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Recorded Virtual Presentation Script
RM 1826 Feasibility Study Public Meeting
CSJ: 754-02-031

Slide 1 – Welcome & Intro:

Hello and welcome to the virtual public meeting for the RM 1826 Feasibility Study from the Travis/Hays county line to RM 150. This is a prerecorded presentation. Thank you for participating in this virtual public meeting with in-person option. Your participation is important in the feasibility study process and TxDOT appreciates your input on the proposed safety improvement typical sections for this feasibility study. This virtual option is being held in conjunction with an in-person public meeting option. The in-person public meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 25, 2024, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Real Life Church located at 13701 RM 1826 Austin, TX 78737. The meeting presentation will be available for online viewing with the opportunity to provide comments until Tuesday, July 16, 2024. The information presented in the virtual public meeting and the in-person option are identical and both provide opportunities to provide written comments. Please note that you may pause this presentation at any point to allow more time to view the slides and you may navigate forward or backward as needed. The meeting materials and project information and details on the in-person option can also be found at www.txdot.gov by typing "RM 1826 Feasibility Study" in the search bar.

Slide 2 – Study Area & Objectives:

Hays County is one of the fastest-growing counties in the country. This rapid growth has caused increased traffic demand and congestion on roadways within the county, leading to safety and mobility concerns along the RM 1826 corridor. As a result, TxDOT initiated the RM 1826 Feasibility Study. The purpose of this study is to identify feasible mobility and safety improvements for the 7.7-mile corridor along RM 1826 between the Travis/Hays county line and RM 150. The objectives of the study are to enhance safety, reduce congestion, increase mobility, improve connectivity, identify feasible improvements and to foster public and stakeholder involvement during the study.

Slide 3 – Typical Project Development Process:

The typical project development process includes four primary phases that require the completion of the previous phase to advance. First, a feasibility study is conducted, which is the phase the RM 1826 Feasibility Study is currently in. The next phase is the environmental process which includes schematic design and additional public involvement. Then, final design, right-of-way purchase and utilities adjustment. Then finally, construction is the final phase. To reiterate, we are currently in the feasibility study phase which typically takes around 12 to 18 months to complete. The Environmental/Schematic phase of this project will begin early next year 2025. This phase will take approximately two years to complete. Depending on the scope, the study recommendations could be broken into several projects that extend over a longer period of time.

Slide 4 – Feasibility Study Process:

Now, we will go into more detail on the steps involved in a feasibility study process. Phase 1 includes defining the problems and evaluating future needs. Phase 2 consists of



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developing alternative concepts, identifying goals and objectives and developing evaluation criteria. Phase 3 applies the evaluation criteria to analyze the alternative concepts. The final Phase 4 results in a feasibility study report that includes the final recommended alternatives. As the graphic indicates, the RM 1826 Feasibility Study is currently in Phase 4. TxDOT and the study team have been engaging with local stakeholders and community members throughout the feasibility study process. The RM 1826 Feasibility Study kicked off on May 24, 2023, and TxDOT hosted its first stakeholder working group meeting on August 22, 2023. Then, the study team met virtually with the Driftwood Historical Conservation Society on October 2, 2023. TxDOT hosted its second stakeholder working group meeting on December 5, 2023. At the turn of the new year, the study team met with Hays County officials to ensure proper coordination with the county. TxDOT then hosted its third stakeholder working group meeting on May 7, 2024, and finally, is hosting their virtual public meeting with in-person option on June 25, 2024.

Slide 5 – What we heard from Stakeholders:

Throughout the feasibility study, we've been collecting feedback and input from local stakeholders and community members. Common themes among the feedback the study team received were concerns over corridor safety, environmental features, and discussions on Hays County area growth and where the feasibility study fits within the scope of long-term regional and statewide planning. Community members expressed concerns over the lack of safe left turn lanes, lack of safe passing zones, high speed and traffic enforcement, poor sight distance over hills and instructed the study team to consider the vehicle types that travel on the corridor like semi-trucks and horse trailers. Community members also voiced concerns over noise and light pollution, to consider water features like creeks, floodplain impacts, green spaces, tree lines, deer crossings and to overall prioritize the Hill Country aesthetic and community feel. Community members also asked the study team to consider different options when it comes to incorporating shared use paths and roundabouts. Finally, there were community members who expressed their desire to have this feasibility study prioritized in order to advance to the next phase.

Slide 6 – Existing Typical Sections & Traffic Volumes:

RM 1826 is a two-lane undivided roadway with turn lanes at several intersections that serves as an important travel corridor for residents, commuters, schools, and local businesses in Hays County. This map shows the existing typical sections and current traffic volumes of the study corridor. The numbers in black text indicate the number of trips taken in those segments of the corridor in 2022. The numbers in green text indicate the projected number of trips in 2035, and the numbers in red text indicate the projected number of trips by 2050. As the population of the area continues to grow, the increasing traffic demand and congestion will result in safety and mobility concerns along the corridor.

Slide 7 – Traffic Safety Data:

The heat map provides a visual of the traffic safety data collected between the years 2017 to 2022. The purple shading represents a low crash density, the yellow medium, orange is high, and red is very high. East of Nutty Brown Road, the number of crashes is lower than



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the state average for a similar type of facility, whereas the west side of the corridor is higher than the state average for a similar type of facility. To highlight a few statistics, 38 percent of crashes happened due to roadway and lane departure. There are five recorded fatal crashes and eleven crashes involving commercial vehicles on the study corridor.

Slide 8 – Screening Process:

Twenty-five typical sections were evaluated through a screening process which includes criteria that align with the feasibility study's objectives: safety, mobility and congestion, connectivity, environmental impacts, and right-of-way and utilities. For safety, each typical section was scored based on if it addressed safety concerns identified by community feedback, if it included median improvements, and if it included additional shoulder width. For mobility and congestion, each typical section was scored based on if it included additional travel lanes, if it improved roadway capacity, and if it reduced peak travel hour delays. For connectivity, each typical section was scored based on if it improved travel time, if it included pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and how well it connected to other roadways along the corridor. For environmental impacts, each typical section was scored based on its potential impacts to human and natural resources. Please note, these impacts will be studied further in the next phase. Lastly, for right-of-way and utilities, each typical section was scored based on how much acreage would be purchased, any potential conflicts to existing utilities, and where it would have impacts to hazardous materials or wastewater storage.

Slide 9 – Screening Results:

After the screening process was complete, out of the twenty-five original typical sections, there were seven top typical sections that scored the highest. To the right of each typical section graphic, you will see a circle with a number inside of it. Each number corresponds to that typical section's final score out of a max score of 100. The higher the number, the better the score. The typical section with the highest score of 81, 4K, is a four lane with pedestrian facilities and minimal raised median. The second and third highest scores are 4L and 4M, respectively. Please note, these typical section graphics are not to scale. As a reminder, you are encouraged to pause the presentation recording to allow more time to review.

Slide 10 – Benefits of Top Three 4-Lane Typical Sections:

The benefits of the top three four-lane typical sections are that each one improves the P-M peak travel time by over thirty minutes compared to the no-build option. They improve the level of service and reduce delays at intersections. The raised medians reduce opposite direction crashes. The curb and gutter applications reduce right-of-way impacts. They also provide active transportation options.

Slide 11 – 2050 AM/PM Intersection Level of Service:

This chart provides the intersection LOS, or level of service, for A-M and P-M peak travel times projected in 2050 for the top three four-lane typical sections. Please note, that A, B, C and D indicate passing scores while E and F mean fail. All three top four-lane typical sections pass the level of service requirements for key intersections such as at Reunion Boulevard, Nutty Brown Road, Crystal Hills Drive, Parten Ranch Parkway, Arbor Canyon



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Pass, Darden Hill Road, RM 967, and RM 150. The bar graph at the bottom demonstrates that if safety improvements aren't implemented along the study corridor, it's projected to take forty-two minutes to travel from the Travis/Hays county line to RM 150 in 2050. That said, if any one of the four-lane typical sections are constructed, it will only take eleven minutes to travel the length of the study corridor.

Slide 12 – Draft Concepts (Options 1 & 2):

Based on community feedback and input and results from the screening process, the study team has developed four draft safety improvement concepts. This slide includes the first two options. Option one is a four-lane typical section with a sixteen-foot raised median throughout the entirety of the corridor. Option two is a four-lane typical section with a sixteen-foot two way left turn lane throughout the entirety of the corridor.

Slide 13 – Draft Concepts (Options 3 & 4):

This slide includes options three and four. Option three includes a variation of concepts. Option four also includes a variation of concepts, except the four-lane typical section with sixteen-foot two way left turn lane is extended to the intersection of RM 1826 and Darden Hill Road. Both options include a smaller blue segment that represents a four-lane typical section with a four-foot raised median that goes over Onion Creek. Option four is supported by the highest scoring typical sections and incorporates stakeholder and community feedback, therefore, is the recommended concept. You are encouraged to pause the presentation to take more time to review the draft concepts. As a reminder, this is a feasibility study, there are no schematics in this phase. TxDOT is hosting this public meeting to gather feedback and input from local stakeholders and community members on these draft concepts.

Slide 14 – Recommended Concept with Additional Improvements:

Out of the draft concepts, option four is the study team's recommended concept. Option four includes the following typical sections: the yellow line indicates a four lane with a sixteen-foot raised median, the orange line indicates a four lane with a sixteen-foot two way left turn lane, and the blue line indicates a four lane with a four-foot raised median. The yellow line extends from Darden Hill Road to the corridor study limit at the Travis/Hays county line. The orange line extends from RM 150 to Darden Hill Road, with a smaller blue segment just west of RM 967 that will serve as a bridge over Onion Creek. To reiterate, option four includes the highest scoring typical sections and incorporates stakeholder and community feedback. As indicated in the legend to the right of the map, the purple circles indicate recommended signalized intersections, and the orange circles indicate recommended roundabout locations. The traffic signal symbol indicates an intersection that is currently signalized. The map also indicates the addition of a westbound right-turn lane at Darden Hill Road and the addition of a westbound right-turn lane and dual eastbound left-turn lane at Nutty Brown Road.

Slide 15 – Thank You & Outro:

Comments can be submitted in the following ways: at the in-person public meeting option through a comment form or a verbal comment through an on-site court reporter, by visiting www.txdot.gov and searching "RM 1826 Feasibility Study", by email at



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AUS_RM1826CountyLine@txdot.gov, by calling (512) 766-8891 and leaving a verbal comment by voicemail, or by mail to 1608 West Sixth Street, Austin, Texas 78703 with attention to Solomon Bekele, RM 1826 Feasibility Study. While comments are always welcome, they must be received or postmarked by Tuesday, July 16, 2024, to be included in the official public meeting documentation. Responses to comments received during the comment period will be included in the public meeting summary report that will be posted on the meeting webpage when completed. Thank you for participating in the virtual public meeting. Please don't hesitate to reach out should you have any questions during this feasibility study. The study team can be reached by phone at (512) 766-8891 or by email at AUS_RM1826CountyLine@txdot.gov. All comments are welcome at any time, but if you wish to have your comments included in the summary report, please remember to submit them during the comment period by Tuesday, July 16, 2024. This concludes the meeting presentation.