



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – LAKWOOD DRIVE/SPICEWOOD SPRINGS ROAD

1. What types of improvements will be considered in the project?

This project consists of removing the traffic signals from the Loop 360 mainlanes at Lakewood Drive, Spicewood Springs Road (W) and Spicewood Springs Road (E)/Bluffstone Drive. Overpasses (where the mainlanes go over the cross street) with non-signalized U-turns in both directions will be constructed at Lakewood Drive and Spicewood Springs Road (E)/Bluffstone Drive. The project also includes a shared-use path (SUP) and sidewalks within the project limits to improve bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.

2. Why is the environmental work for the Spicewood Springs Road and Lakewood Drive projects combined?

Due to their proximity and similar environmental considerations, TxDOT has combined the environmental process for the Lakewood Drive and the Spicewood Springs Road projects. This streamlines the environmental process, preserving financial resources and reducing duplicate federal consultation efforts. Any previous comments received on the Spicewood Springs Road project will be included in the documentation for the combined project.

3. What updates have been made to the design since the November 2018 workshop?

Based on public input, and preliminary traffic analysis, the design team has made changes to the lane configuration at the Spicewood Springs Road (E)/Bluffstone Drive intersection. Changes include the following:

- The dedicated right-turn lane on eastbound Bluffstone Drive has been removed to ensure the project can be built within existing right of way. The current lane configuration includes one shared right-turn/through lane and one shared left-turn/through lane
- There are now two left-turn lanes for traffic turning from southbound Loop 360 onto eastbound Spicewood Springs Road (E)
- Turn lanes and dedicated U-turn lanes have been lengthened based on the results of the preliminary traffic analysis for the northbound and southbound connector roads

Additionally, the interim U-turn proposed for use during construction between Spicewood Springs Road (W) and Lakewood Drive has been eliminated to increase safety. Traffic signals will remain in place during construction to assist with traffic flow.

4. How does TxDOT decide what changes will be made to the concept?

At the beginning of any environmental study, the community is invited to help define the problem we are trying to solve. Concept(s) are developed to help solve that problem, and the community is invited to provide additional input on the development and evaluation of all proposed improvements. A "no build," or "do nothing," alternative will be carried through the process and used as a baseline for comparison.

Public feedback is then combined with engineering feasibility, social, economic and environmental analyses to identify the best concept, ultimately leading to the identification of a preferred alternative. As the environmental study nears completion, a preferred alternative will be presented to the public.

5. What is the project timeline? Will the combination for the environmental work impact the timeline?

The Lakewood Drive/Spicewood Springs Road project will include an environmental and design phase lasting approximately 2-4 years. During the environmental phase, TxDOT will: identify the purpose and need, perform environmental analysis of alternatives, review draft documentation, finalize documentation and come to an environmental decision.

Environmental work for the project is expected to conclude in early 2021. The project will then enter the utility relocation phase, typically lasting one year, and then will proceed to construction. The construction process may be phased, and is projected to take 2-3 years. Combining the environmental work for the two projects streamlines the process.

6. Why can't we move faster/build it now?

Prior to starting construction, projects must go through several processes, including a rigorous environmental study dictated by the federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), roadway design, utility relocation and a construction bidding process. During the environmental process, the project design will continually be modified based on engineering feasibility, traffic analyses and public input. Area utilities, including those placed underground, must also be relocated to allow space to construct the project. Once a construction contractor is selected, construction can begin. The program team is working to move through the projects as efficiently and quickly as possible given these guidelines.

7. Are there any improvements planned for the intersection of Loop 360 at Great Hills Trail?

At this time, improvements at Great Hills Trail are not included in the Loop 360 program. Improvements at the intersection may be considered as part of a separate project.

8. Will the Spicewood Springs Road project impact Bull Creek or Bull Creek Trail?

No.

9. How will I access northbound Loop 360 from eastbound Spicewood Springs Road (W)?

Drivers headed from Spicewood Springs (W) will turn right to head south on Loop 360, proceed to Lakewood Drive, and then turn around using the non-signalized U-turn at Lakewood Drive.

10. How will I access Spicewood Springs Road (W) from northbound Loop 360?

Drivers headed northbound on Loop 360 will take the exit for Spicewood Springs Road(E)/Bluffstone Drive, turn around via the non-signalized U-turn at Spicewood Springs Road (E)/Bluffstone Drive, and proceed southbound on the connector road to reach the intersection of Loop 360 at Spicewood Springs Road (W).

11. How will drivers coming from the east side of Loop 360 access neighborhoods on the west side?

Drivers headed from neighborhoods east of Loop 360 to neighborhoods on the west side of the corridor may travel under the new overpass at Spicewood Springs Road (E)/Bluffstone Drive. A southbound connector road will allow drivers to travel from Spicewood (E)/Bluffstone to Spicewood Springs Road (W). Drivers will no longer have to wait for through traffic, as it will be diverted onto the Loop 360 mainlanes.

12. How do you plan to address noise?

A noise analysis is currently underway as part of the environmental study. The analysis considers the current level of noise at many locations throughout the study area, calculates existing and projected future traffic noise levels and considers noise reduction measures. Noise reduction measures are only proposed if the predicted future noise levels exceed acceptable levels for surrounding properties. The results of that analysis will be made available at future public meetings and will be included as part of the environmental study.

The most common noise reduction measure is the construction of noise barriers or sound walls. If the noise analysis shows that noise levels exceed acceptable standards in a particular area, the project will provide sound walls if they are determined to be feasible, reasonable and acceptable to the adjacent property owners. Feasibility considers whether a substantial noise reduction can be achieved and whether the noise barrier will cause a reduction in safety. Reasonableness considers, among other factors, cost effectiveness, expected noise levels and land use. Acceptability considers the opinions of the residents that live adjacent to the proposed wall.

13. Does TxDOT require additional right of way for the Lakewood Drive/Spicewood Springs Road project?

At this time, the proposed improvements would not require additional right of way.