

## What Problem Are We Trying to Solve?

The MoPac Expressway south of Cesar Chavez Street is a vital artery in Austin for commuters, neighbors, and visitors. This corridor provides a critical link to downtown Austin and other major highways such as US 290 and Capital of Texas Highway. Consistently ranked as one of the most congested roadways in Texas, 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. This negatively impacts mobility and quality of life for the traveling public and adjacent neighborhoods.

If we do nothing to address congestion, drivers could waste an additional 35 minutes traveling the corridor by 2035.



## The Mission

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.

## The Process

The project team has initiated a comprehensive study to thoroughly analyze the corridor and determine the best approach to meet the mobility needs. This study will identify a full range of alternatives, and through extensive analysis and community outreach, identify a recommended solution. The study began in 2013, and we anticipate an environmental finding in 2021.

## Project Purpose

### 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

## Project Need

### What problems are we trying to address?

- Current congestion levels are creating unreliable travel times
- Forecasted population, traffic, and employment growth, resulting in increased congestion and delay
- Emergency response times are impacted by traffic congestion

Various alternatives (proposed solutions to the mobility problem) have been refined and narrowed using public input, the purpose and need for the project, and other evaluation criteria.

## Recommended Build Alternative

Based on initial evaluation, the Express Lane(s) Alternative, along with the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes Alternative and the Transit Only Lanes Alternative were carried forward for further evaluation because each met the Purpose and Need for the project.

The Express Lane(s) Alternative was selected as the Recommended Build Alternative because it:

- Offers reliable travel times for single 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 3 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.
- Delivers relief in a timely manner.
- Increases opportunities for transit and ridesharing and includes new bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

*The No Build (or "Do Nothing" Alternative) is also being carried as a baseline for analysis.*

## Configuration Options for the Express Lanes

After the initial roll-out of the Express Lane(s) Alternative, the project team developed six different potential operational configurations for the Alternative for consideration by the project team, transportation partners and the community. The project team is now working to identify the best configuration option for the Express Lane(s) Alternative; the decision will be shared with the public as soon as the information is available.

## 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

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