

**RESOLUTION NO.**

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2       **WHEREAS**, the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA) is  
3 conducting the MoPac South Environmental Study as part of the required federal  
4 review process under the National Environmental Policy Act for a major highway  
5 project, and the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for the MoPac South  
6 Project (Project) has been released with a proposed Finding of No Significant  
7 Impact; and

8       **WHEREAS**, throughout the environmental review process, hundreds of  
9 community members have submitted comments expressing concerns about the  
10 proposed Project, including the Recommended Build Alternative selected in 2015  
11 to widen MoPac South Expressway from Slaughter Lane to Cesar Chavez Street  
12 with up to four new tolled express lanes and additional general-purpose and  
13 auxiliary lanes in certain locations, but the current Recommended Build  
14 Alternative has not changed substantially in size or capacity since 2015; and

15       **WHEREAS**, in the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization  
16 (CAMPO) 2035 Regional Transportation Plan, the Project was described as an  
17 expansion with only one additional lane in each direction; and

18       **WHEREAS**, in 2015, the City expressed serious concerns about changing  
19 the description of the Project in the CAMPO 2040 Regional Transportation Plan  
20 from an expansion consisting of two toll lanes to four toll lanes, highlighting issues  
21 related to the Project's technical feasibility, impacts on connecting roadways, and  
22 environmental impacts; and

23       **WHEREAS**, a decade of smart-growth planning has changed Austin's  
24 future and, in November 2020, Austin voters approved Project Connect, creating

25 dedicated funding for a citywide high-capacity transit system to offer mobility  
26 options not reliant upon personal vehicles; and

27 **WHEREAS**, in support of the public's vote to transform the transportation  
28 network, the City has also transformed its land use regulations, embracing density  
29 within the urban core of the City and along transit corridors; and

30 **WHEREAS**, highway expansion projects are associated with increased  
31 sprawl, higher traffic volumes, and elevated levels of air pollution and carbon  
32 emissions; and

33 **WHEREAS**, on August 8, 2019, City Council declared a climate  
34 emergency; and

35 **WHEREAS**, transportation is responsible for the largest share of carbon  
36 emissions in Travis County; and

37 **WHEREAS**, the DEA states the proposed expansion is anticipated to  
38 increase vehicle miles traveled (VMT), placing it at odds with the City's adopted  
39 sustainability, mobility, and climate goals, including targets in the Austin Strategic  
40 Mobility Plan (ASMP) and the Austin Climate Equity Plan to reduce VMT by 20  
41 percent and achieve a 50 percent mode share of non-single-occupancy vehicle trips  
42 by 2039; and

43 **WHEREAS**, the proposed highway expansion would be constructed over  
44 the environmentally sensitive Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, which serves as a  
45 crucial water source and supports unique karst features and sensitive ecosystems,  
46 including Barton Springs and Cold Springs; and

47 **WHEREAS**, this area provides critical habitat for several endangered and  
48 threatened species, including the Austin blind salamander, Barton Springs  
49 salamander, Bee Creek cave harvestman, tooth cave spider, golden-cheeked

50 warbler, monarch butterfly, tricolored bat, and bracted twistflower, all of which are  
51 listed in the DEA documents as species that may be adversely affected by the  
52 project; and

53 **WHEREAS**, the construction and operation of the proposed highway  
54 project has a high potential to disrupt these habitats and negatively affect water  
55 quality within the Edwards Aquifer and Barton Springs, thereby directly  
56 threatening the survival of these species and the ecological integrity of the creeks,  
57 caves, and springs that rely upon the continuous flows of clean water; and

58 **WHEREAS**, the Environmental Protection Agency has recently  
59 strengthened the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for particulate matter  
60 (PM) 2.5 due to its harmful effects on respiratory and cardiovascular health,  
61 especially for children, and

62 **WHEREAS**, Travis County's PM 2.5 levels already exceed the safe  
63 threshold of 9.0 micrograms per cubic meter, putting the region at risk of a  
64 "nonattainment" designation if air quality does not improve; and

65 **WHEREAS**, the construction and operation of the Project are expected to  
66 increase PM 2.5 emissions and other air pollutants due to higher vehicle volumes  
67 and construction activity, exacerbating air quality issues and increasing exposure to  
68 harmful pollutants in sensitive areas, including Austin High School and adjacent  
69 neighborhoods; and

70 **WHEREAS**, on December 12, 2024, City Council adopted Resolution No.  
71 20241212-066, which directed the City Manager to collaborate with CTRMA to  
72 ensure that the proposed Project aligns with the City's environmental and mobility  
73 goals as outlined in the ASMP, the Austin Climate Equity Plan, the Watershed  
74 Protection Strategic Plan, and the Project Connect System Plan; and

75           **WHEREAS**, the resolution specifically called for a refined Project proposal  
76 that supports express transit service, provides safe and continuous pedestrian and  
77 bicycle crossings, reduces or does not increase vehicle miles traveled and  
78 greenhouse gas emissions, reduces or minimizes increases in impervious cover,  
79 minimizes the loss of tree canopy, and minimizes roadway widening; and

80           **WHEREAS**, on February 2, 2026, the Urban Transportation Commission  
81 (UTC) recommended that CTRMA pause the Project given the lack of alignment  
82 of the project with the ASMP, City Council's and Travis County Commissioners  
83 Court's requests and guidance, and community feedback; and

84           **WHEREAS**, the UTC also recommended that the Project be paused until  
85 the I-35 Capital Express Central Project, Austin Light Rail Phase 1, and 2016 Bond  
86 Corridor Program planned construction for South Lamar Boulevard are complete,  
87 and CTRMA can reassess the community need for the Mopac South Expressway  
88 expansion after the addition of these three large infrastructure projects; and

89           **WHEREAS**, the UTC recommended that should CTRMA move forward on  
90 the Project without a pause, a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and not  
91 just an Environmental Assessment, should be completed to help the community  
92 understand the project's potential impact on VMT, carbon emissions, safety,  
93 impervious cover, and tree canopy, among other impacts; and

94           **WHEREAS**, the Travis County Commissioners Court also sent letters to  
95 CTRMA on July 31, 2024 and January 28, 2025, requesting that CTRMA perform  
96 a full EIS for the Project, emphasizing the significant environmental impacts of the  
97 Project on local air and water quality, including impacts to the Edwards Aquifer  
98 Recharge Zone, impacts to endangered species and important ecological resources  
99 in the area, and impacts to unique geographic features such as Lady Bird Lake and  
100 Zilker Park; and

101           **WHEREAS**, City Council desires to echo these concerns regarding the  
102 environmental, public health, and community impacts of the proposed project and  
103 believes that a thorough and transparent evaluation of alternatives and potential  
104 impacts, with the highest level of scrutiny, is necessary to build public trust and  
105 ensure that the Project aligns with our region’s collective vision for a sustainable  
106 future; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

107 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

108           City Council formally requests that CTRMA reevaluate its proposed Finding  
109 of No Significant Impact in the Draft Environmental Assessment for the MoPac  
110 South Project on the grounds that the Project is likely to have significant  
111 environmental effects on air and water quality, endangered species, caves and karst  
112 features, public parkland and community spaces, and vulnerable school-aged  
113 communities, and that CTRMA commence preparation of a full Environmental  
114 Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act to ensure a  
115 thorough, transparent, and legally compliant evaluation of all potential impacts and  
116 alternatives.

117 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

118           City Council formally requests that CTRMA revive consideration of a  
119 project alternative that adds no more than one lane in each direction and  
120 incorporates targeted modifications designed to alleviate known problem areas and  
121 improve overall traffic flow, while minimizing environmental and community  
122 impacts. City Council requests that the project alternative align with the goals and  
123 intent of the Austin Climate Equity Plan, the Watershed Protection Strategic Plan,  
124 the Project Connect System Plan, the Austin Parks and Recreation Long Range  
125 Plan, and the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, including the Urban Trails Plan. Per

126 the goals of these Council-approved plans and existing City policy, the alternative  
127 should:

- 128 • add no more than one lane in each direction;
- 129 • support express transit service to one or more park and ride facilities;
- 130 • provide continuous, safe pedestrian and bicycle trails and crossings;
- 131 • achieve City water quality treatment standards at a minimum, with the  
132 goal of achieving Save Our Springs non-degradation water quality  
133 treatment levels where possible;
- 134 • meet City geologic void mitigation standards;
- 135 • minimize and mitigate impacts to adjacent City parkland and recreation  
136 facilities, including Zilker Park, Austin Nature and Science Center,  
137 Rowing Dock, Zilker Botanical Garden, Dick Nichols Park, Eilers (Deep  
138 Eddy) Park and Pool, Deer Park at Maple Run Preserve, Circle C Ranch  
139 Metropolitan Park at Slaughter Creek, Johnson Creek Greenbelt,  
140 Williamson Creek Greenbelt, the Barton Creek Greenbelt, the Violet  
141 Crown Trail, the Anne and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail, and the  
142 Balcones Canyonland Preserve;
- 143 • reduce or not increase vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas  
144 emissions;
- 145 • reduce or not increase air pollution;
- 146 • reduce or minimize increases in impervious cover;
- 147 • minimize the loss of tree canopy; and
- 148 • minimize the widening of the existing roadway.

149 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

150 The City Manager is directed to work with CTRMA to help facilitate  
151 development of this alternative for the Project and ensure its alignment with City  
152 goals, plans, and policy.

153 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

154 The City Manager is further directed to help identify and advance targeted,  
155 interim infrastructure improvements that could improve road function, address  
156 mobility and safety concerns, and mitigate the need for or reduce the scale of the  
157 Project.

158 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

159 The City Manager is further directed to continue to work collaboratively  
160 with Capital Metro Transportation Authority and CTRMA to identify locations for  
161 one or more new park and ride facilities along MoPac South Expressway to be  
162 served by Express bus, per the Project Connect System Plan and in fulfillment of  
163 the Project Purpose and Project Goals and Objectives. The new park and ride  
164 facility location(s) should preferably utilize existing or planned impervious cover,  
165 such as through a shared parking agreement or beneath elevated highway lanes.  
166 This work should be undertaken with urgency to ensure the final design of MoPac  
167 South can be as transit-supportive as possible, ideally including one or more park  
168 and rides as part of CTRMA's project.

169 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

170 The City Manager is directed to leverage the expertise of City departments,  
171 including but not limited to Austin Watershed Protection, Austin Climate Action  
172 and Resilience, Austin Parks and Recreation, Austin Water, Austin Energy, Austin  
173 Planning, and Austin Transportation and Public Works, to submit comprehensive,

174 official staff comments for the MoPac South Draft Environmental Assessment  
175 Public Hearing by the May 3, 2026 deadline. The City Manager is also directed to  
176 submit a copy of this Resolution as Council's official comments by the deadline.  
177

178 **ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2026 **ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

179 Erika Brady  
180 City Clerk  
181

DRAFT