






Tennessee	
 I-269 Memphis	<p>Interstate 269 is a 60-mile outer beltway around Memphis, 15 to 20 miles beyond the inner beltway, I-240. The route, mostly through farmland, wetlands, and open spaces, is part of the I-69 "NAFTA Highway" system that was designed to reduce congestion on the inner beltway. But truckers believe that the highway, which was first proposed in the early 2000s when gas was around \$2.00 per gallon, will add 40-plus miles to their trips. Initial proposals for the project were opposed by the citizens and mayors of Memphis and Shelby County, citing "nothing but problems for Memphis." They feared the project would induce sprawl and deepen economic segregation in the region. Another objection is that it is mainly a real estate development scheme, designed to spur the growth of suburbs that will waste tax dollars for the benefit of developers. The regional Memphis Planning Organization is planning more six to eight lane suburban roadways, continuing the trend of auto-dependence in Memphis. This project and the Planning Organization's "Vision Study" may encourage exurban officials to think ahead about what type of development they want, but the impacts of these highway projects on Memphis and the larger region must be part of the future conversation.</p>
Texas	
 Texas State Highway 45 Southwest Austin	<p>Texas State Highway 45 SW is a remnant of an Outer Loop beltway highway around Austin that TxDOT proposed in the 1980s when gas prices were around \$1.24/gal. A large portion of the southwest quadrant of the loop was long ago deleted due to lack of need and the environmental sensitivity of the area. Since the 1980s, more than ten thousand acres of land in the area, one of central Texas' most sensitive environmental areas, have been preserved from development, further reducing the demand for such a road. However, this 3.5-mile toll road project is routed through this sensitive area: the Barton Springs portion of the Edwards Aquifer serves 60,000 people as a primary source of drinking water, and gives rise to a number of springs including the famous Barton Springs, the water source for Austin's iconic natural urban swimming pool. The porous limestone aquifer is recharged as rainwater flows into fissures in creek beds and into open natural land. The road threatens the endangered Barton Springs salamander, passes through endangered Golden-cheeked warbler habitat, and passes directly over at least one cave known to harbor extremely rare cave-dwelling invertebrates. Texas Department of Transportation consultants have mapped significant recharge features for the aquifer in the 3.5 mile right of way of the toll road. Impervious cover and road and traffic runoff would seriously threaten the quality and quantity of water from this key aquifer.⁹⁷</p>
 Houston Light Rail Houston	<p>METRORail is a 7.5 mile light rail line in Houston, Texas that began service in 2004. With a daily ridership of 34,000, the METRORail ranks as one of the most-traveled light rail systems in the United States per route mile. The light rail is currently undergoing an expansion, with two new rail lines under construction, scheduled to be completed in 2015. There are three additional lines in the planning stages, adding a total of 26 miles of tracks to the rail system. The light rail expansion will continue to address the city's air quality problem, by providing residents with an alternative to driving.⁹⁸ The North Corridor project will receive \$94 million for a 5.3-mile light rail transit extension that begins at the existing University of Houston-Downtown Station and runs north to Interstate 45, ending at Northline Commons. The project includes eight new stations, expansion of the existing rail operations center, and purchase of 22 light rail vehicles. The \$94 million grant for the Southeast Corridor covers design and construction of a new 6.6-mile light rail line from downtown Houston to a terminal at Palm Center. The project includes 10 new stations, a new vehicle storage and wash facility, and purchase of 29 light rail vehicles.⁹⁹</p>