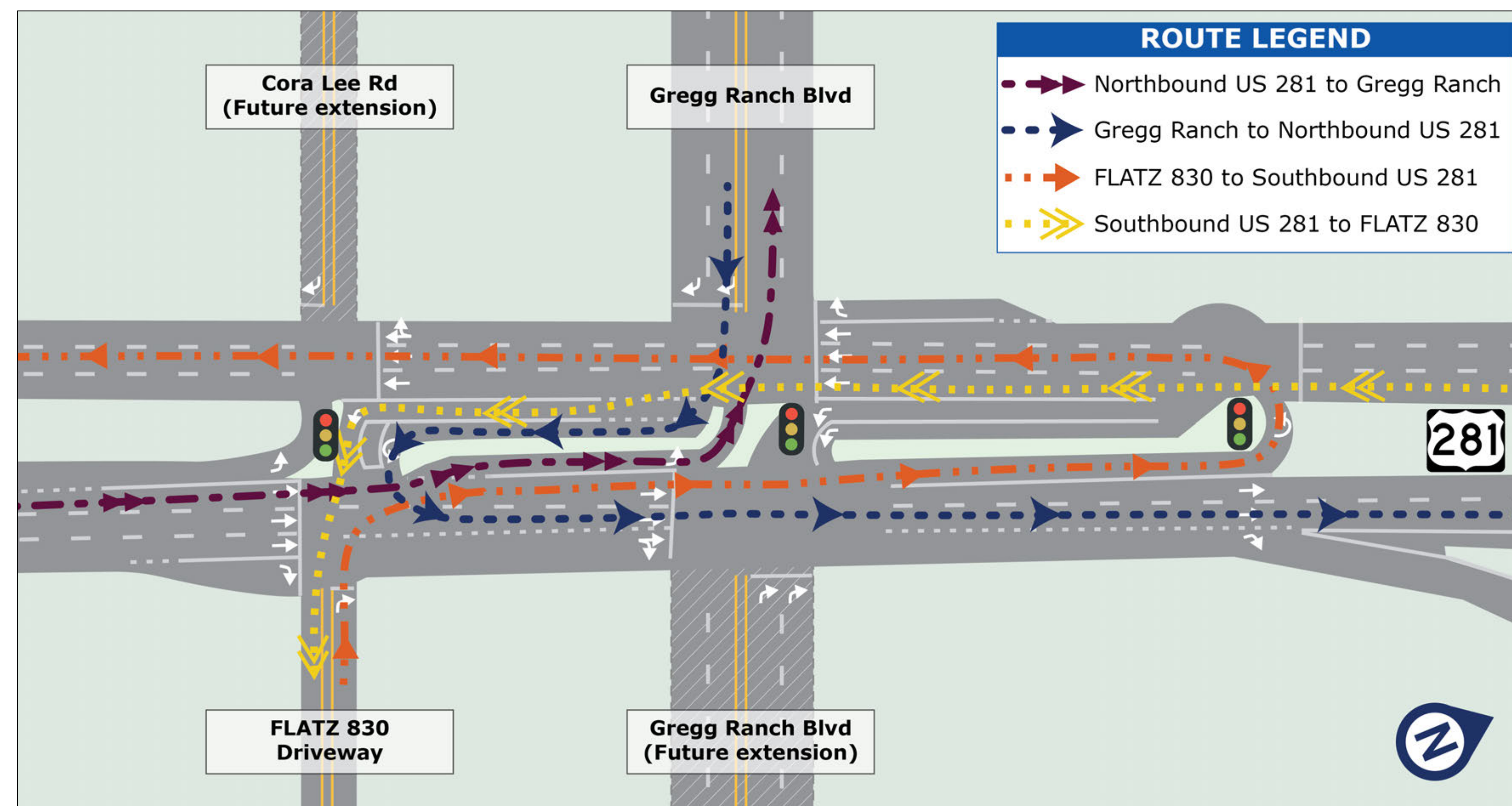
Reduced Conflict U-Turn (R-CUT) Intersection

Enhanced safety

- R-CUT intersections reduce fatalities and injuries by 63 percent.
- R-CUT intersections reduce crossing-type conflict points from 16 at a conventional intersection to 2, eliminating many severe crash opportunities.



R-CUT in San Antonio at SH 16 (Bandera Road) and FM 1560



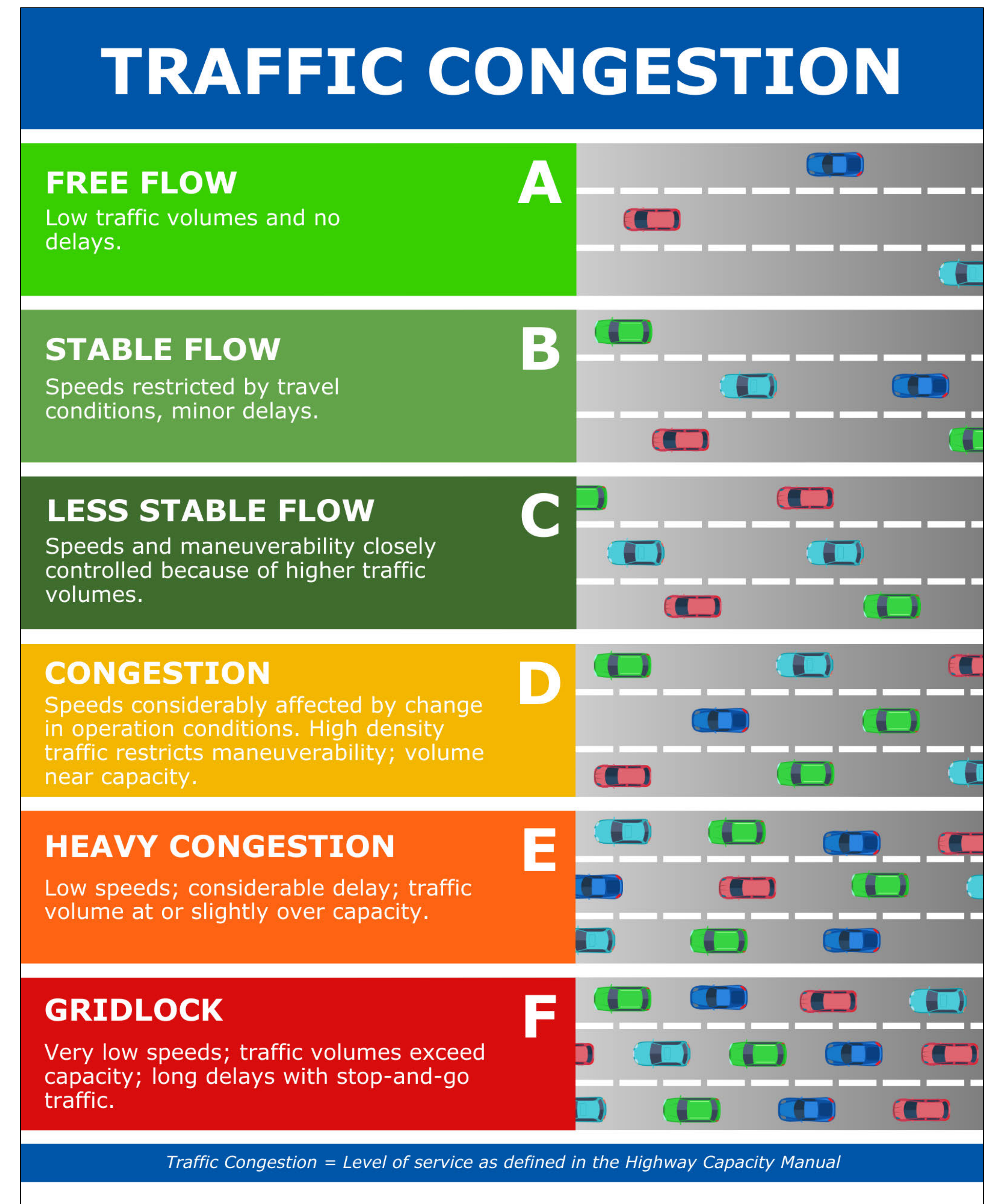
Gregg Ranch Boulevard Route with R-CUT Intersection

Projected Level of Service

The table below conveys the projected year 2054 level of service for the Build Alternative and No Build Alternative.

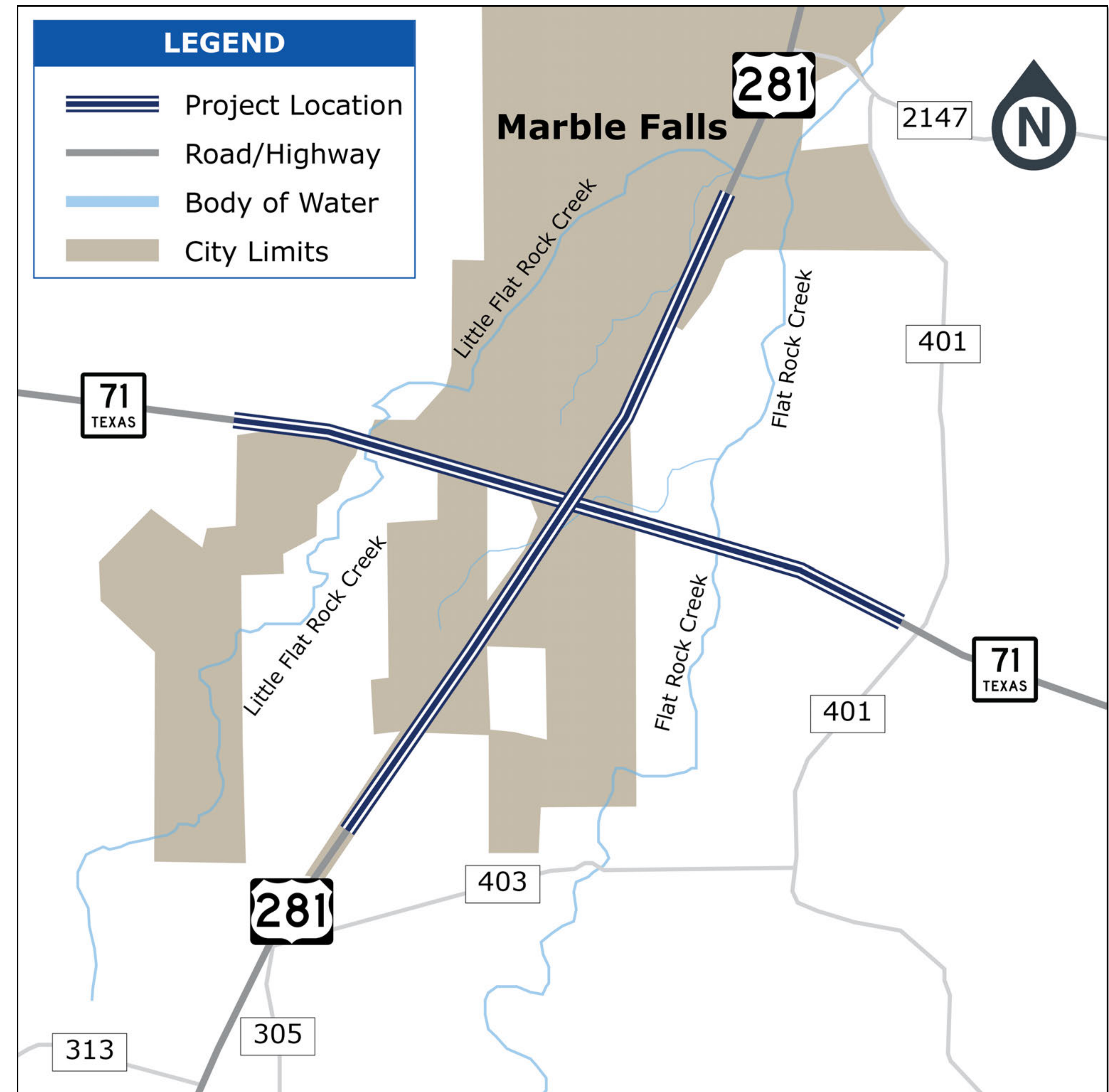
	Level of Service*			
	Build		No Build	
US 281 Northbound (NB) Thru Traffic	D		F	
US 281 Southbound (SB) Thru Traffic	D		F	
SH 71 Eastbound (EB) Thru Traffic	D		F	
SH 71 Westbound (WB) Thru Traffic	D		F	
US 281 NB Interchange (exit to SH 71 EB / WB)	B	B	D	C
US 281 SB Interchange (exit to SH 71 EB / WB)	B	B	F	E
SH 71 EB Interchange (exit to US 281 NB / SB)	B	B	E	C
SH 71 WB Interchange (exit to US 281 NB / SB)	B	B	F	D

* Level of Service reported is for worst performing segment of roadway

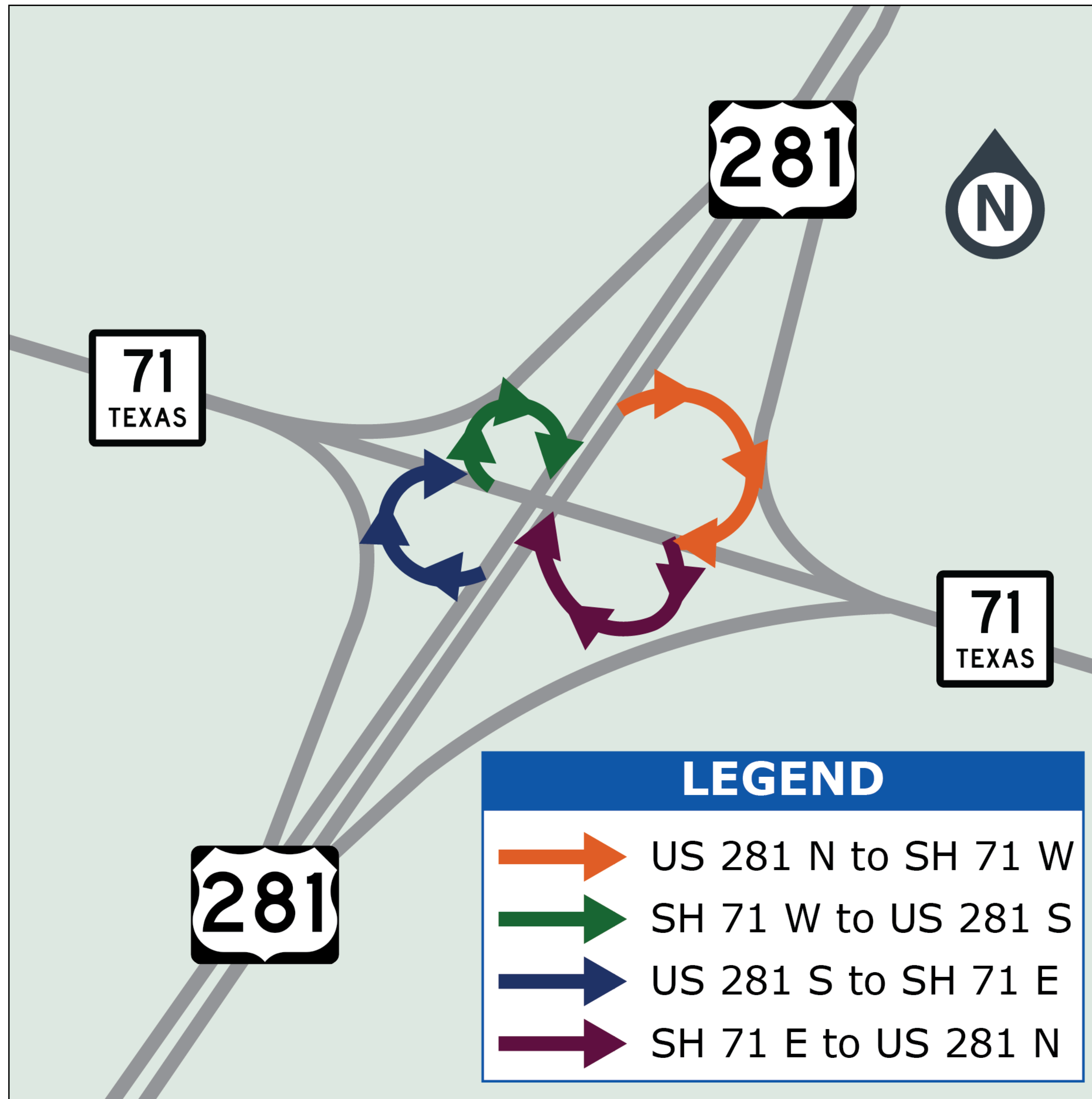


US 281 at SH 71 Interchange

- Project Area
 - US 281 at SH 71 interchange
 - Burnet County, Texas
- Project Purpose
 - Improve the interchange
 - Improve safety
 - Improve mobility and reduce congestion



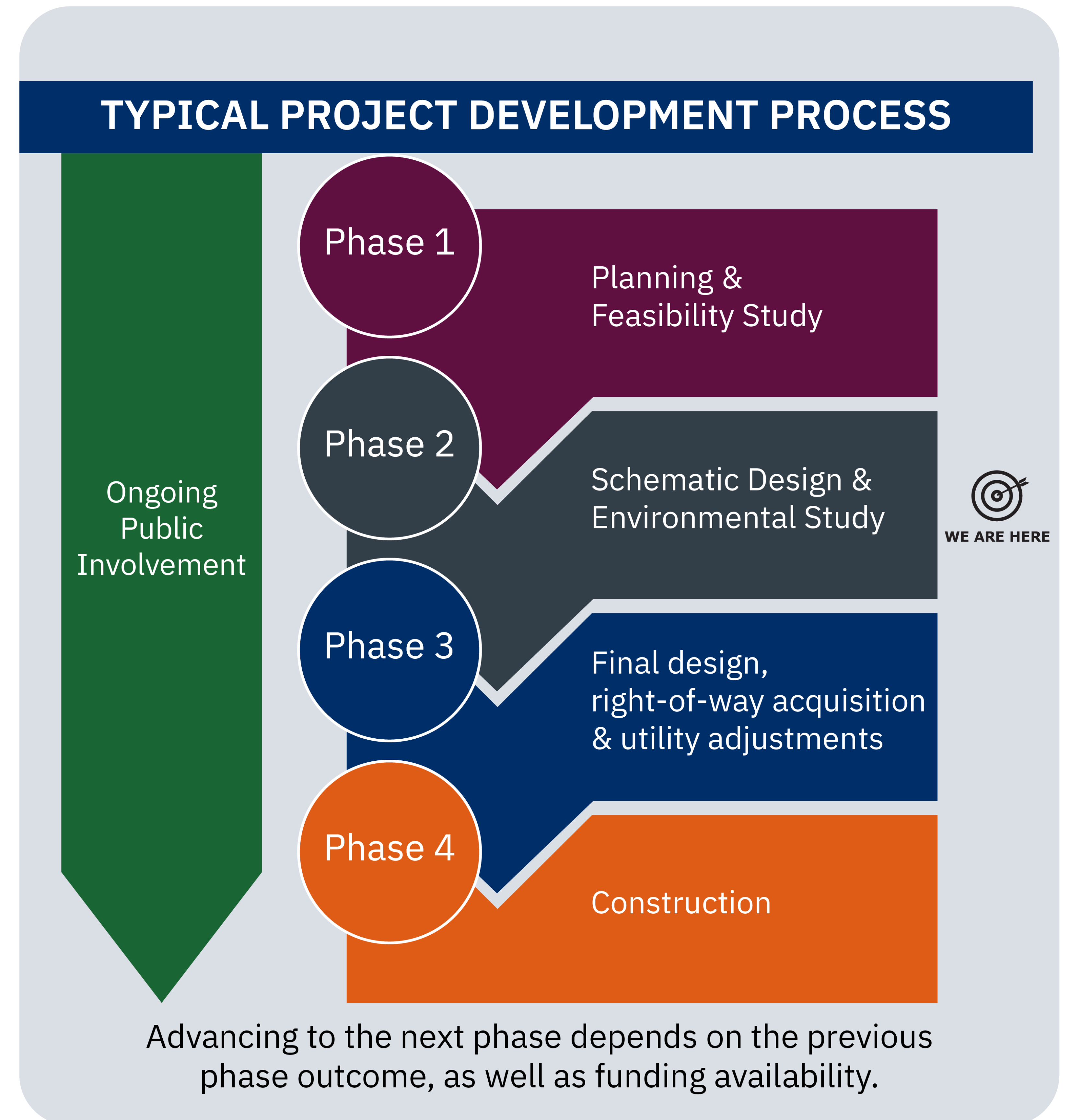
Existing Interchange - Cloverleaf



- Cloverleaf interchange was built in the 1960s
- Short weaving movement between loop ramps concentrates potential conflict points
- Smaller radius curves have low design speed and are not efficient for trucks
- This project is needed because the interchange does not meet current design standards and does not provide adequate lane and ramp configurations to accommodate future traffic volumes

Project Development Process

- US 281 at SH 71 Interchange
 - This project is currently in Phase 2.
 - Phase 1 began in 2022 with an Alternatives Analysis.
 - Phase 2 began in 2023 and is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2026.



Phase 1
Planning & Feasibility Study

Preliminary Analysis

Preliminary analysis work included:



Safety Analysis



Traffic Projections

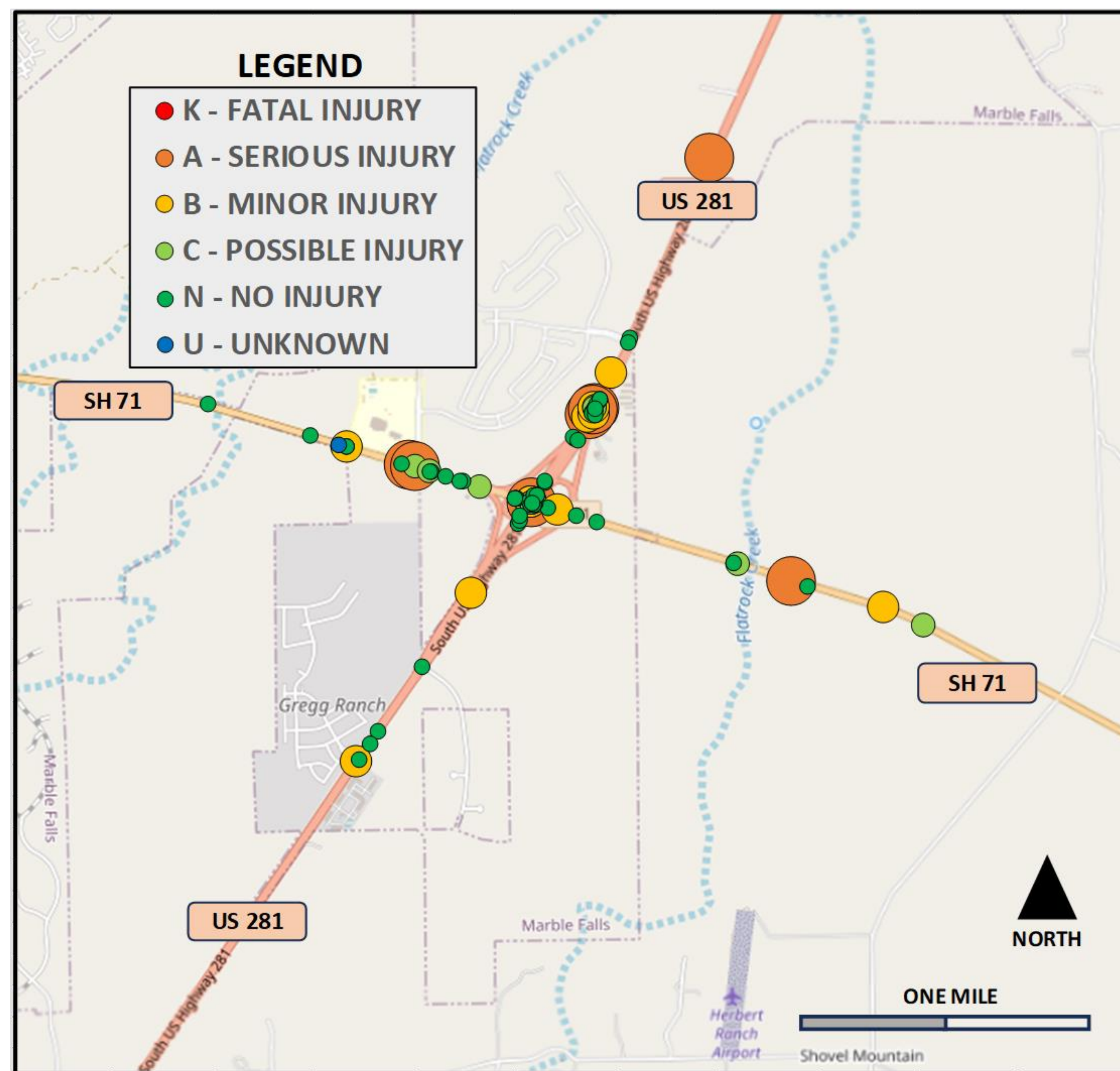


**Regional
Population Growth**



Connectivity

Safety Analysis



Crash Data between 2020 and 2024

- 95 total crashes over five years
- Increase from 18 crashes in 2020 to 30 crashes in 2024
- No fatal injury crashes, eight serious injury crashes
- Concentration of crashes at the interchange and among local access points north and west
- Crash rate on US 281 is about three times higher than the statewide average for similar roadways
- Crash rate on SH 71 is over two times higher than the statewide average for similar roadways

Regional Population Growth

Burnet County Surroundings (Travis, Williamson, Blanco, Llano Counties)



280% growth from 1980 to 2020

78% growth anticipated between 2020 and 2050

- Travis County, which connects with Burnet County via SH 71, ranked 9th nationally in total population growth from 2010 to 2020

Burnet County



176% growth from 1980 to 2020

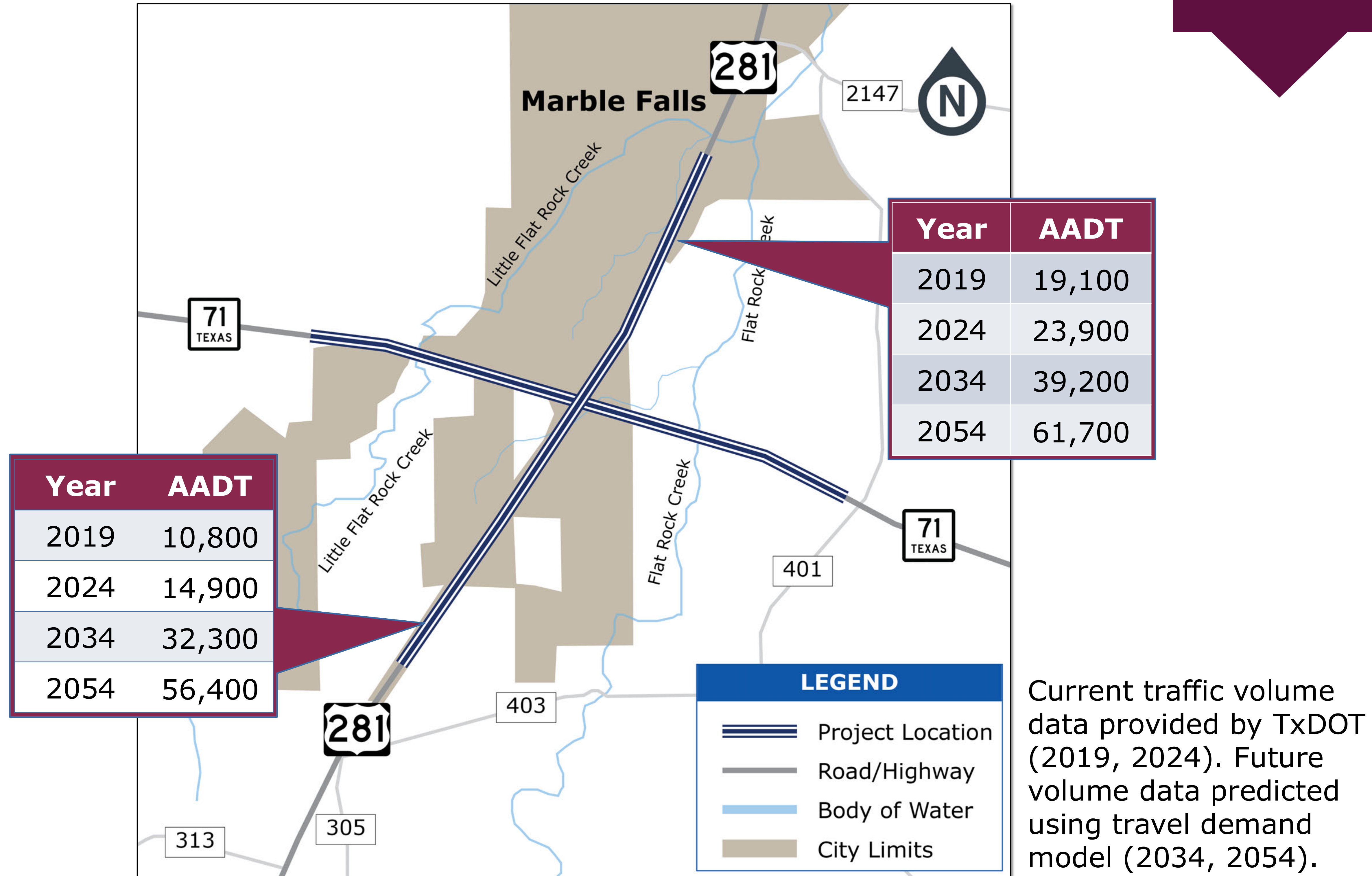
33% growth anticipated between 2020 and 2050

- Burnet County growth combined with that of surrounding counties is substantial and will increase local and through trips along US 281 and SH 71

Phase 1

Planning & Feasibility Study

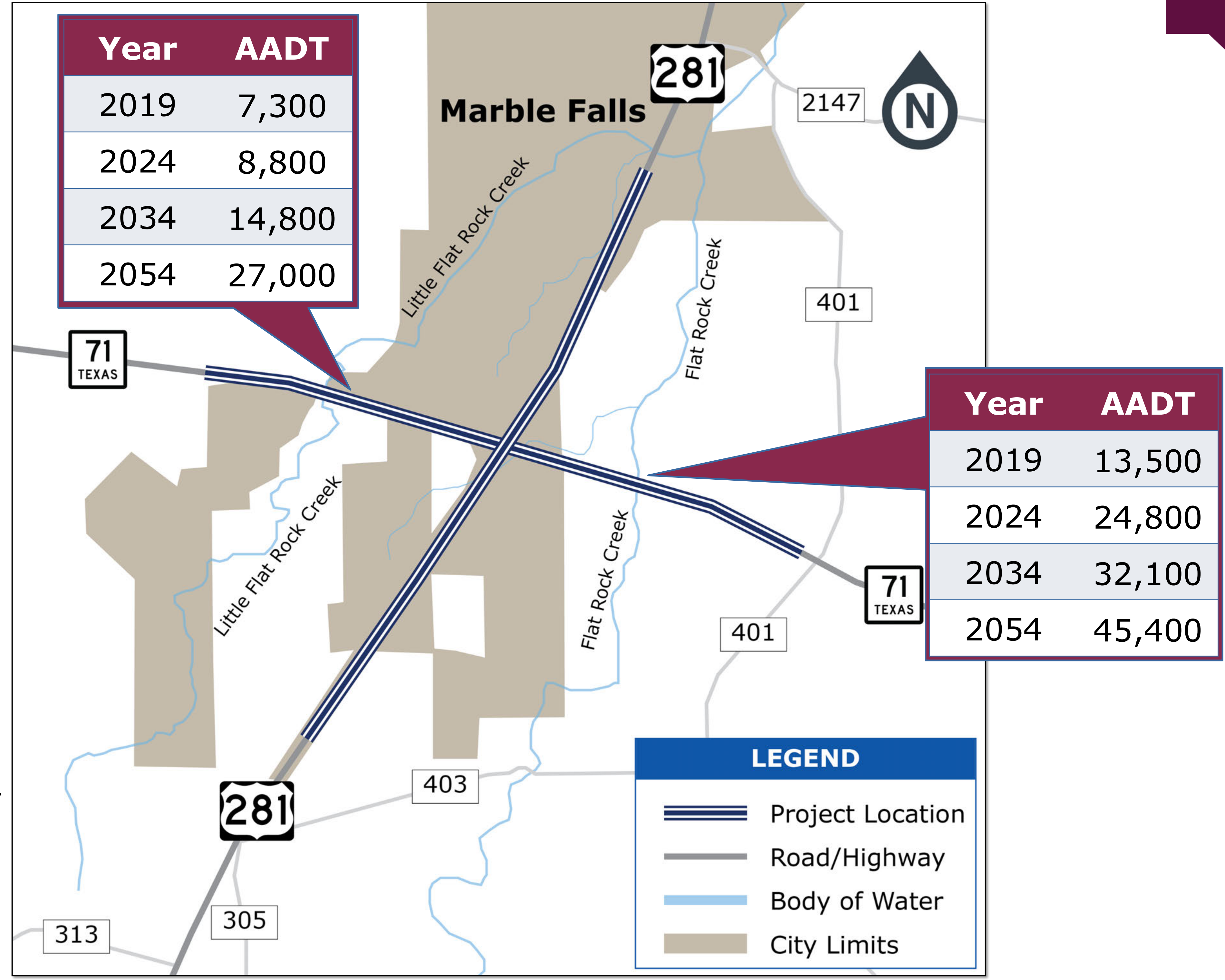
Traffic Projections - US 281



Projected Growth of Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) on US 281

Phase 1
 Planning &
 Feasibility Study

Traffic Projections – SH 71



Current traffic volume data provided by TxDOT (2019, 2024). Future volume data predicted using travel demand model (2034, 2054).

Projected Growth of Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) on US 281

Connectivity

US 281 has been identified by multiple agencies as a critical highway within Texas and the nation connecting motorists to Marble Falls, Blanco and San Antonio. Highway networks that have identified US 281 as critical include:



National Highway System



**Strategic Highway Network
(SRAHNET)**

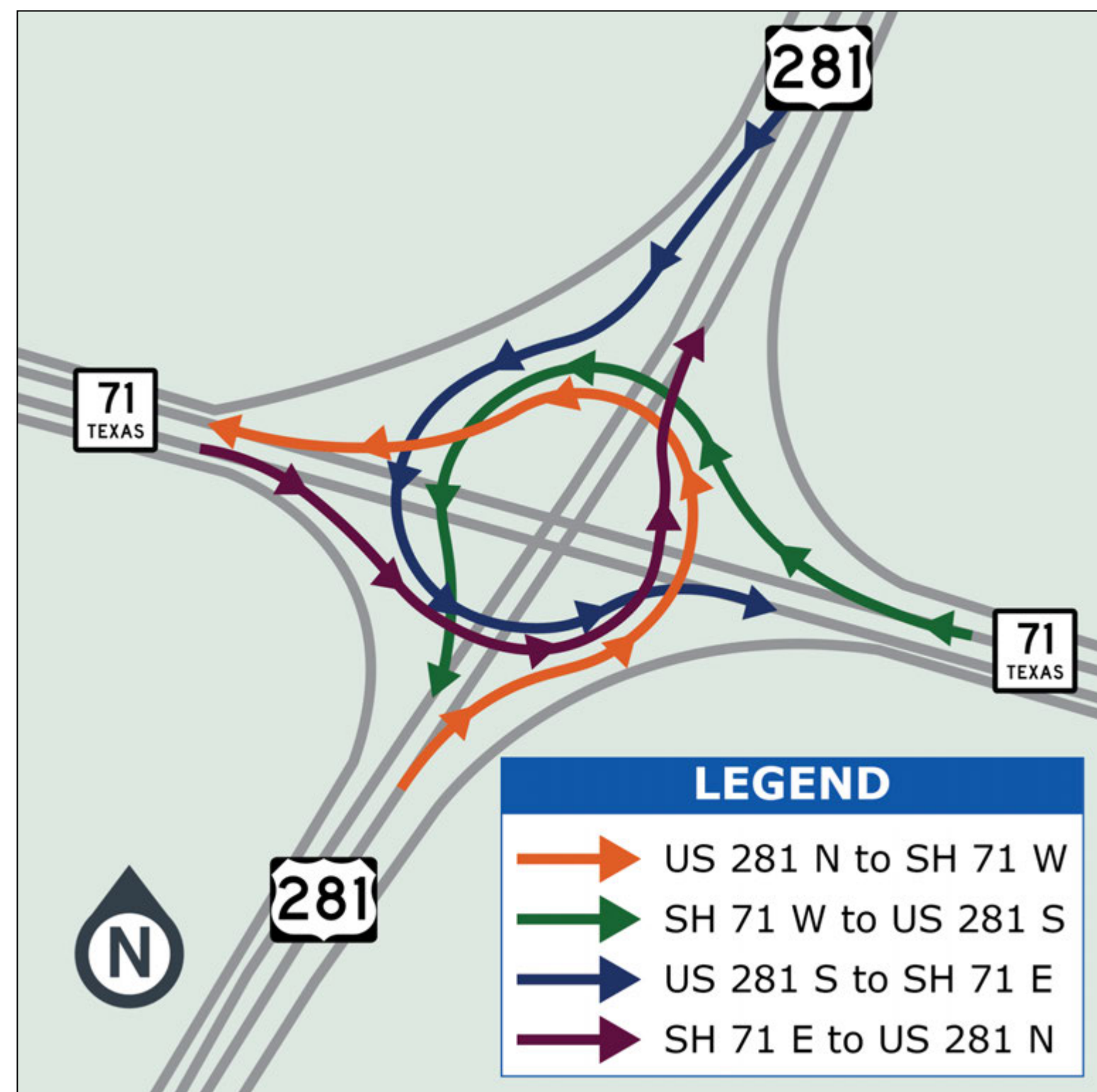


Texas Trunk System

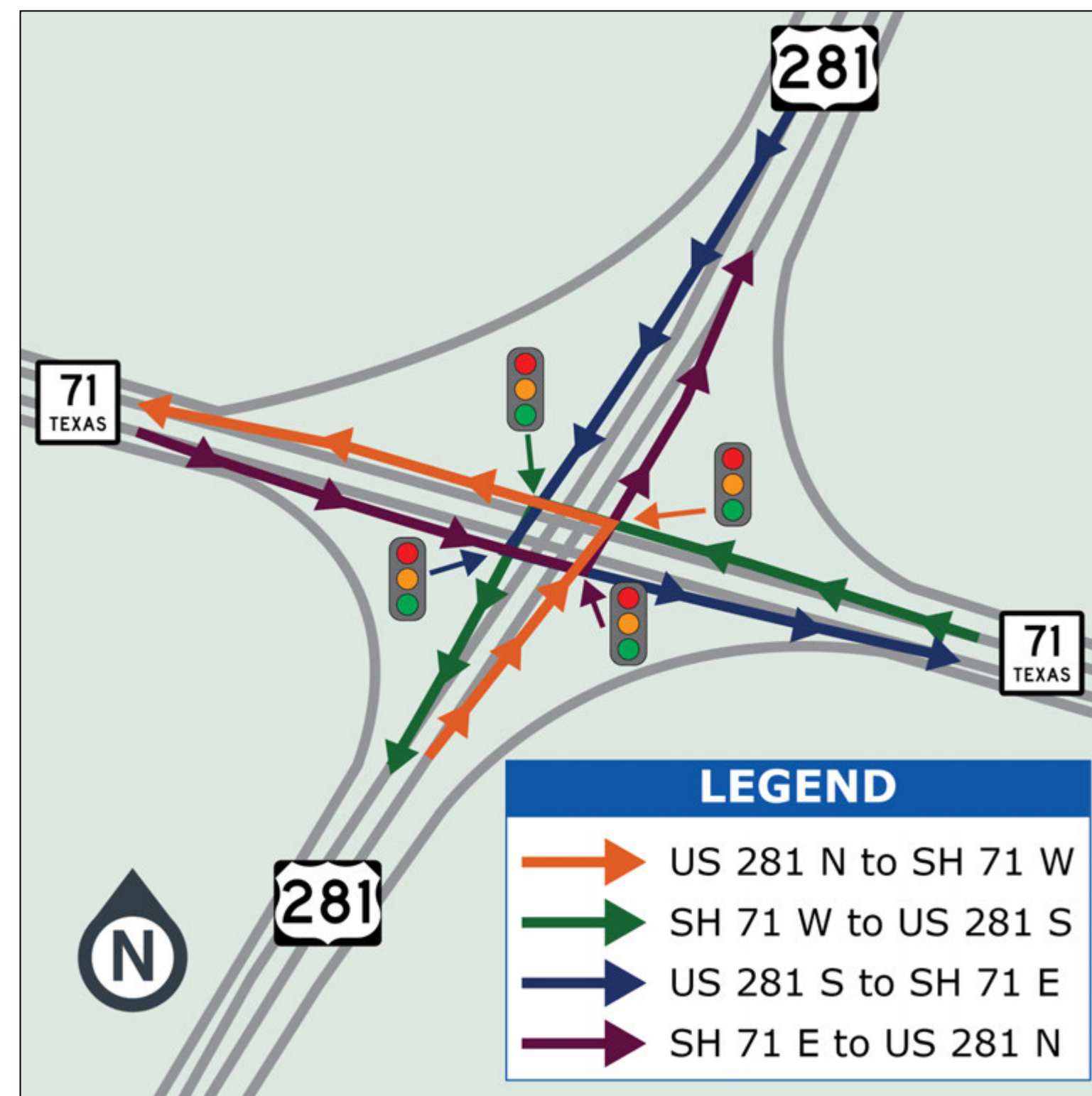


Texas Highway Freight Network

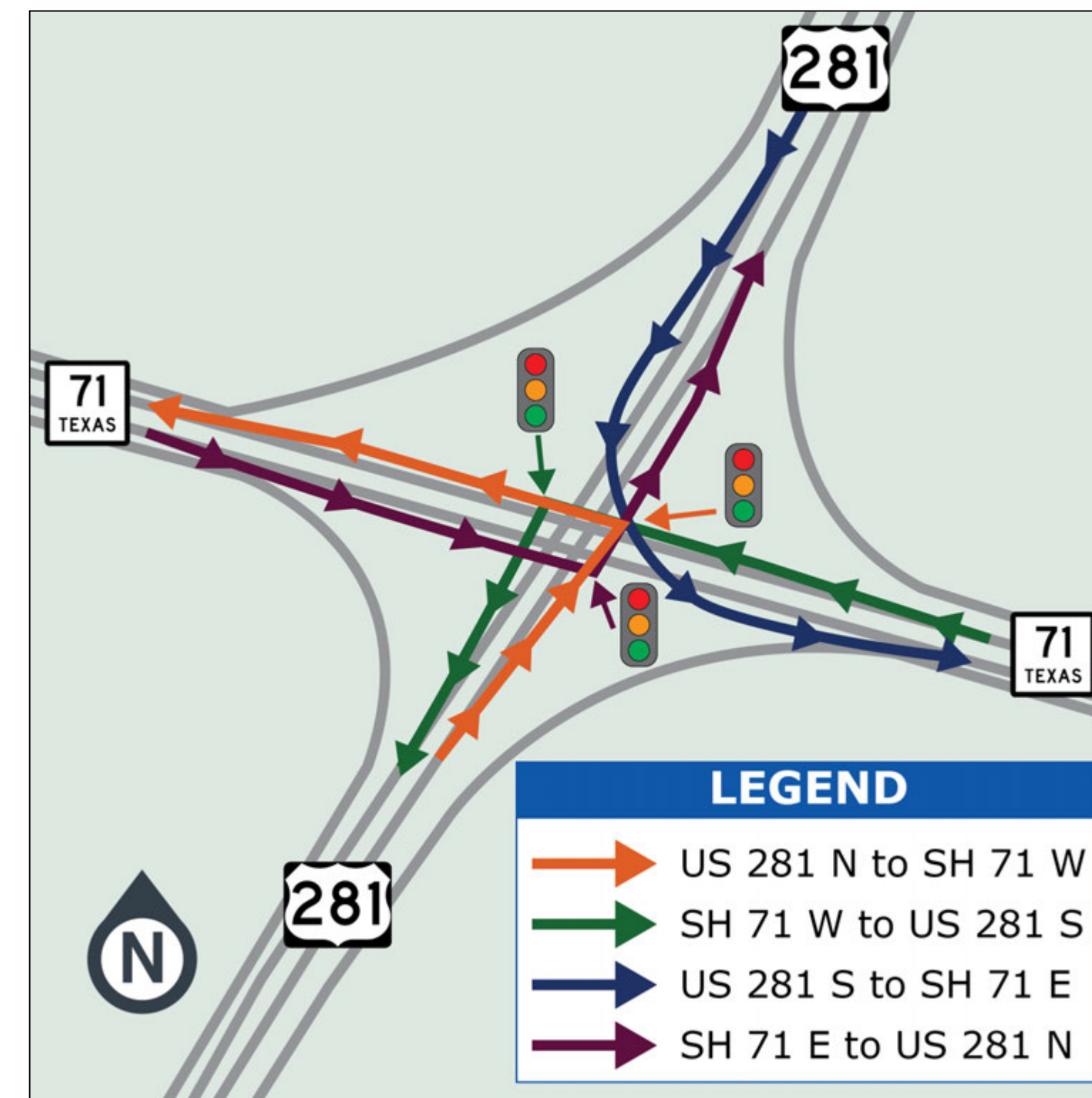
Alternatives Evaluated



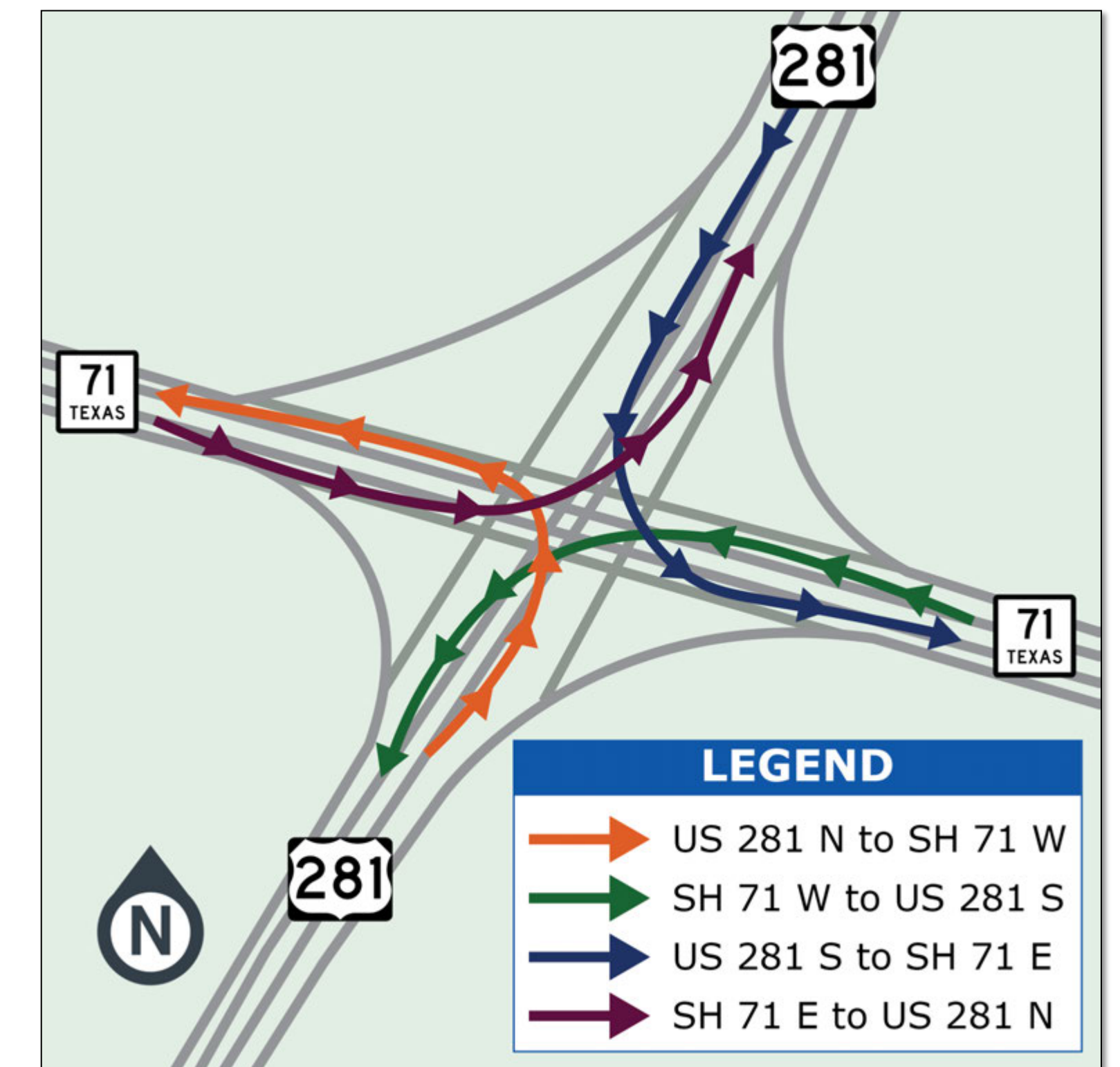
**Alternative 1:
2-Level Turbine**



**Alternative 2:
3-Level Diamond**



**Alternative 3:
3-Level Diamond with
South-to-East Flyover**



**Alternative 4:
5-Level Directional with
Frontage Road Box**

Phase 1

Planning & Feasibility Study

Alternatives Evaluated

- Turbine Recommended
 - Best interchange operations
- Meets regional mobility goal
 - Best interchange safety
 - Meets safety goal
- Smaller right-of-way footprint than flyovers
- Less visually obstructive than flyovers
- Least effective local operations
 - Mitigated with design modifications

Evaluation Metrics	Alternative 1: 2-Level Turbine	Alternative 2: 3-Level Diamond	Alternative 3: 3-Level Diamond w/ Flyover	Alternative 4: 5-Level Flyovers
Operations – Interchange Level				
Interchange Vehicle Hours Delay	15	104	66	37
Interchange Average Delay per Vehicle (seconds)	7	46	34	33
Interchange Level of Service (LOS)	A	D	C	C
Turn Movement Delay per Vehicle (seconds)	15	80	30	30
Turn Movement LOS	B	E	C	C
Resilience to Traffic Control (Signal) Failure	Best	Good	Good	Good
Safety – Interchange Level				
Interchange Conflict Points – Angle	0	14	14	14
Interchange Crash Exposure – Angle	0	126,750	90,930	61,830
Interchange Conflict points – Merge and Diverge	24	44	46	52
Interchange Crash Exposure – Merge and Diverge	355,520	606,700	556,780	455,220
Operations – Network Level				
Network Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	34,205	31,493	31,446	31,835
Network Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT)	831	824	542	542
Network Vehicle Hours Delay (VHD)	248	280	253	208
Network Average Travel Speed (MPH)	41.2	38.2	39.6	42.5
Operations – Local Trip Travel Times (minutes)				
Gregg Ranch Residential to Scott & White Hospital	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.3
Legacy Crossing Residential to Scott & White Hospital	4.3	3.9	3.8	3.8
Thunder Rock Residential to Legacy Crossing Retail	4.3	5.8	5.3	5.4
Right-of-Way				
Total New Proposed ROW (Acres)	161.9	158.5	171.4	171.4
Commercial Displacements (Apartment Complex)	1	1	1	1
Residential Displacements	2	1	1	2
Roadway				
Construction Cost (Million)	\$225	\$150	\$200	\$375
Phased Implementation Capability	No	Yes – Defer SH 71 MLs & bridges until SH 71 becomes a freeway.	Yes – Same as 3-Level Diamond AND defer S-E DC (\$20M).	Yes – Construction of all DCs could be deferred (\$100M).
Constructability				
Bridge Levels	2	3	4	5
Construction Complexity	High	Low	Medium	High
Construction Duration (Months)	46	36	40	48

Proposed Improvements

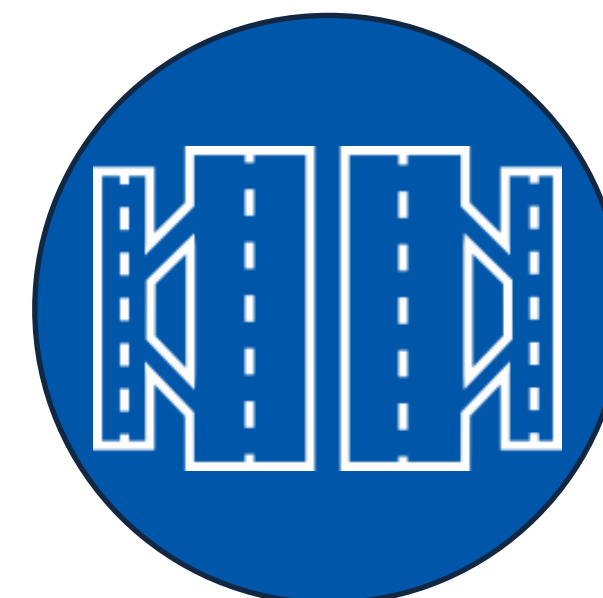
- Replacing the current cloverleaf interchange with a turbine interchange



- Adding elevated structures to improve mobility through the interchange



- Adding frontage roads to separate high-speed through traffic from local traffic



- Adding shared-use paths to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians



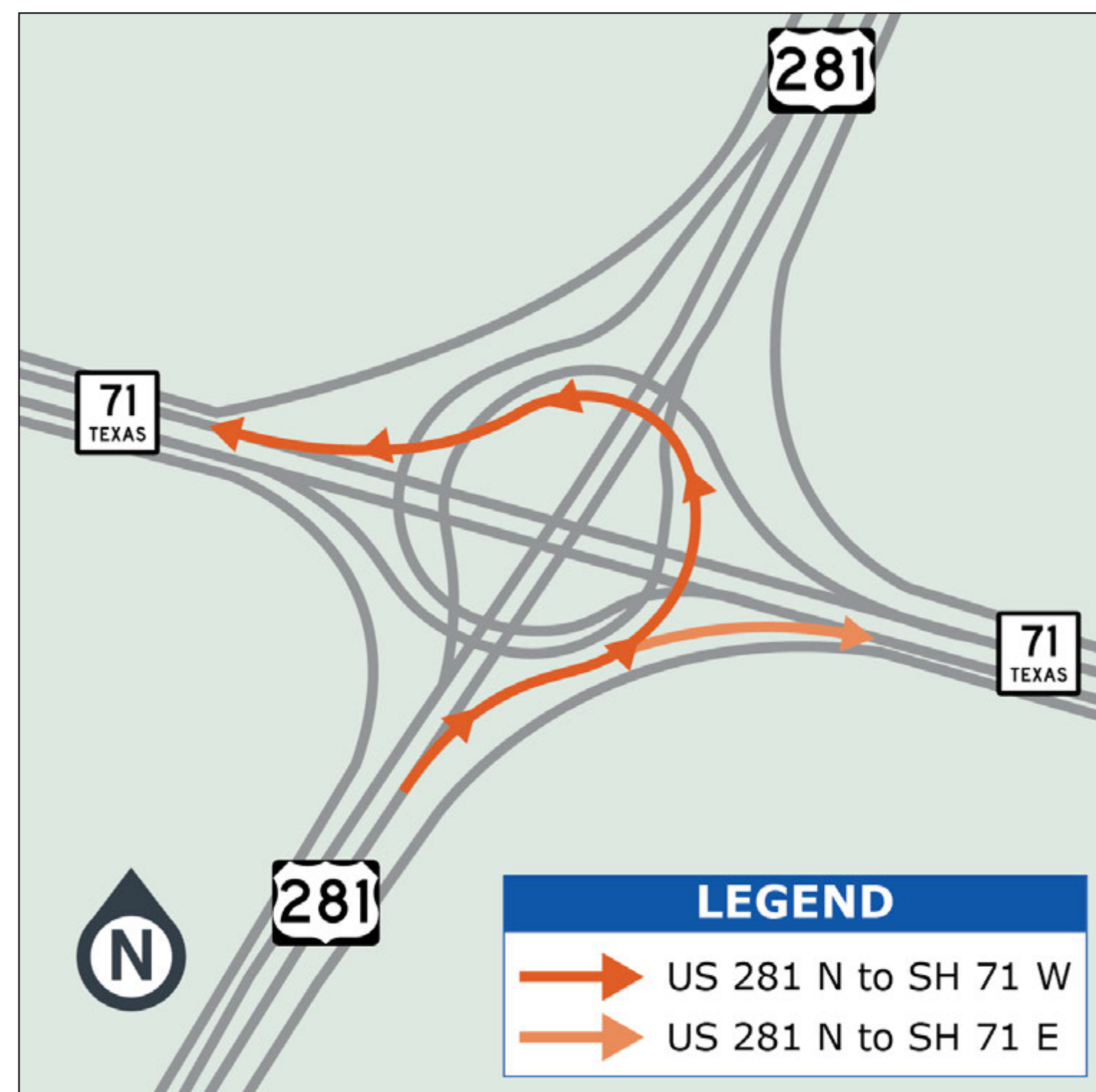
Phase 2

Schematic Design & Environmental Study

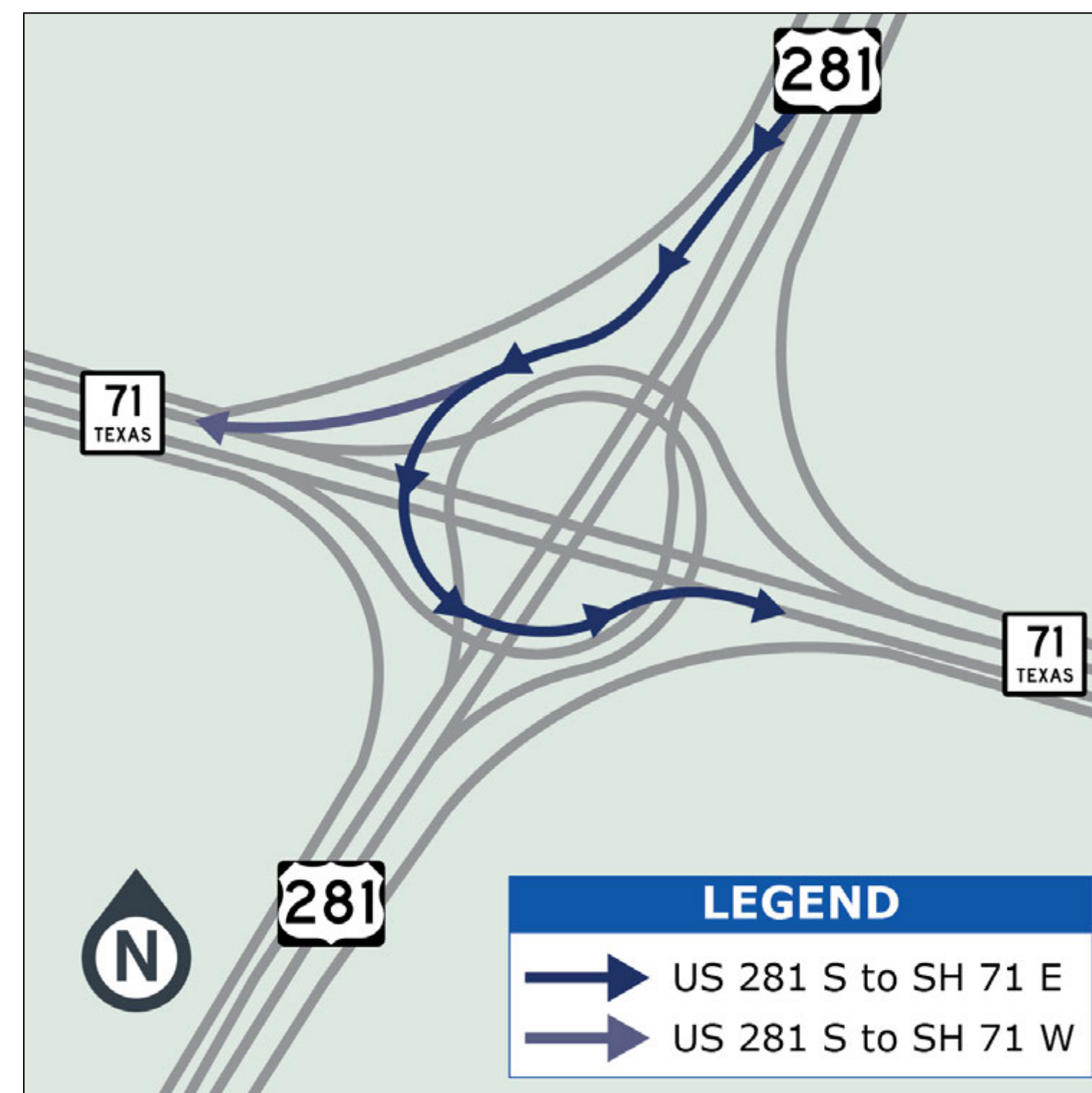
Proposed Interchange - Turbine



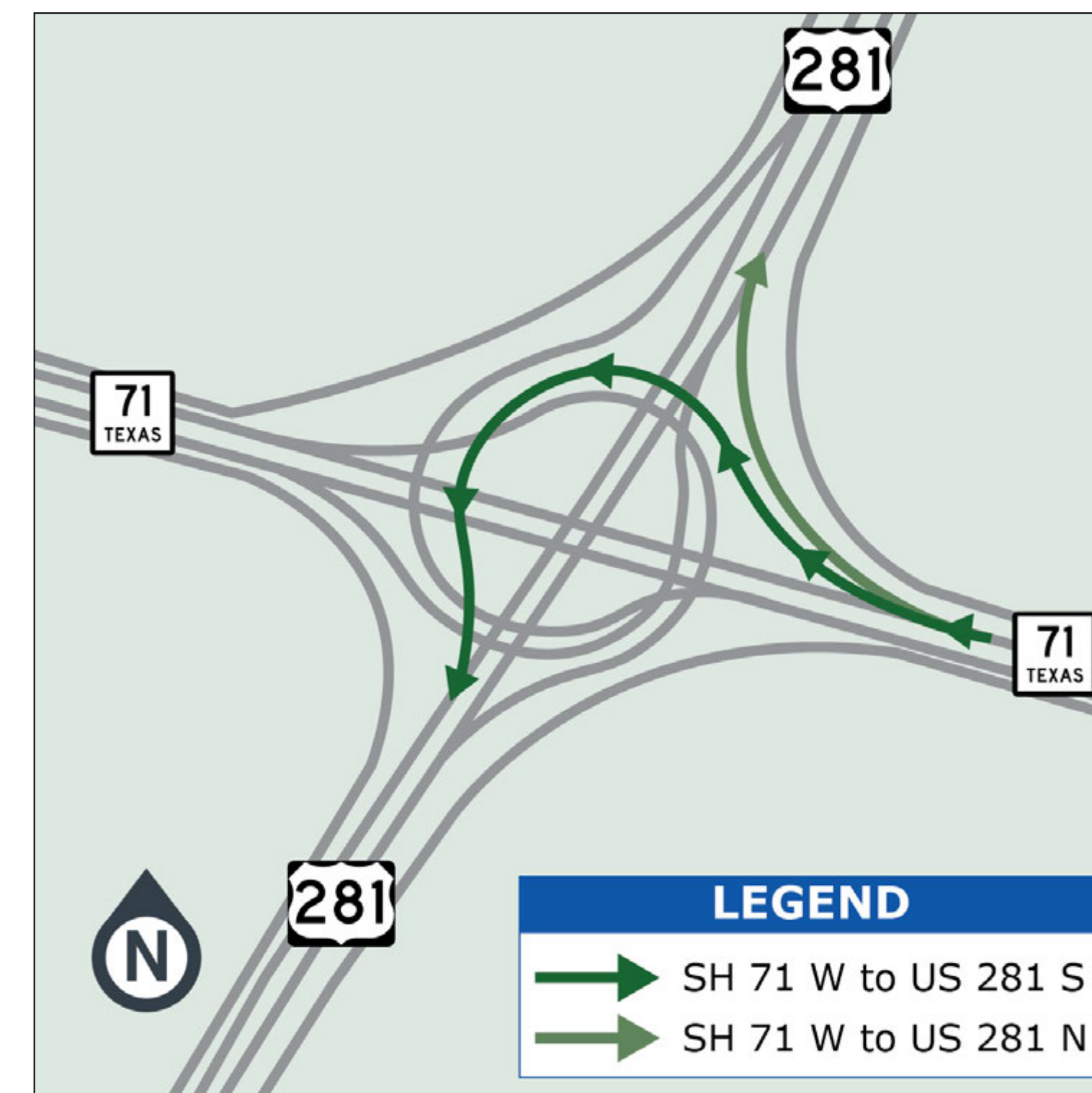
Turbine interchange rendering at US 69 and SH 73 in Jefferson County



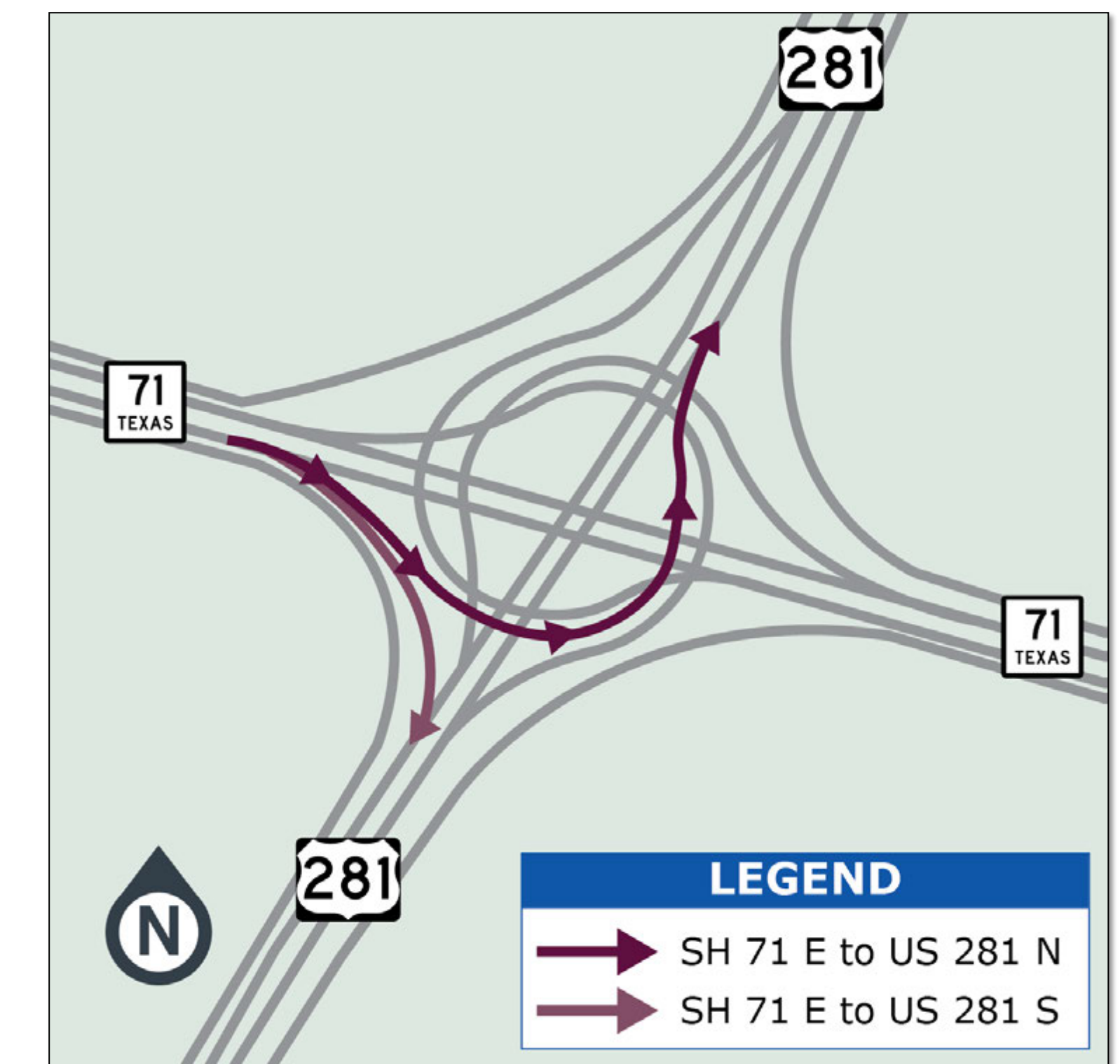
US 281 northbound to SH 71



US 281 southbound to SH 71



SH 71 westbound to US 281



SH 71 eastbound to US 281

What We Heard at Previous Public Meeting

Safety Concerns

- Traveling speed on US 281
- Turning into and out of Gregg Ranch Boulevard
- Low speed limit on access roads
- Implement near-term safety enhancements

Noise Concerns

- Add noise walls
 - Install before construction
 - Consider aesthetics
- Use of materials that reduce noise
- Place "No Engine Brake" signs

Lighting Concerns

- Consider increased light pollution
- Adhere to dark sky compliance

Access Concerns

- Prioritize emergency response time
- Consider future grown in the project area

Gregg Ranch Overpass

- General opposition to proposing an overpass at Gregg Ranch Boulevard

Public Outreach

- Direct communication with residential neighborhoods

What Has Changed

A: Noise Walls

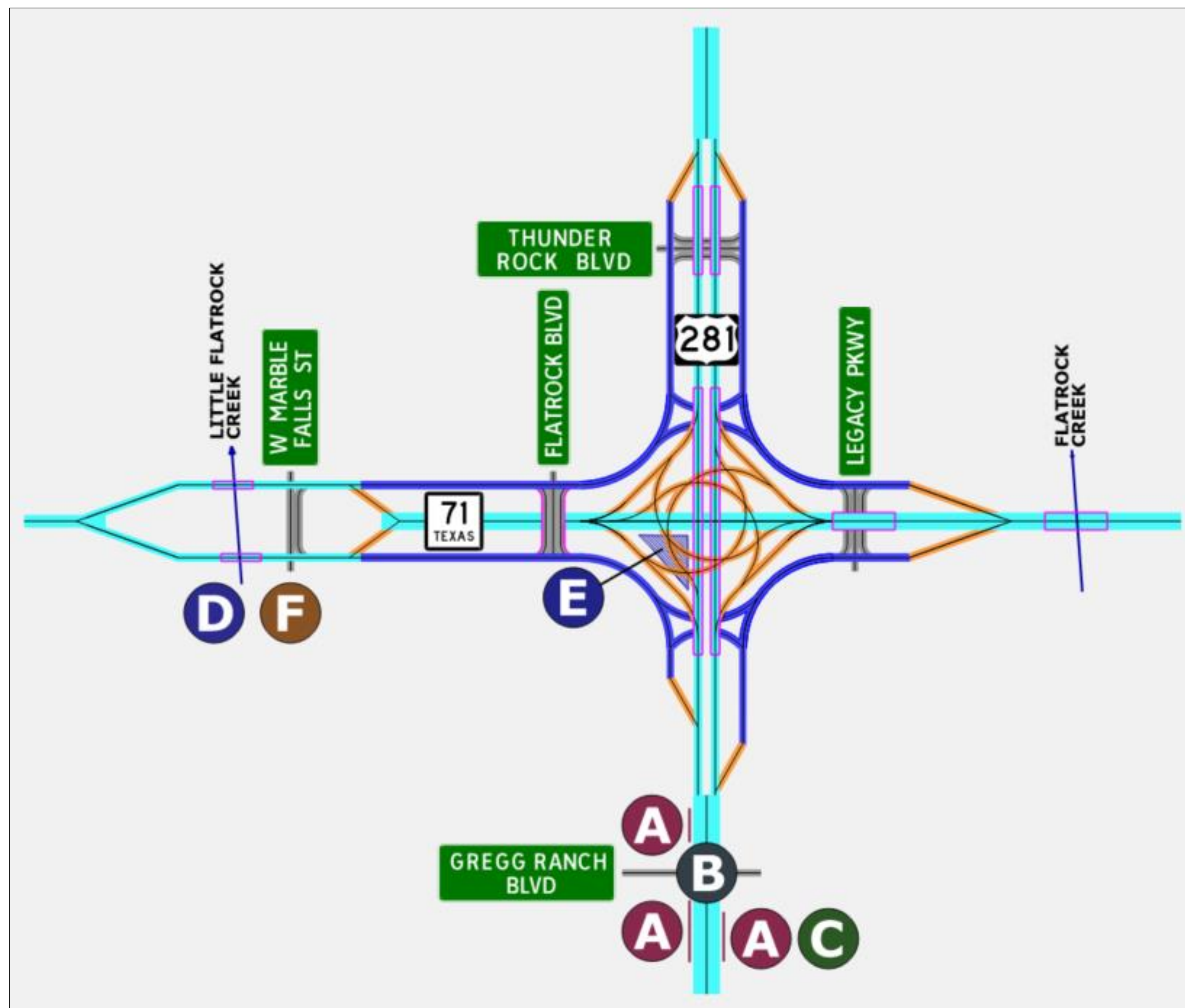
Added noise walls to reduce traffic noise at residences near Gregg Ranch Blvd

B: Gregg Ranch

Removed overpass at Gregg Ranch Blvd; R-cut with signals proposed

C: FLATZ 830

Eliminated displacements at FLATZ 830 apartments



D: Bridges

Added bridges to improve drainage crossings

E: Detention Pond

Added detention pond to reduce flow through drainage channel

F: Cross Street

Added stub-out to match Marble Falls Comprehensive Plan network

Current Public Outreach



- The notice was posted to the TxDOT website on March 9, 2026.



- Notices were mailed (and/or emailed) to:

- Elected officials on March 9, 2026.
- Community organizations, such as schools, hospitals and emergency services.
- Adjacent property owners as identified from the Burnet County Appraisal Districts on March 16, 2026.



- Approximately 2,200 Every Door Direct Postcards were delivered to local mailboxes on March 25, 2026.



- The hearing update was displayed on roadside changeable message signs beginning April 2, 2026.



- Advertisements were published in English and Spanish, as applicable, in the following newspapers:
 - *The Highlander, DailyTrib Online and Horseshoe Bay Beacon*

About the Environmental Study

TxDOT performed the environmental assessment for the US 281 at SH 71 Interchange in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act.



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated July 17, 2025, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

The study included:

- Engagement with community stakeholders, public agencies and local governments
- Presentation of the purpose and need for the project
- Continued analyses of current project area conditions
- Evaluation of design options and the No Build (do nothing) alternative
- Evaluation of potential impacts to the community and environment
- Recommendation of a design option or No Build alternative

Environmental Study Findings

- The environmental study (Environmental Assessment (EA)) evaluated potential impacts to the community and environment, including:



Air Quality and Traffic Noise



Hazardous Materials



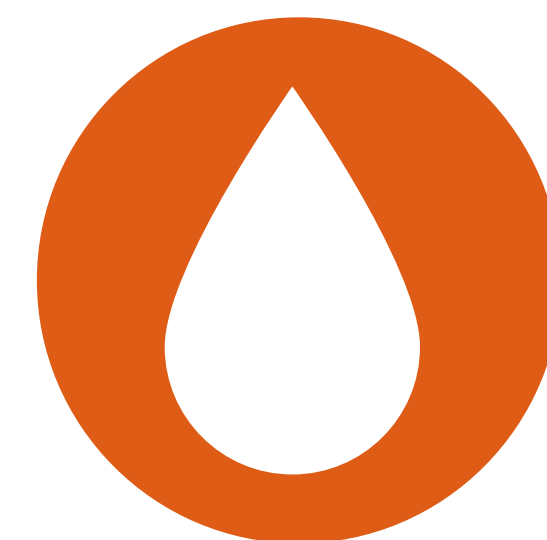
Cultural Resources (Historic and Archeology)



Biological Resources



Threatened and Endangered Species



Water Resources



Social and Community Impacts

Draft EA Conclusion: Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a significant impact on the human or natural environment. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is recommended.

Right-of-Way Information

- Acquisition of right of way and relocation assistance will be in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Properties Acquisitions Polices Act of 1970, as amended.
- The following information on the right-of-way acquisition process is available at txdot.gov and on the public hearing webpage:
 - Landowner’s Bill of Rights
 - Relocation Assistance
 - State Purchase of Right of Way



Landowner Bill of Rights and resources webpage

We Want Your Input

Provide your input by submitting a comment:

- In person at the Public Hearing
- By email: AUS_US281atSH71@txdot.gov
- Online: www.txdot.gov, keyword search “US 281 at SH 71 Interchange”
- By mail: TxDOT Austin District
ATTN: US 281 at SH 71
1949 S I-35 Frontage Rd, Ste 105
Austin, Texas 78741
- By voicemail: 512-553-2821



While comments are always welcome, they must be received or postmarked by **Friday, April 24, 2026**, to be included in the official hearing documentation.

Virtual Hearing: Materials & Input

You may view materials from today's public hearing and provide input online.

- Access the virtual hearing by:
 - Scanning the QR Code
 - Visiting www.TxDOT.gov, keyword search "US 281 at SH 71 Interchange"



Please submit your input for the public hearing by **Friday, April 24, 2026**.

If you have questions or need technical assistance, please contact the study team at 512-756-2316.