OAK HILL PARKWAY

ENVISIONING GREATER Mobility

MAY 2018

What Problem Are We Trying To Solve?

Congestion has reduced mobility and quality of life in Oak Hill and surrounding communities. The intersection of two major state highways, US 290 and SH 71 in Oak Hill, is a gateway to southwest Travis County and serves as a key route between central Austin and fast-growing suburban and rural communities such as Lakeway, Bee Cave, Dripping Springs, and Johnson City. US 290 is one of Texas' most congested highway corridors, and due to a lack of reliable connectivity, US 290 has become an unreliable route for both transit and emergency vehicles.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO DO?

- Improve mobility and operational efficiency
- Promote long-term congestion management
- Increase multimodal travel options for people and goods
- Improve safety
- Improve emergency response

PROJECT PARTNERS

Texas Department of Transportation · Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority · City of Austin · METRO · County of Travis

CONSIDER THESE FACTS:

- US 290 in Oak Hill is the 64th most congested roadway in the state of Texas (Texas A&M Transportation Institute, 2017)
- Travis County's population has grown from 212,000 in 1960 to just over 1.2 million in 2016, increasing congestion (US Census Data, 2016)
- 1,208 crashes occurred on US 290/SH 71 between 2010 and 2016, resulting in five fatalities, 30 incapacitating injuries, plus other injuries and property damage (TxDOT, 2017)
- Drivers wasted more than 454,000 hours per year stuck in traffic on US 290/SH 71 in 2014 (Texas A&M Transportation Institute, 2015)
- Traffic demand at the US 290/SH 71 intersection will more than double by 2040 (RTG using CAMPO's travel demand model)

THE MISSION

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (Mobility Authority) are working with the City of Austin, Travis County, Capital Metro, and other local partners to improve long-term mobility in the region. These organizations have worked with the community to develop a solution that effectively addresses congestion, respects the environment, and adds value to the Oak Hill community.

THE PROCESS

The project team initiated a comprehensive study to thoroughly analyze the corridor and determine the best approach for improving mobility.This study identified a full range of alternatives, incorporated previous analyses, and through extensive analysis and community outreach, identified a recommended solution. The analysis and public involvement efforts have been documented through the preparation of this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The DEIS evaluates the potential environmental, social, and economic impacts resulting from the proposed construction of the project.

Multiple concepts for the proposed Oak Hill Parkway were refined and narrowed using public input, the purpose and need for the project, and detailed traffic analysis. As a result of the final phase of evaluation, Alternative "A" has been recommended by TxDOT and the Mobility Authority as the proposed build alternative.

What Are We Proposing?

- TxDOT proposes an upgraded, state-of-the-art roadway consisting of three mainlanes for through traffic in each direction, as well as two to three frontage road lanes in each direction.
- An overpass for the US 290 mainlanes over William Cannon Drive would be built, along with flyovers between US 290 and SH 71. At this location, the US 290 mainlanes would be depressed, or go under, SH 71.
- The westbound US 290 mainlanes and frontage roads would be north of Williamson Creek.
- Intersections would be constructed along US 290 at Convict Hill Road, RM 1826, Scenic Brook Drive, and Circle Drive (South View Road), where the highway would go below ground and the cross street would be at ground level.
- U-turn lanes would be constructed at intersections along US 290 and SH 71 to allow vehicles traveling on frontage roads to U-turn to access the opposite direction frontage road.
- Along SH 71, the flyover ramps would extend past Scenic Brook Drive where the mainlanes would transition to a five-lane (three lanes northbound, two lanes southbound) rural highway with U-turns for local access.
- Significant bicycle and pedestrian accommodations would be built along the entire corridor including a seven-mile shared-use path, sidewalks, and a trailhead at Williamson Creek on William Cannon Drive.
- Upstream water detention ponds would be built to reduce potential flooding, and multiple stormwater detention and water quality treatment ponds would be built within the corridor.
- Additionally, new landscaping, tree plantings, and corridor aesthetics are proposed.

This proposal would require acquisition of new right of way, including four commercial property displacements and one single-family residential property displacement. Other impacts include tree and vegetation removal and the potential for traffic noise mitigation through sound walls.

All features illustrated in this rendering are proposed and considered an artistic rendering for conceptual purposes only. Subject to change.

What Is The No-Build, Or "Do Nothing," Alternative?

At the end of this environmental study, if the TxDOT Environmental Division decides that the No-Build Alternative is the preferred alternative, US 290 and SH 71 would continue to exist as they do today and would continue to have standard, routine maintenance over the next 30 years. Travel times are projected to increase to approximately 25 to 35 minutes over what they are today, and congestion, safety, and mobility would continue to decline in the Oak Hill area as population increases. In addition, the proposed bicycle/pedestrian accomodations and the upstream water detention ponds would not be constructed.

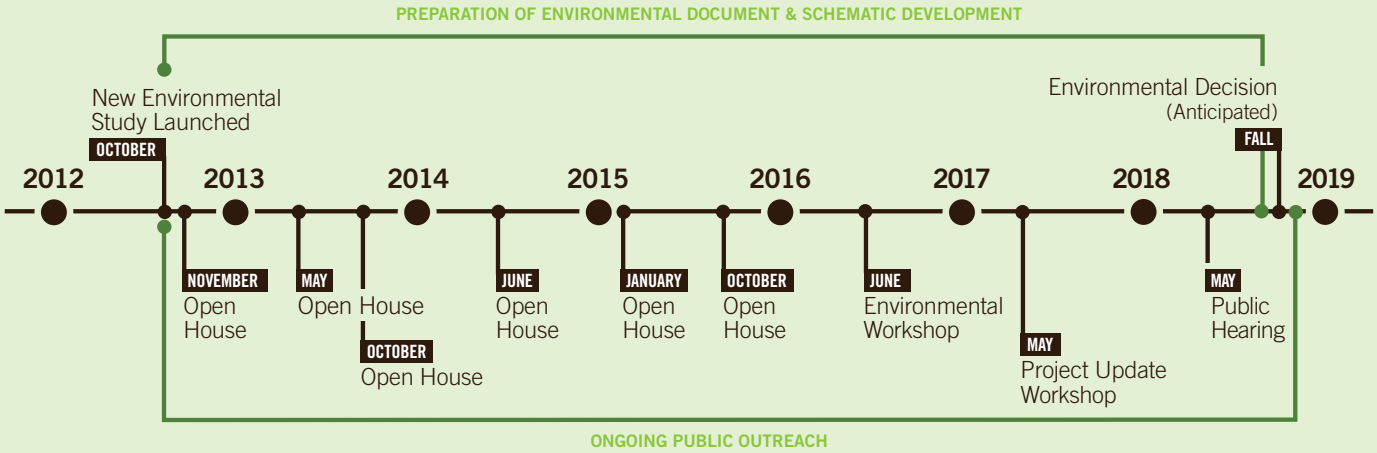
The No-Build Alternative is still an option on the table for approval and is being carried forward as a baseline for comparison.

YOU ARE SHAPING OAK HILL PARKWAY

We continue in our mission to engage and listen to you. Your participation in meetings, workshops and open houses has made significant improvements to the proposed alternatives. Some of these improvements include:

- Developing alternatives to address traffic congestion in the corridor
- Proposing a design to separate through traffic from local traffic
- Reducing the proposed elevation at the US 290/SH 71 intersection
- Adding new bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, including a shared-use path along the entire corridor
- Depressing the US 290 mainlanes at all crossings west of the US 290/SH 71 intersection
- Extending the improvements past Circle Drive and reducing the proposed project's footprint in that area
- Realigning the westbound US 290 exit to RM 1826 to improve access to Austin Community College
- Improving access for businesses along SH 71 just north of US 290
- Reducing potential flooding with upstream water detention ponds
- Minimizing impacts to Williamson Creek

TIMELINE



What Are The Next Steps?

After the May 24, 2018 public hearing, public and agency comments will be considered as the final environmental document, or Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), is completed and submitted for final review. The TxDOT Environmental Division will review the FEIS and make a final decision known as the "Record of Decision," or ROD. The decision will determine whether the preferred build alternative moves forward or if the no-build alternative is selected instead. Should the build alternative be selected, TxDOT will seek state and federal funding. TxDOT has identified funding for utility relocation and right of way appraisal and purchase.

FREQUENTLY ASKED ? QUESTIONS

WHY ARE YOU BUILDING IT AS A NON-TOLLED ROADWAY?

Toll financing alone cannot pay for this specific project. In order to move this project forward, TxDOT will be seeking state and federal funding to pay for the construction of the non-tolled Oak Hill Parkway project. As a non-tolled project, improvements will be eligible for funding from Propositions 1 and 7. It is important to note that the non-tolled design is the same as the tolled design previously shown to the public. TxDOT is committed to improving the 100 most congested roads in Texas. This section of roadway currently ranks as the 64th most congested.

COULD A SMALLER PROJECT ADDRESS THE CONGESTION PROBLEMS IN OAK HILL?

Unfortunately, no. Traffic demand on this corridor is just too high. The project team is designing a project that meets the traffic demand along the corridor today and best manages the traffic projections of tomorrow. We are trying to keep the footprint as small as possible in order to responsibly meet the purpose and need of the project, and it's important to us to design something that requires very limited right-of-way acquisition.

When we launched the study in 2012, the community told us that traffic congestion was a serious problem. In fact, 83 percent of survey respondents agreed that a goal of any proposed improvement should be to reduce congestion and manage traffic. We are tasked with providing a real transportation solution that provides meaningful traffic relief.

WHAT ARE THE UPSTREAM WATER DETENTION PONDS?

We propose providing flood storage at two off-site and upstream detention ponds to ensure the project does not result in flooding impacts. In two locations, we would build a dam across natural creek valleys to capture flood waters during intense rain events. The water would then slowly recede over hours/days.

WILL YOU PLANT NEW TREES AND RELOCATE EXISTING TREES?

Various landscaping enhancements, including tree plantings and native plant seeding, would be included with the final project design, in response to public input regarding tree removal within the project area. TxDOT is willing to work with organizations wishing to relocate existing trees. Of note, the Grandmother Oak, the Grandfather Oak, the Nieces, and the Becket Grove Tree would be avoided by the proposed project.

IF APPROVED, WHEN CAN YOU START CONSTRUCTION?

If the build alternative is approved to move forward into construction, the earliest the project could break ground is 2020, once funding is identified.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 16, 2014, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

WELCOME!

Public Hearing – May 24, 2018

Bowie High School Cafeteria, 4103 Slaughter Lane, Austin, TX 78749

Welcome to the Public Hearing for the Oak Hill Parkway project. Your input is appreciated and will help us refine long-term mobility improvements for US 290 and SH 71 West in Oak Hill.

At today's hearing, you will have an opportunity to review and comment on the following:

- The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS); a comprehensive full disclosure document comprised of all the environmental studies performed since 2012
- The draft schematic design of the recommended build alternative, known as "Alternative A"
- Artistic renderings of key intersections

Staff members from the Texas Department of Transportation and other mobility partners are here to listen to you and answer your questions.

YOUR INPUT IS REQUESTED.
Official comments will be accepted by the project team in the following ways:

TONIGHT:
- Place your written comment in one of the comment boxes
- Fill out a speaker registration card to speak during the public comment session
- See the transcriber available during the open house session

ONLINE:
- Fill out a comment form on www.OakHillParkway.com

MAIL:
- Mail comments to
  TxDOT Austin District Environmental Coordinator
  c/o Jon Geiselbrecht
  Texas Department of Transportation
  P.O. Drawer 15426
  Austin, Texas, 78761-5426

FAX:
- Fax comments to 512-832-7157

Your comments must be received by Monday, June 18, 2018 to be included in the official record of this public hearing. We weigh public input along with other factors in the decision-making process. Thank you for submitting your comments for consideration.

The DEIS, draft schematic design, and all public hearing materials are available for review and download via the **Virtual Open House**, which can be accessed from www.OakHillParkway.com. This virtual experience will be available through June 18, 2018.

The DEIS is also available for in-person review at the following locations: TxDOT Austin District office, 7901 North I-35, Austin, TX 78753; Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority office, 3300 North I-35, Suite 300, Austin, TX 78705; and Hampton Branch at Oak Hill, Austin Public Library, 5125 Convict Hill Road, Austin, TX 78749.

Thank you for your interest and participation in the Oak Hill Parkway project. If you have questions after tonight's hearing, please call our hotline at 512-342-3281.

PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA

6:15 PM OPEN HOUSE SESSION

7 PM FORMAL PRESENTATION

INTRODUCTIONS AND MEETING FORMAT
Greetings and Public Hearing Format
Chris Bishop, TxDOT

TECHNICAL PRESENTATION
Description of the Proposed Improvements
Overview of the Environmental Process and DEIS
Wade Strong, RTG

RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION AND RELOCATION ASSISTANCE
Chris Bishop, TxDOT

BREAK

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

Facilitated by Chris Bishop, TxDOT

If you wish to address the project team during the public comment session, please fill out a Speaker Registration Card, located at the sign-in table, and provide to the sign-in table staff. Speakers will be heard in the order they signed up to speak. Each speaker will have three (3) minutes to make comments. There is no transferring of time to others.

ADJOURN

Proceedings will conclude after the last registered speaker has been heard.

COMMENT FORM

OAK HILL PARKWAY
PUBLIC HEARING

May 24, 2018
Bowie High School Cafeteria
4103 Slaughter Lane, Austin, TX 78749

US 290/SH 71 West from MoPac (State Loop 1) to RM 1826

Name (please print): _____

Comment:

Written comments may also be mailed to TxDOT Austin District Environmental Coordinator, c/o Jon Geiselbrecht, Texas Department of Transportation, P.O. Drawer 15426, Austin, Texas, 78761-5426, or faxed to 512-832-7157. You may also fill out a comment form on the project website, www.OakHillParkway.com. Comments received by mail, fax, or website must be received by **Monday, June 18, 2018.**

This form may be used to provide written comments on this project. Any questions placed on this form will not be considered an open records request and will not be treated as such. If you have an open records request it must be submitted under a separate letter.

Per Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5), check each of the following boxes that may apply to you:
□ I am employed by TxDOT
□ I do business with TxDOT
□ I could benefit monetarily from this project

OAK HILL
PARKWAY

PUBLIC HEARING
May 24, 2018

SPEAKER REGISTRATION CARD

US 290/SH 71 West from MoPac
(State Loop 1) to RM 1826

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

_____

PHONE: _____

Check each of the following boxes that may apply to you (Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)):

☐ I am employed by TxDOT ☐ I do business with TxDOT ☐ I could benefit monetarily from this project

PLEASE RETURN THIS CARD TO THE SIGN IN TABLE

OAK HILL
PARKWAY

PUBLIC HEARING
May 24, 2018

SPEAKER REGISTRATION CARD

US 290/SH 71 West from MoPac
(State Loop 1) to RM 1826

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

_____

PHONE: _____

Check each of the following boxes that may apply to you (Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)):

☐ I am employed by TxDOT ☐ I do business with TxDOT ☐ I could benefit monetarily from this project

PLEASE RETURN THIS CARD TO THE SIGN IN TABLE