

Loop 286 Improvements

CSJs: 1690-001-123, 1690-001-124, 1690-001-125
Paris, TX - Lamar County

July 16, 2020

Slide 1

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WELCOME

Loop 286 Improvements

Virtual Public Meeting

Thursday, July 16, 2020

TxDOT Paris District



Loop 286 Improvements

July 16, 2020



Slide 2

Welcome to the Loop 286 Improvements project virtual public meeting presented by the Texas Department of Transportation Paris District.

Please note that you may pause this video at any time to allow additional time to study each slide. On behalf of Paris District Engineer Noel Paramanatham and Project Manager Duane Good, the department appreciates your interest in the Loop 286 Improvements project.

This public meeting is being held to receive and consider comments from the public regarding proposed short-term and long-term improvements for Loop 286.

At the conclusion of this presentation, you will be provided several methods to submit comments to the department. Your comments will be addressed in the formal meeting documentation and will be given full consideration as the department prepares final recommendations for improvements to Loop 286.

Maps showing the project location and design as well as other information and materials about the proposed project are available for your review at www.Loop286.com.

Purpose of Public Meeting



This public meeting has four essential purposes:

1. Inform the public of the status of the project.
2. Describe how the proposed improvements for Loop 286 may potentially affect the community.
3. Provide the public an opportunity to view information and express their viewpoints before recommendations are finalized.
4. To develop a record of public views and participation to accompany recommendations for subsequent decisions.



Slide 3

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2. Describe how the proposed improvements for Loop 286 may potentially affect the community.
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4. To develop a record of public views and participation to accompany recommendations for subsequent decisions.

This virtual public meeting is being held in compliance with federal and state laws.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, an in-person meeting will not be held at this time.

Project Overview



- The purpose of the Loop 286 Improvements project is to:
 - Improve safety
 - Increase regional mobility
 - Improve traffic operations
 - Address roadway deficiencies

- The project is currently in the schematic design and environmental study phase, which is one of the early stages in the project development lifecycle.



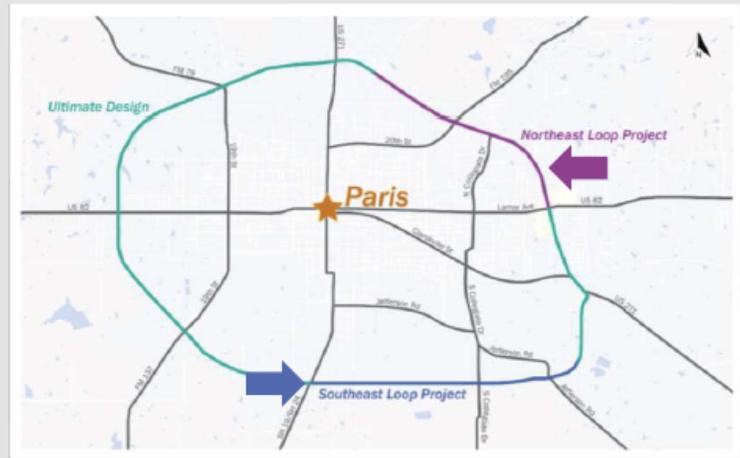
Slide 4

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Project Area

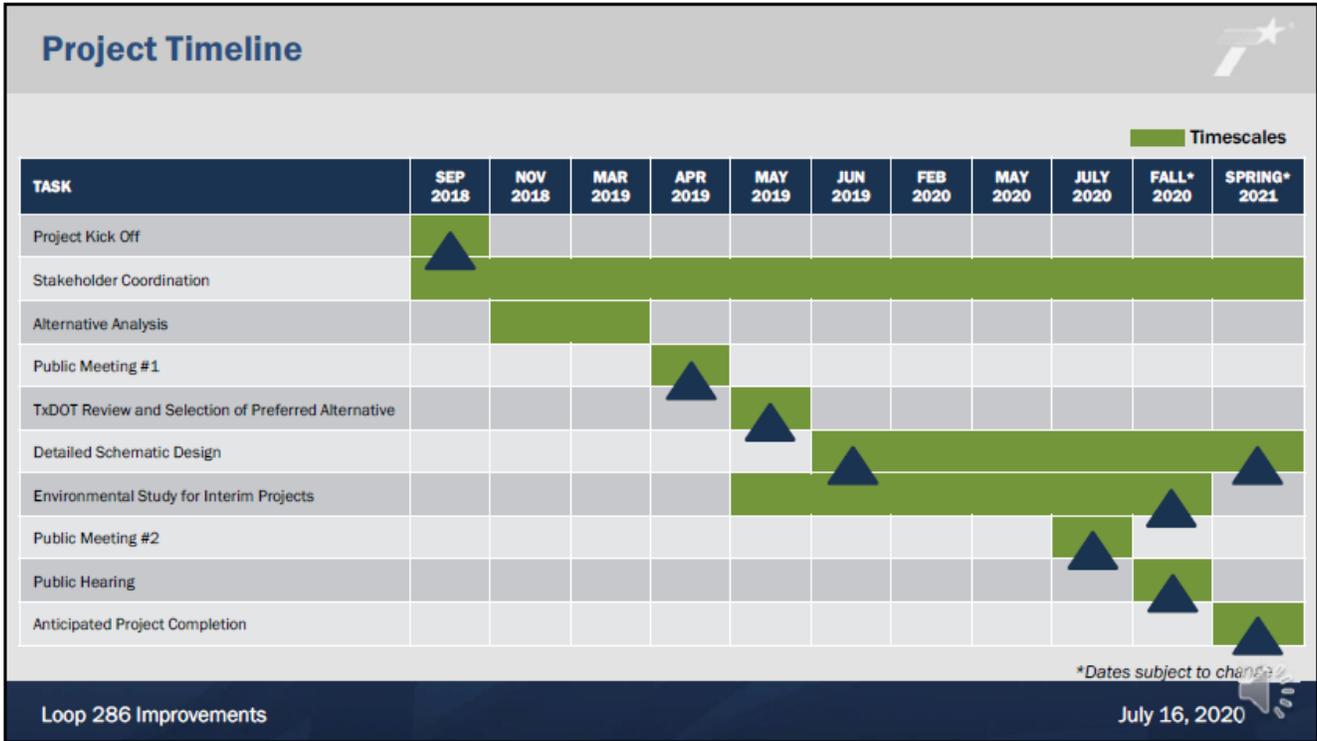
- The proposed long-term project encompasses the entire Loop around Paris, a length of 15.5 miles.
- Two short-term projects, the Southeast Loop and Northeast Loop, are also proposed.



Slide 5

The proposed long-term project, referred to as the Ultimate Design, includes improvements for the entire Loop around Paris, a project length of 15 and a half miles.

Two short-term projects that align with the Ultimate Design vision are also proposed and include improvements for the Southeast Loop, shown in blue, and Northeast Loop, shown in purple.



Slide 6

Since the project began in September 2018, the department has worked to collect information about needed improvements, develop alternatives, and seek input from the public and key stakeholders on proposed improvements for Loop 286.

The project team developed various alternatives for Loop 286 that were presented at a public meeting in April 2019. The department used feedback from this first public meeting to help select a preferred alternative and begin detailed schematic design.

Following this public meeting, the department will develop environmental documents for the proposed interim projects and finalize schematic designs for improvements to the entire Loop.

The department has tentatively scheduled a public hearing for the Fall of 2020 and anticipates completion of environmental studies and schematic designs for the Loop 286 Improvements project in the Spring of 2021. However, all dates are subject to change.

What We Heard From You – April 2019

Top priorities of survey respondents (ranked highest to lowest):

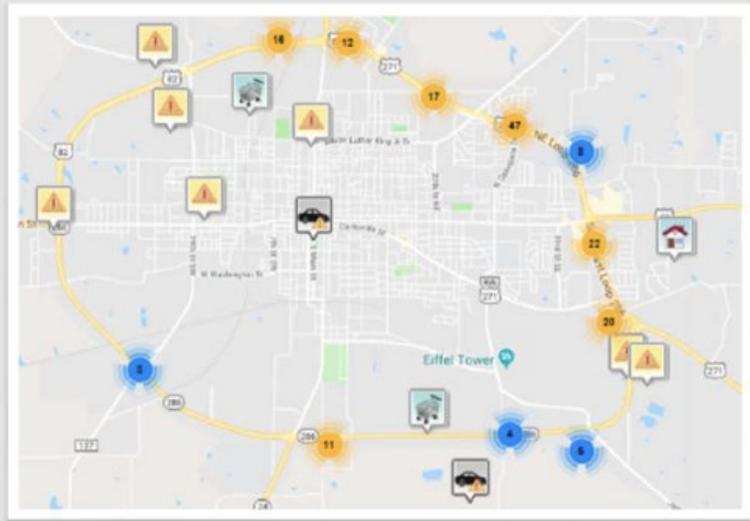
- Enhance safety
- Reduce congestion
- Economic growth
- Bike/pedestrian improvements
- Business access
- Business impacts
- Neighborhood access
- Residential impacts

Top three current issues:

- Too congested
- Concerns about safety
- Slowdowns at intersections

Safety improvements important to respondents:

- Reconfigure intersections to improve sight distance and safety
- Construct longer merge lanes onto Loop 286
- Additional turn lanes



Map shows important issues identified by survey respondents.

Loop 286 Improvements

July 16, 2020

Slide 7

Public involvement has been an important part of the Loop 286 Improvements project.

At the public meeting held in April 2019, the department gathered initial input on current issues and potential improvements to Loop 286. In addition to written comments received during and after the public meeting, the department collected feedback through an interactive, electronic survey.

Public comments and survey responses showed that enhancing safety, reducing congestion, and economic growth were top priorities for improvements to Loop 286.

Survey respondents also noted that the top three current issues for Loop 286 included congestion, safety, and slowdowns at intersections.

According to survey respondents, important safety improvements that should be considered for Loop 286 included reconfiguring intersections to improve sight distance and safety, constructing longer merge lanes, and adding additional turn lanes.

This feedback helped the department select a preferred alternative and further develop proposed improvements for Loop 286.

Crash Analysis



- Crash rates on Loop 286 between US 271 North and US 271 South are **nearly 2.5 times the statewide average** for similar roadway facilities.
- The area surrounding North Collegiate Drive **accounts for 1/3 of crashes** on the Loop.
- Safety improvements proposed for the Northeast Loop are expected to **reduce crashes by 65%**.



Slide 8

In addition to public input, engineering studies were conducted to identify needed improvements for Loop 286. This included a crash analysis to help identify and prioritize areas for safety improvements.

Using data from TxDOT's Crash Records Information System, the project team found that crash rates on Loop 286 between US 271 North and US 271 South are nearly two and half times the statewide average for similar roadway facilities.

The project team also found that the area surrounding North Collegiate Drive accounts for one-third of crashes on the Loop.

The department's proposed improvements for the Ultimate Design and interim projects are expected to significantly reduce crash rates, including a 65 percent reduction in crashes for the Northeast Loop.

Ultimate Design

- The Ultimate Design is a long-range plan for the entire Loop that serves as a blueprint for the future.
- Funding for the entire Ultimate Design has not been identified.
- Segments of the Ultimate Design could be completed as funding becomes available.



Slide 9

Now that we have reviewed the project location, purpose, timeline, and need, we will provide more details about the proposed improvements, starting with the Ultimate Design, which encompasses the entire Loop around Paris.

The Ultimate Design is a long-range plan that serves as a blueprint for the future of Loop 286. Funding for the entire Ultimate Design has not been identified. However, smaller segments of the design could be completed as funding becomes available.

Ultimate Design



- Proposed improvements:
 - Add additional lanes
 - Separate high/low speed traffic with mainlanes and frontage roads on the north section of the loop
 - Improve safety (lighting and signage)
 - Improve traffic flow (turn lanes and signal timing/locations)
 - Improve drainage (culverts, ditches, curbs and gutters)
 - Improve access for existing and future developments
 - Add sidewalks and wide paths for bicycles and pedestrians
 - Ensure bridges/overpasses meet clearance requirements
- Estimated cost: \$415.5 million



Slide 10

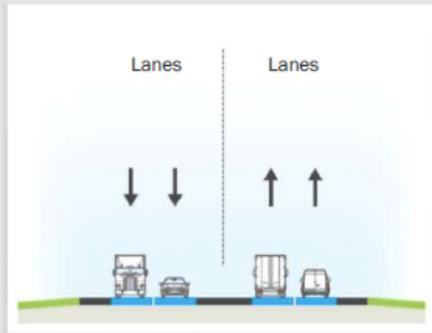
Proposed improvements for the Ultimate Design include:

- Adding additional lanes
- Separating high and low speed traffic with mainlanes and frontage roads on the north section of the Loop
- Improving safety with additional lighting and signage
- Improving traffic flow with additional turn lanes and adjustments to signal timing and locations
- Improving drainage by adding culverts, ditches, curbs and gutters
- Improving access for existing and future developments
- Adding sidewalks and wide paths for bicycles and pedestrians
- Ensuring bridges and overpasses meet clearance requirements

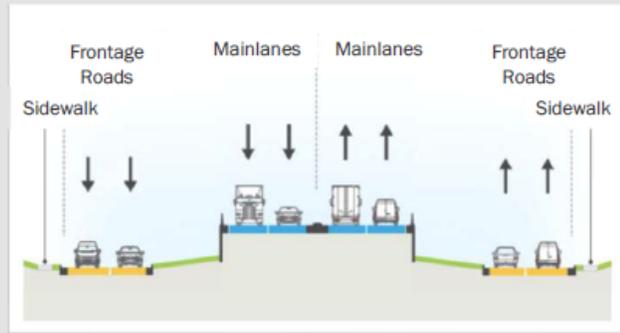
The estimated cost for the Ultimate Design is \$415.5 million.



Existing Typical Section



Proposed Typical Section with Grade Separation and Frontage Roads



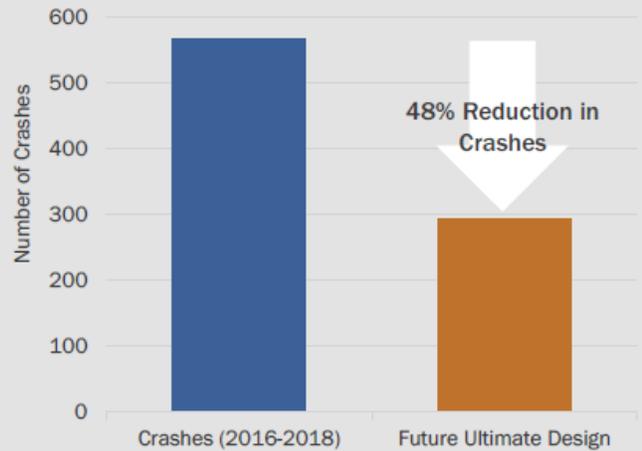
Slide 11

Loop 286 as it exists today varies from a two-lane roadway—with one lane moving in each direction—to a four-lane roadway—with two lanes moving in each direction—similar to the image shown on the left. This roadway configuration does not provide sufficient turn lanes and causes slowdowns at intersections. Also, many areas of the current roadway lack sidewalks or wide paths for bicycles and pedestrians.

The proposed Ultimate Design will be a grade separated roadway with four elevated mainlanes and frontage roads on each side. The elevated mainlanes allow high speed traffic to bypass intersections while the frontage roads allow slower moving traffic to safely access residential and commercial developments. The roadway improvements also include sidewalks and wide paths for bicycles and pedestrians.

Ultimate Design – Anticipated Crash Reduction

Proposed improvements for the Ultimate Design are anticipated to reduce crash rates by **48%**.



Slide 12

The number of crashes on Loop 286 from 2016 to 2018 was 567, shown on the chart in blue. Predictive modeling indicates that proposed improvements for the Ultimate Design will enhance safety and reduce crashes by 48 percent, shown on the chart in orange.

Southeast Loop Interim Project



- Project limits are from SH 19/SH 24 to FM 906 (shown in blue).



Slide 13

Since funding for the entire Ultimate Design has not been identified, the department is proposing two short-term projects that could be completed as soon as funding becomes available. First, is the Southeast Loop interim project from SH 19/SH 24 to FM 906, as shown on the map in blue.

Southeast Loop Interim Project



- Proposed improvements:
 - Expand roadway to four lanes
 - Add a wide path for bicycles and pedestrians
 - Improve the intersection of South Collegiate Drive near Paris High School
- Estimated cost: \$20.2 million



Paris High School



Slide 14

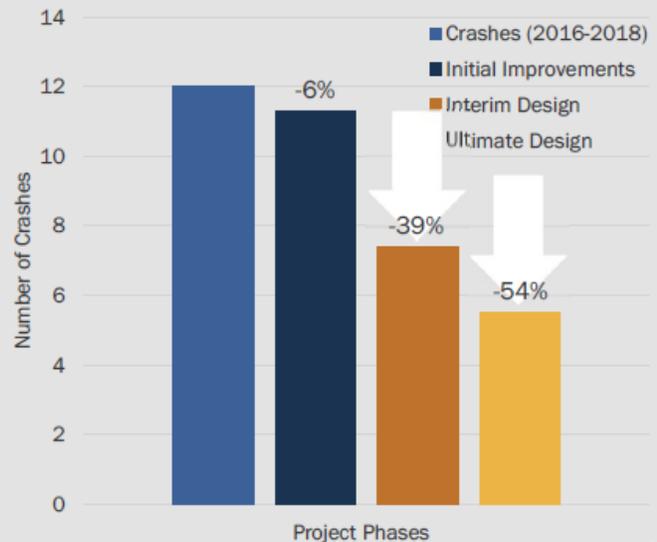
Proposed improvements for the Southeast Loop interim project include:

- Expanding the roadway to four lanes. This is the only section of Loop 286 that is currently a two-lane roadway which causes a pinch point for traffic.
- Adding a wide path for bicycles and pedestrians
- Improving the intersection of South Collegiate Drive near Paris High School. This intersection has been identified as a prioritized area for safety improvements due to severe crashes that have occurred in recent years.

The estimated cost for the Southeast Loop interim project is \$20.2 million.

Southeast Loop – Anticipated Crash Reduction

Proposed improvements for the Southeast Loop are anticipated to reduce crash rates by **54%**.



Slide 15

Crash data for the Southeast Loop shows that crashes are not as frequent as the Northeast Loop but are typically more severe which makes it a prioritized area for safety improvements.

Predictive modeling indicates that proposed short-term improvements for the Southeast Loop will reduce crashes by 39 percent, shown on the chart in orange. Proposed long-term improvements will reduce crashes for the Southeast Loop by 54 percent, shown on the chart in yellow.

Northeast Loop Interim Project



- Project limits are from Stillhouse Road to Lamar Avenue (shown in purple).
- Project is a continuation of TxDOT's 2010 Pine Mill Road intersection project.



Slide 16

Next, is the Northeast Loop interim project from Stillhouse Road to Lamar Avenue, as shown on the map in purple.

This project is a continuation of TxDOT's Pine Mill Road intersection project and is a prioritized area for safety improvements due to the frequency of crashes.

Northeast Loop Interim Project



- Proposed improvements:
 - Add lanes and an overpass at North Collegiate Drive
 - Add sidewalks and paths for bicycles and pedestrians
 - Improve safety with lighting, advance warning signs and flashing beacons
 - Improve drainage by adding culverts, curbs and gutters



*Pine Mill Road Intersection Project
Photo Credit: The Paris News*



Slide 17

Proposed improvements for the Northeast Loop interim project include:

- Adding lanes and an overpass at North Collegiate Drive
- Adding sidewalks and paths for bicycles and pedestrians
- Improving safety with lighting, advance warning signs and flashing beacons
- Improving drainage by adding culverts, curbs and gutters

Northeast Loop Interim Project



- Proposed improvements (continued):
 - Improve traffic flow by:
 - adjusting signal timing based on traffic needs
 - installing traffic signals at some stop-controlled intersections
 - adjusting the number of left turn/thru lanes based on traffic analysis
 - Improve driveway access for existing and future developments
- Estimated cost: \$73.4 million



North Collegiate Drive



Slide 18

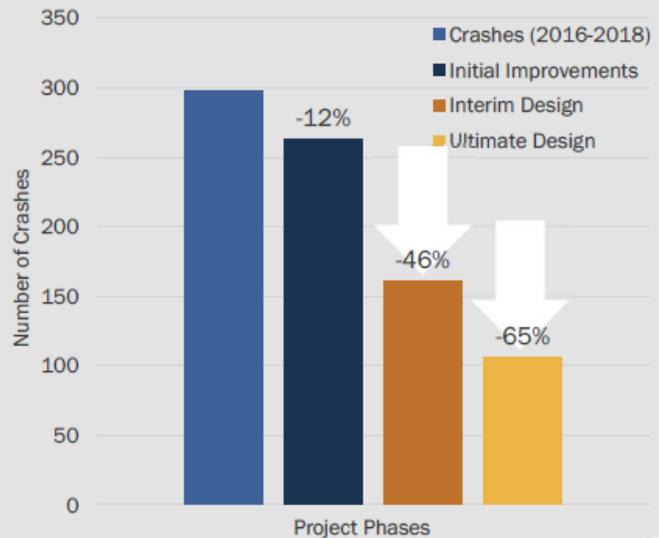
- Improving traffic flow by:
 - adjusting signal timing based on traffic needs
 - installing traffic signals at some stop-controlled intersections
 - Adjusting the number of left turn and thru lanes based on traffic analysis
- Improving driveway access for existing and future developments

The estimated cost for the Northeast Loop interim project is \$73.4 million.

Northeast Loop – Anticipated Crash Reduction



Proposed improvements for the Northeast Loop are anticipated to reduce crash rates by 65%.



Slide 19

Predictive modeling shows that proposed short-term improvements for the Northeast Loop will reduce crashes by 46 percent, shown on the chart in orange. Proposed long-term improvements will reduce crashes for the Northeast Loop by 65 percent, shown on the chart in yellow.

Northeast Loop – Anticipated Crash Reduction (Major Intersections)



Based on 2016-2018 Crash Data

Intersection	Crashes Before Improvements	Anticipated Crashes After Improvements
Clement Road	14	0.7
Spur 139	39	2
FM 195	38	32
North Collegiate Drive	189	55
Park Place/34th Street	15	11
Totals	295	101



Slide 20

Detailed analysis of crash data also shows that proposed improvements for the Northeast Loop interim project will reduce crash rates at major intersections within the project area.

As previously mentioned, the area surrounding North Collegiate Drive accounts for one-third of crashes on the Loop. Predictive modeling indicates that the Northeast Loop interim project will decrease the number of crashes at North Collegiate Drive from 189 to 55, which is 70 percent reduction in crashes.



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Assignment to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

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 9, 2019, and executed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and TxDOT.



Slide 21

The Texas Department of Transportation Loop 286 Improvements project adheres to the National Environmental Policy Act known as NEPA.

In a memorandum of understanding between the Federal Highway Administration and TxDOT, the department assumed responsibility to review and approve certain assigned NEPA environmental documents.

The department is currently conducting environmental assessments and will prepare NEPA environmental documents for the Southeast Loop and Northeast Loop interim projects.

Environmental Assessments

- TxDOT is in the process of conducting environmental assessments for the Southeast Loop and Northeast Loop interim projects.

The environmental assessment process includes:



Slide 22

Environmental assessments for each of the interim projects must be completed prior to any construction.

The environmental assessment process includes:

- Defining the project purpose and need
- Identifying other reasonable alternatives
- Assessing impacts on the human and natural environment
- Developing environmental assessment documents

Environmental Assessments



Examples of environmental features that may be evaluated during the environmental assessment include:



Natural habitats and developed areas



Historic properties and archeological resources



Streams, wetlands and flood plains



Public lands, parks and trails

- Once complete, the environmental document for each interim project will be available for public review and comment.
- TxDOT will issue an environmental finding at the end of the study to determine if the projects can move forward. The finding may include mitigation to offset adverse effects to sensitive resources.



Slide 23

Examples of environmental features that may be evaluated during the environmental assessment include:

- Natural habitats and developed areas
- Historic properties and archeological resources
- Streams, wetlands and flood plains
- Public lands, parks and trails

Once the environmental assessments are complete, an environmental document for each interim project will be available for public review and comment following a public hearing that is tentatively scheduled for the Fall of 2020.

The department will issue an environmental finding at the end of the study to determine if the interim projects can move forward. The finding may include mitigation to offset adverse effects to sensitive resources.

How to Provide Comments

All comments must be received or postmarked by Friday, July 31, 2020.

Electronic Survey	Available at www.Loop286.com under "How to Provide Comments" or scan the QR code on the right to access the survey.
Mail	Attention: Duane Good, P.E. TxDOT Paris District Office 1365 North Main Street Paris, TX 75460
E-mail	Duane.Good@txdot.gov



Slide 24

As you can see, there are many factors that the department considers during its evaluation of proposed improvements to Loop 286, including safety data, public input, environmental impacts, and future needs.

The proposed project would, subject to final design considerations, require additional right of way. We encourage you to review the designs and maps provided at www.Loop286.com.

All comments regarding the Loop 286 Improvements project must be received or postmarked on or before Friday, July 31, 2020 to be included in the formal meeting documentation.

Comments can be submitted through an interactive, electronic survey available at www.Loop286.com under "How to Provide Comments." You can also scan the QR code on the screen to access the survey.

Comments can also be submitted by mail to Duane Good, P.E., TxDOT Paris District Office, 1365 North Main Street, Paris, TX 75460 or by email to Duane.Good@txdot.gov.

Project Contacts



Texas Department of Transportation

If you have any general questions or concerns regarding the project, please contact the TxDOT project manager during regular business hours.

Duane Good, P.E.

(903) 737-9282

Duane.Good@txdot.gov

Monday – Friday / 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.



Slide 25

If you have any general questions or concerns regarding the Loop 286 Improvements project, please contact the TxDOT project manager, Duane Good, during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., by phone at (903) 737-9282 or by email at Duane.Good@txdot.gov.



Thank you for your interest and for providing input on the Loop 286 Improvements project.

Visit **www.Loop286.com** for additional project information and to subscribe for updates.



Slide 26

We sincerely appreciate your interest in the Loop 286 Improvements project. Please visit www.Loop286.com for additional project information and to subscribe for project updates and meeting notices.

Thank you.