



MoPac South
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

HELP SHAPE MOBILITY IMPROVEMENTS ALONG MOPAC

THE PROBLEM

The MoPac Expressway south of Lady Bird Lake is a vital artery for Austin commuters and neighbors, as well as visitors to our region. Constructed between 1973 and 2013 as a four to six lane divided highway, it attracts up to 130,000 cars and trucks per day. Over time, expanding population as well as residential, retail and commercial development in the corridor has led to increased traffic congestion, negatively impacting mobility and quality of life for the traveling public and adjacent neighborhoods.

IDENTIFYING A SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority and the Texas Department of Transportation are working with local partners to improve approximately eight miles of the MoPac Expressway from Cesar Chavez Street to Slaughter Lane.

PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO MOPAC

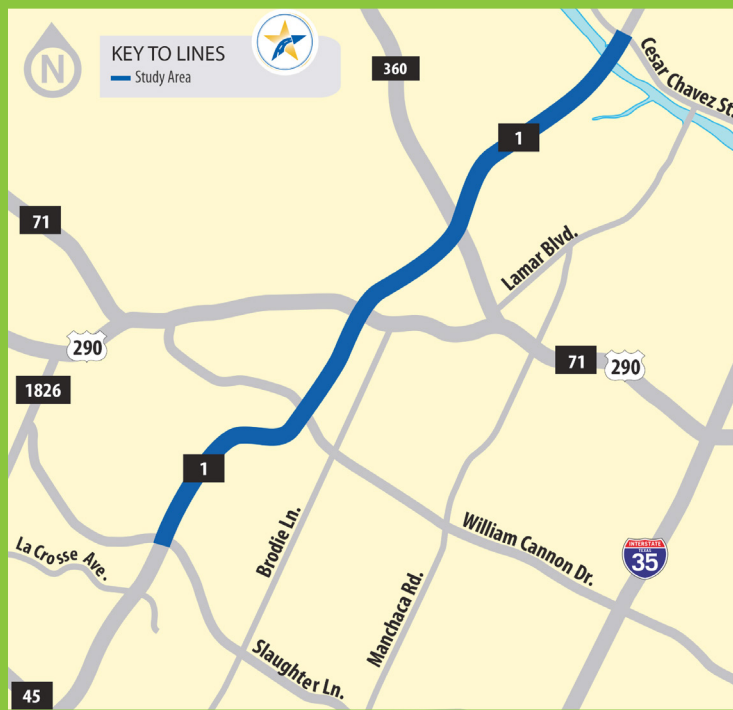
What are we trying to do?

- Provide an opportunity for reliable travel times
- Improve operational efficiency
- Create a dependable and consistent route for transit
- Facilitate reliable emergency response

What problem are we trying to address?

- Current congestion levels are creating unreliable travel times
- The total population of Travis and Hays counties is expected to increase 98% by 2040
- Emergency response times are impacted by traffic congestion
- If we do nothing, it could take an additional 35 minutes to drive from Cesar Chavez Street to Slaughter Lane in 2035

MOPAC SOUTH PROJECT STUDY AREA



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study will assess the potential impacts of proposed transportation improvements on the environment. The following resources will be studied: threatened and endangered species and other wildlife, water quality, trees and other vegetation, cultural resources, traffic noise, air quality, socio-economic resources, geology and soils, visual and aesthetic resources, parkland and other recreational facilities.

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Provide consistency with local and regional plans
- Reduce congestion delay and provide travel time savings for all roadway users
- Be constructible without unnecessary impacts to the natural and human environment
- Avoid and minimize impacts to water quality
- Deliver relief in a timely manner
- Facilitate congestion management
- Increase opportunities for transit, ridesharing, pedestrians and bicyclists

ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION

Preliminary Alternatives

The study team evaluated six preliminary alternatives. Among others, these alternatives included the addition of General Purpose Lanes, HOV Lanes, Express Lanes or Transit Only Lanes.

Alternative Recommended

The Express Lanes Alternative best meets the Purpose and Need and is recommended because it:

- Offers reliable travel times for single occupancy vehicles, high occupancy vehicles, vanpools, buses and emergency vehicles
- Provides the shortest peak period travel time for all vehicles, including those using the general purpose lanes
- Provides over three million hours of annual travel time savings for all users compared to the No Build Alternative. That's about 1.7 times more savings than HOV Lanes and 13 times more savings than Transit Only Lanes.
- Avoids unnecessary impacts to the natural and human environment and avoids and minimizes impacts to water quality
- Increases opportunities for transit and ridesharing and includes new bicycle and pedestrian facilities

Continuing Engineering Analysis and Community Input

The Mobility Authority responded to the call for more analysis of the Express Lanes Alternative, and extended the project schedule to work with the community and local governments to look at additional operational configurations. These operational configurations are:

- One Express Lane in each direction with a downtown direct connection
- One Express Lane in each direction without a downtown direct connection
- Two Express Lanes in each direction with a downtown direct connection
- Two Express Lanes in each direction without a downtown direct connection
- Two Express Lanes in each direction with elevated ramps near Barton Skyway
- A configuration proposed by the city of Austin

A No Build (Do Nothing) Alternative continues to be considered.

DATA AND DETAILED ANALYSIS RESULTS AVAILABLE

The Mobility Authority worked with the Center for Transportation Research (CTR) at the University of Texas to conduct a dynamic traffic assignment study (DTA) to determine how the addition of Express Lanes might impact the downtown street network. The DTA shows that the addition of Express Lanes on MoPac would not adversely affect congestion on Austin's downtown street grid as a whole. All operational configuration options studied either presented an overall improvement or resulted in overall negligible changes in travel times within the downtown network.

The study team also analyzed how the six different operational configurations under consideration could impact travel times on MoPac South in the morning and afternoon peak periods between the merge onto the MoPac ramps at Cesar Chavez Street and Slaughter Lane. All configurations studied improve peak period travel times on the general purpose lanes when compared to the No Build (Do Nothing) Alternative. Express Lane travel times range from nine - 20 minutes depending on the configuration selected.

To review the full results of the analysis, visit www.MoPacSouth.com.

STAY INVOLVED

We welcome your feedback and questions about the MoPac South Environmental Study. To learn more or to request a presentation for your group, please contact us by email at www.MoPacSouth.com/contact/ or by phone at (512) 996-9778.

Visit www.MoPacSouth.com for information and to sign up for updates.

