

OPEN HOUSE COMMENT AND RESPONSE REPORT

FM 1626: from Brodie Lane to FM 2304 (Manchaca Road)
CSJ: 1539-02-026

Project Number: PTF
Travis County

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS: FM 1626 may be widened from the existing 2 lane undivided road to a 4 lane divided road where the travel lanes are divided with a continuous center turn lane.

PURPOSE AND NEED: The purpose for the proposed improvements on FM 1626 is to enhance safety and improve mobility.

NOTICES AND ARTICLES:

Direct mail: The meeting notification was mailed to all 39 property owners on the project limits on November 8, 2013.

Legal notices: A legal notice was placed in the Austin American Statesman on November 12, 2013 and again on December 2, 2013. The notice also ran in *jahora sí!* on November 14, 2013 and November 28, 2013.

Signage: Six meeting notification signs were posted along the project limits beginning Monday, December 2, 2013.

Email Notifications: The project team, through meetings and outreach collected emails from those interested in the project. This database is updated as new emails are collected. An email reminder of the meeting time and date was sent three times to this database. The first email was distributed on Tuesday, November 19, 2013 to 30 emails, the second reminder was distributed on Thursday, December 5, 2013 to 33 emails, and the third reminder was distributed on Wednesday, December 11, 2013 to the same 33 stakeholders.

DATE AND PLACE: Thursday, December 12, 2013 at Manchaca Elementary School Cafeteria, 12120 Manchaca Road, Austin, TX 78748.

ATTENDANCE: 81 people signed in at the meeting, of those, 14 were identified as project team members or TxDOT and Travis County representatives.

EXHIBITS AND PROJECT INFORMATION:

Exhibits: Two copies of the three proposed alternatives were printed in large format and displayed on tables for attendees to view. Large printed versions of the Project Location and of Typical Sections of the improvements were also provided.

Handouts: An information packet was distributed which included a letter to attendees with information on how to submit comments, a project location map, a Project Overview, Typical Sections, Right-of-Way Acquisition and Relocation Assistance page, and a comment sheet for attendees to complete and leave or mail/fax later. Relocation Assistance Brochures were also made available. A Spanish translator was in attendance and a court reporter was available to record verbal comments.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Eleven people presented oral comments and 56 submitted written comments. The issues and the number of comments on the issue are summarized in the following table:

Issue	# of Comments	Summary of Comments
Possible Relocations and/or Land Acquisition	54	Austin Christian Academy under Alt 2 or 3; Lil Moreland home under Alt 1 or 3; Redeeming Grace Lutheran Church under Alt 2; overall Alt 3 would not be equitable in the community; 1705 FM 1626 under Alt 1 and 2; fewer overall under Alt 1; 1707 FM 1626;
Design	45	New bridge north or south of existing under Alt 1; bicycle lanes; pedestrian facilities throughout and at the intersections; curb and gutter preferred;
Alternative 1 (Center)	41	Preference for center alternative;
Community Cohesion	41	Possible acquisition of land or relocations would not be equitable to the community under Alt 3;
Project Cost	40	Bridge cost reasonable under Alt 1 if new bridge constructed adjacent to the old;
Construction	39	Traffic management; prefer construction near Manchaca Elementary take place in summer;
Alternative 2 (North)	9	Preference for north alternative;
Access	6	United Methodist Church; pedestrians and bicyclists; Brodie Lane intersection; 1707 W FM 1626; planned development near Brodie Lane;
Regional Planning	5	Continue improvements to I-35; widen Manchaca Road to 5 lanes; widen Brodie Lane; complete SH 45; need a turn lane and/or signal near the intersection of Wayne Riddell Loop and 1626; add access for United Methodist Church at Manchaca;
Safety	5	Bicycle facilities; proximity of traffic near the Austin Christian Academy;
Traffic Congestion	2	Additional traffic from the west;
Alternative 3 (South)	3	Preference for south alternative;
Project Support	2	Project is needed;
Drainage	2	Concern for flooding between Brodie and Manchaca; drainage near and erosion of bluff at 1705 W 1626; prefer curb and gutter;
Vegetation	2	Trees in front of Methodist Church;
Traffic Noise	2	At churches;
Historic Elements	1	Austin Christian Academy;
Species	1	In abandoned water well;
Water Quality	1	In drinking water well.

Analysis and Recommendations: The majority of the comments were focused on the proposed acquisition of land for right-of-way and how this may result in relocations and be inequitable to community members. The next largest issues related to the design of the bridge and management of traffic during construction under Alternative 1 (Center). Property access and design/safety of bicycle facilities are also notable issues. It is recommended that all the comments be considered during project development that may result in a preferred alternative.

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