

# TXDOT's I-35 Expansion: Facts and Resources

## The Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Proposed I-35 Expansion

<b>TXDOT'S PLAN</b>	To widen I-35 through Austin from 12 lanes to as many as 22 lanes.
<b>PROJECT LIMITS</b>	28 miles of I-35 between SH 45-SE near Buda to SH 45 N in Round Rock.
<b>TIMELINE</b>	<a href="#">North</a> and <a href="#">south</a> portions: 2023. <a href="#">Central</a> portion: Early 2024.
<b>PROJECT WEBSITE</b>	<a href="https://my35capex.com/">https://my35capex.com/</a>

## The Problems with the Project

### Environmental

- The proposed expansion of I-35 through Austin would result in an increase in carbon dioxide emissions of [1.2 to 2.6 million metric tons by 2050](#)<sup>1</sup>; the equivalent of a small coal fired power plant.<sup>2</sup>
- Meanwhile, the International Panel on Climate Change has stated that [cities must move away from car-dependent infrastructure](#) in order to tackle climate change. Highway infrastructure is explicitly mentioned in [the report](#). The City of Austin has a goal of [net zero greenhouse gas emissions](#) by 2040 which will certainly go unmet if this highway is expanded.
- Texas roadways currently make up .48% of global emissions. Opposing the eternal road-widening agenda that has been promoted by the Governor is crucial for climate justice in this state.

### Congestion

- It is well known by now that expanding highways does not solve congestion (some recent articles are available in the [New York Times](#) and the [Atlantic](#) as well as countless academic articles - [here](#) is one example) . Indeed, it often worsens it.
- Peak travel times along the [Katy Freeway in Houston](#) increased by 55% after it was expanded.

### Public Health

- The planned expansion, by TxDOT's own estimates, will result in increasing the number of cars driving through the city from approximately 200,000 a day to 330,000 - a 59% increase.
- There is mounting evidence that particulate matter coming off of tires (which is not helped by electrification) is [a serious public health concern](#). (It significantly increases the risk of [childhood asthma](#) and [strokes](#) to name a couple of examples).
- We are aware that the [EPA is expected to tighten regulations on particulate matter](#) which would put Austin currently in non-attainment, even without the addition of 130,000 cars a day.

<sup>1</sup>

Note that this estimate from the [SHIFT](#) calculator already takes into account predicted increases in electric vehicles.

<sup>2</sup> <https://environmentamerica.org/texas/articles/expansion-of-i-35-in-austin-a-disaster-for-environment/>

## Mobility

- Interstate highways are one of the least efficient ways of moving large numbers of people in and around a city. By proceeding with this project, we will be missing out on opportunities to support a long-term transit future for the State of Texas.
- Residents have spoken loud and clear in their support for Project Connect and improved bike and pedestrian infrastructure. We would like to be able to move around our region without a car. It is well known that [expanding highways results in more reliance on cars](#) and increasing difficulty supporting public transit, and pedestrian, and bike infrastructure.
- The community has put forward alternative proposals for this corridor (such as the Rethink35 and Reconnect Austin proposals) aimed at improving mobility and connectivity for people in an efficient and sustainable way. They were not given serious consideration by TxDOT.

## Equity

- 86% of the displacements from the proposed expansion are people and businesses in the Environmental Justice category (FEIS, Appendix J).
- People of lower income and people of color also disproportionately bear the brunt of [air pollution](#).
- Automobile dependent design results in the exclusion of many people from public life, such as those who cannot afford a car, who are too young, too old, or have a disability.

## Safety

- The City of Austin has a [Vision Zero goal](#) - to eliminate traffic related fatalities in our community.
- As of 2021, [I-35 is the deadliest road in the city](#). A wider highway with more lanes and more cars will result in more deaths.

**Thank you for your help!**  
**We couldn't do this without you.**



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