

NCINC2 Resolution talking points

From the draft cover letter to Council:

The Texas Department of Transportation plan (“Mobility 35”) ...includes adding an auxiliary lane to the Upper Decks through North Central Austin and retrofitting support beams to handle additional weight.

Any investment in the Upper Decks must be done ...with a long-range plan for the future of the Upper Decks; therefore, we do not support the TxDOT Plan for the Upper Decks without it being **part of a City of Austin-led, funded plan on a comprehensive vision for the Upper Decks** that includes an analysis of the social, environmental and economic **benefits to the City that might be derived by their removal.**

There are several factors that contribute to our support of such a study and concern regarding the existing Plan for the Upper Decks:

- Nationally and internationally, cities are removing large, outdated transportation infrastructure at an unprecedented rate and seeing tangible benefits to economic development, mobility and quality of life. The TxDOT Plan for the Upper Decks runs contrary to that trend and we fear that investment in the Upper Decks without a long-term plan will delay that process for Austin.
- The TxDOT Plan for the Upper Decks should support the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan and its principles of a Healthy, Sustainable and Compact & Connected City. The Upper Decks—in contrast—are a visual, physical, economic and psychological obstacle that discourages pedestrian and bicycle mobility, disconnects neighborhoods, depresses property values and economic development and subjects nearby residential and commercial areas to elevated noise, air and water pollution.
- Other projects in the Mobility35 Plans, such as the decision to eliminate “super streets” and the most recent plan to depress IH35 through Downtown to allow for future capping of the interstate, have benefitted greatly from public input, particularly through stakeholders focused on improving connectivity across IH35, while the Plan for the Upper Decks has received no such input.
- The physical distance between on- and off-ramps on the upper decks all but ensures that the auxiliary lanes will have the effect of additional carrying capacity, traffic generation and traffic volumes on the Upper Decks.
- The TxDOT Plan for the Upper Decks includes no provisions to encourage any mode of transportation other than the personal automobile and does not plan sufficiently for, or contribute to, alternative mobility modes in the future.