



RECOMMENDATION

Urban Transportation Commission

Recommendation Number 20260203-006: Mopac South

WHEREAS, the [Austin Strategic Mobility Plan](#) (ASMP) sets a goal that by 2039, 50% of commutes will not be non-single occupancy vehicles;

WHEREAS, the Austin Strategic Mobility Plans sets a target to achieve a 20% reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by 2039;

WHEREAS, vehicle miles traveled per capita, congestion levels, commute times, and crashes in the Austin region have been increasing, and the region is not meeting the safety targets recommended in the Texas Transportation Institute's (TTI) Regional Traffic Safety Plan;

WHEREAS, expanding highways leads to developmental sprawl, increases in traffic, air pollution, and per-capita vehicle miles traveled, while failing to relieve congestion;

WHEREAS, the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA) recommended build alternative 2C for Mopac South proposes to add two tolled express lanes to Mopac Boulevard between Barton Skyway and 6th Street;

WHEREAS, the CTRMA recommended build alternative additionally widens the bridge over Lady Bird Lake to five non-tolled general purpose lanes in both directions;

WHEREAS, the CTRMA recommended build alternative includes significant elevated ramping of the highway between Barton Skyway and Rollingwood, while community feedback has consistently requested no elevated ramps;

WHEREAS, [City Council Resolution 20241212-066](#) directed the City Manager to work with CTRMA to align the Mopac South proposal with the ASMP, Austin Climate Equity Plan, and Project Connect Plan;

WHEREAS, that same resolution called for a refined Mopac South project that would "reduce or not increase vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions, reduce or minimize increases in impervious cover, minimize the loss of tree canopy, and minimize the widening of the existing roadway," yet it is at best unclear that the recommended build alternative would meet these goals;

WHEREAS, Council Member Ellis, the resolution's sponsor and council-district representative of the project area, followed up with a letter requesting that the Mopac South project include no more than one additional lane in each direction, but the recommended build alternative does not align with this request;

WHEREAS, the Travis County Commissioners Court requested that CTRMA produce an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with a thorough study of alternatives before moving forward with the project, yet CTRMA has indicated they hope to conduct only an Environmental Assessment (EA);

WHEREAS, [Urban Transportation Commission Recommendation 20250401-003](#) built on the groundwork laid by City Council and requested that the Mopac South Project be removed from the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) 2050 Regional Transportation Plan, or amended from “up to two lanes in each direction” to “up to one lane in each direction;”

WHEREAS, continued community feedback has been received opposing highway expansion and particularly highway expansion over sensitive watershed and aquifer areas and parkland;

WHEREAS, the I-35 Capital Express Central Project has broken ground, and promises to create both short-term and long-term mobility impacts to the region that are yet to be foreseen, at the same time CTRMA proposes to begin extensive construction on Austin’s other major north-south highway;

WHEREAS, the 2016 Bond Corridor Program has outstanding projects for construction on South Lamar Blvd between Barton Springs Road and US Highway 290 currently up for bid and projected to break ground in 2026 and take place over the next 6 years;

WHEREAS, Project Connect’s Austin Light Rail project is set to receive federal approval and will move into contracting, engineering, and permitting in 2026, with construction starting in 2027, and will also have wide-reaching impacts on mobility options in the region;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Urban Transportation Commission recommends that CTRMA pause their Mopac South project given the lack of alignment of the project with the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, Austin City Council and Travis County Commission requests and guidance, and community feedback;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Urban Transportation Commission also recommends that the Mopac South project be paused until the I-35 Capital Express Central Project, Austin Light Rail Phase 1, and 2016 Bond Corridor Program planned construction for South Lamar Blvd are complete, and CTRMA can then reassess the community need for Mopac South expansion after the addition of these three large infrastructure projects;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, if CTRMA moves forward on the Mopac South project without a pause, the Urban Transportation Commission recommends they complete a full Environmental Impact Statement, and not just an Environmental Assessment, to help the community understand the project’s potential impact on VMT, carbon emissions, safety, impervious cover and tree canopy, among other impacts.

Date of Approval: 02/03/2026

Motioned By: Commissioner Kavelman

Seconded By: Chair Somers

Record of Vote: 7-0

Attest: Natalie Stone
