



ADDING NEW LANES OR ROADS



More Information: tti.tamu.edu/policy/how-to-fix-congestion

Description

Widening a freeway or street, or adding a new road is a traditional strategy to ease traffic flow problems. Though this technique is not a panacea for congestion, it may be an appropriate course of action when the existing road cannot handle the travel demand, and less expensive options cannot address the challenges.

New or widened roads can serve as a relief route or economic catalyst in the region. In any case, these are major projects that require careful planning, environmental consideration, comprehensive public engagement, and financial support.

Target Market

- Areas where existing roads have no room to expand.
- Areas of desired and future growth.

Additional lanes on current routes are best suited for corridors where cheaper and quicker options for improving travel and safety, and improving travel time reliability are unavailable. Projects

to add lanes and new roads should include other traffic-easing methods in the design and operation, including those that manage traffic and provide travel options.

How Will This Help?

- **Improves traffic flow** by adding or creating new capacity.
- **Improves safety and travel time reliability** by providing more regular traffic flow.
- **Reduces congestion on other facilities** by diverting vehicles onto the new road and improving access to surrounding areas.
- **Stimulates economic growth** by encouraging new development or redevelopment of surrounding lands.

COST



TIME



IMPACT



WHO



CITY/STATE

HURDLES



FUNDING

Implementation Issues

Though adding new lanes or roads is common, funding and environmental limits make this method more difficult to use. Getting the right of way to add lanes to an existing road or build a new road, especially in urban areas, can be difficult and expensive.

In addition to obtaining right of way, planners must find a suitable location that earns public and environmental approval. A poorly placed expansion or new road could harm the local economy and neighborhoods.

