

## **Appendix A: Public Involvement Plan**



# Draft Public Involvement Plan

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RM 620 Feasibility Study

US 183 to SH 71

Williamson and Travis Counties

CSJs: 0683-02-062, 0683-01-088

Date: November 2015

*This is a living document and may be updated as the project progresses to adapt to new and changing circumstances.*

## **Project Description/Background**

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is conducting a feasibility study for proposed improvements to Ranch to Market (RM) 620 extending from United States (US) 183 to State Highway (SH) 71 in Williamson and Travis Counties, Texas. The purpose of the Feasibility Study is to identify key locations and generate ideas regarding potential short and long-term improvements along the 18.8 mile long project corridor. A goal for the feasibility study is to identify potential improvements that could be accomplished within existing right-of-way. The road has major intersections with US 183, RM 2222, SH 71, and provides primary access to the southern Lake Travis area of Travis County and the southernmost tip of Williamson County. Through most of its length, RM 620 functions as both a local thoroughfare and commuter highway. In many cases, it is the sole access to subdivisions, businesses and schools. It is also the primary access route to Lake Travis area recreation facilities. The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization 2040 Regional Transportation Plan identifies RM 620 as a six-lane divided major arterial. Based on the feasibility study, possible improvements over the next ten years could include a no-build plan, intersection improvements, adding two lanes (for a total of six), strategic overpasses at key intersections, and the extension of SH 45 down the middle of RM 620 (which would include two, three, or four elevated lanes).

For planning purposes, the facility has been divided into six sections and are described below:

- 1: US 183 to Austin City Limit
- 2: Austin City Limit to RM 2222
- 3: RM 2222 to Colorado River Bridge
- 4: Colorado River Bridge to Lakeway City Limit
- 5: Lakeway City Limit to Lakeway/Bee Cave City Limit
- 6: Lakeway/Bee Cave City Limit to SH 71

This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) provides the protocols for processing communications from the media, elected officials, agencies, stakeholders, general public and appropriate State staff.

No funding is currently available for any proposed improvements; however, TxDOT will use the information gathered from stakeholders and community members to further identify potential proposals and help explore funding options.

The approach to the Feasibility Study will follow a four-step process and is described below:

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**Step 1 Identify:**

TxDOT plans to develop small segment working groups comprised of 12 to 15 members. The members identified will be representatives that can speak for the community. These groups will be instrumental for identifying problems and potential solutions along the corridor. Step 1 includes collecting existing background data, developing a Public Involvement Plan, developing a stakeholder database, organizing key stakeholders into segment working groups, and identifying problems, issues, and concerns.

**Step 2 Evaluate:**

Step 2 involves the evaluation of environmental constraints, crash data, information gathered from stakeholders, traffic engineers, and traffic designers. Step 2 includes identifying options for solving short-term problems, discussing limitations of same and introduce long-term solutions as well as conducting meetings with stakeholders.

**Step 3 Refine:**

Step 3 includes the distribution of information gathered during the study and includes further discussion with stakeholders. Step 3 includes refining short and long-term options and working towards acceptable effective solutions and presenting them to stakeholders.

**Step 4 Proceed:**

Step 4 reports the results of the study and provides a list of short and long term potential solutions. Step 4 includes summarizing findings and describing feasible options.

**Project Partners and Stakeholders**

Project partners and stakeholders are those who have a key interest in the project or who may be directly impacted by the project. This may include property owners, elected and public officials, civic groups, chambers of commerce, business organizations, developers and those with transportation interests. A database of stakeholders will be developed for this project, including:

**Elected Officials**

- US Senator John Cornyn
- US Senator Ted Cruz
- State Senator Troy Fraser
- State Senator Charles Schwertner
- State Senator Kirk Watson
- State Representative Tony Dale
- State Representative Donna Howard
- State Representative Paul D. Workman
- Austin Mayor Steve Adler
- Austin City Manager Marc A. Ott

- Cedar Park Mayor Matt Powell
- Cedar Park City Manager Brenda Eivens
- Lakeway Mayor Dave DeOme
- Bee Cave Mayor Caroline Murphy
- Bee Cave City Manager Travis Askey
- Travis County Judge Sarah Eckhardt
- Williamson County Judge Dan A. Gattis
- Travis County commissioners: Gerald Daugherty, Brigid Shea
- Williamson County commissioners: Cynthia Long

#### **Cities/Counties**

- City of Austin
- City of Cedar Park
- City of Lakeway
- City of Bee Cave
- Williamson County
- Travis County

#### **MPO/COG**

- Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO)

#### **Community Residents**

- Residents
- Homeowners Associations
- Adjacent property owners

#### **Community Businesses**

#### **Education Facilities**

- Leander ISD
- Lake Travis ISD
- Concordia University

#### **Additional Interests**

- Bike/pedestrian users
- Environmental groups
- Churches

#### **Local Media**

- *Austin American Statesman*
- *Williamson County Sun*
- KEYE TV – Channel 5 (CBS)

- KVUE TV – Channel 3 (ABC)
- KXAN TV – Channel 4 (NBC)
- Multiple radio stations

## Public Involvement Goals

The primary purpose of the Public Involvement Plan is to provide a framework to encourage public input into the decision-making process. Building good relationships with stakeholders will result in an increased level of trust and confidence in TxDOT’s planning process and with the project outcome.

Specific goals of the plan are to:

- Provide early and ongoing public involvement to engage all appropriate stakeholders and the general community
- Provide notification and opportunities for public input via a variety of activities/tactics
- Encourage a collaborative process with stakeholders
- Establish and maintain effective two-way communication between the community and TxDOT during the project development process, through construction, and beyond.
- Provide a contact to obtain, acknowledge, and respond promptly to public questions and issues
- Distribute reliable information about the project
- Manage expectations and promote long-term benefits of the project
- Build upon TxDOT’s reputation as a transparent, credible agency and a good partner to the community

## Public Involvement Roles & Responsibilities

TASK	LEAD	SUPPORT
<b>GENERAL</b>		
Develop public involvement plan	Blanton	AUS, IEA
Compile and maintain stakeholder/citizen mailing list	Blanton	AUS, IEA
<b>STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH/EVENTS</b>		
Arrange meeting scheduling and logistics; set up and tear down	Blanton, AUS	IEA, HDR
Create/distribute meeting invitations	Blanton, AUS	IEA, HDR
Prepare meeting materials, including presentations, handouts, comment forms, sign-in sheets, maps	Blanton, HDR, IEA, AUS	N/A
Staff meetings	IEA, Blanton, HDR, AUS	N/A
Provide meeting documentation (meeting summary, responses to citizen comments)	Blanton, IEA, HDR, AUS	N/A

## Public Involvement Roles & Responsibilities

TASK	LEAD	SUPPORT
<b>NOTIFICATION METHODS</b>		
Provide media alerts	AUS	N/A
Letters to adjacent property owners and elected officials	Blanton, IEA, AUS	N/A
Provide changeable message signs	AUS	N/A
Disseminate e-blasts	Blanton, AUS	IEA
Post meeting information to TxDOT.gov	AUS	Blanton, IEA
Post information to Facebook/Twitter	AUS	N/A
District outreach to City/County/Chamber Communications Personnel	AUS	N/A
<b>MEDIA RELATIONS</b>		
All media outreach	AUS	N/A
<b>ONLINE COMMUNICATION</b>		
Create and update project webpage to convey general information and allow visitors to submit comments	AUS	Blanton, HDR, IEA
<b>PRINTED MATERIALS</b>		
Create and disseminate fact sheets	Blanton	IEA, AUS
Create and disseminate maps, other materials for public meetings/hearing	Blanton, HDR, IEA	AUS

## Schedule

Task	Timeframe
Prepare Public Involvement Plan	January-February, 2015
Develop Stakeholder Database	January-March, 2015
Prepare Content for Study Webpage Updates	January, 2015 – February, 2016
Prepare and Continuously Update Public Outreach Materials	January, 2015 – February, 2016
Conduct Stakeholder Meetings	January, 2015 – February, 2016

## Media Request Protocol

- The media will seek information from multiple sources. These potentially include TxDOT, project team members, neighborhoods, businesses or other stakeholders within the corridor. Media requests for information internal to the Project Team must be directed to the TxDOT Austin District Project Manager, Bruce Byron, immediately, for proper handling and response.

## **Approval Process for Communications Products**

Any communication product (ex. fact sheet, newsletter) created by a consultant or contractor to TxDOT must go through the following approval process:

- Internal QA/QC review
- Bruce Byron review/approval

## **Public Involvement Strategies**

The Austin District intends to be transparent and keep the public updated on the project progress. The public involvement strategies for this project will vary and will potentially include one or more of the following:

- Online Surveys
- Stakeholder meetings
- Meetings with Cities, Counties
- Meetings with elected officials
- Email blasts
- Online webpage information regarding study
- Fact Sheet - A simple, one page fact sheet will be provided to inform the community about the project. This fact sheet will be updated as needed to keep the community up to date and well informed about the current status of the project.
- Illustrations and Maps - The team will develop easy to understand maps and schematic documents for public distribution and online posting.
- Individual outreach to city/county communications personnel – It is recommended that the AUS PIO reach out to these public information officers to help disseminate information to residents via their organization web sites and social media platforms.
- Stakeholder relations – Project team members will respond to inquiries on a case-by-case basis. Only the TxDOT project manager or AUS PIO will respond to elected officials.
- Media relations – Project team members will not respond to media inquiries. Instead, they will provide the reporter with the name and contact information for the AUS PIO or AUS project manager.
- Small group meetings – Small group meetings will be held with neighborhood associations, civic clubs, neighborhood associations and elected bodies to gather additional input as needed.

## Contacts

Bruce Byron

Project Manager 360/620 Improvement Studies

TxDOT Austin District

7901 N. IH 35, Austin, TX 78753

Office: 512-832-7107

Mobile: 512-636-2282

[Bruce.Byron@TxDOT.gov](mailto:Bruce.Byron@TxDOT.gov)

Larry G. Redden, P.E.

Project Manager

IEA

18333 Preston Road, Suite 205

Dallas, TX 75252

214-884-4253 Ext. 127

[lredden@ieaworld.com](mailto:lredden@ieaworld.com)

Dean Tesmer

Environmental Manager

Blanton & Associates

5 Lakeway Centre Ct., Suite 200

Austin, Texas 78734

512-264-1095

[dtesmer@blantonassociates.com](mailto:dtesmer@blantonassociates.com)