



November 21, 2024

PUBLIC HEARING

FM 2154 (Wellborn Road) Widening Project

From: SH 40 (William D. Fitch Parkway)

To: Greens Prairie Road

Brazos County
CSJ: 0540-04-074

Good evening. My name is **Doug Marino**. I am the Director of Transportation Planning and Development for the Bryan District of the Texas Department of Transportation and will serve as the public hearing officer for this meeting.

Today is **November 21, 2024** and the time is now **6:0X p.m.** On behalf of TxDOT, I would like to thank each of you for your interest and participation in this public hearing for the proposed **FM 2154 Widening Project**. I would also like to thank the Wellborn Middle School for the use of this facility.

As you entered this evening, you were asked to register at one of the sign-in tables. If you have not already done so, please register before you leave tonight so that we have a record of participation at this public hearing.

You have had an opportunity to view the project exhibits located in the middle of the room as part of the open house portion of tonight's hearing. These displays will be available for as long as we are here tonight and then they will continue to be available at our offices and on the TxDOT project website.



HELP
#EndTheStreakTX
End the streak of daily deaths on Texas roadways.

TxDOT.gov
#EndTheStreakTX Toolkit



With safety being the priority at TxDOT, I'd like to take a moment to share a message.

November 7, 2000 was the last deathless day on Texas roadways. That means for over 24 years, at least one person has died...every....single...day on roads. We all have a part to play to change that.

This message is that reminder – to End the Streak of deaths on Texas highways. We need drivers and passengers to act more responsibly and help us reach our goal of zero deaths by 2050.

Texans can play a major role in ending fatal crashes with a few simple driving habits: wear seatbelts, drive the speed limit, put away the phone and other distractions, and never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

So please do your part...and share the message to End the Streak...with family and friends.

Thank you.

Public Hearing Agenda

- 1 | Introduction
- 2 | Project Overview
- 3 | Environmental Overview
- 4 | Right-of-Way Acquisition Overview
- 5 | Verbal Comment Period
- 6 | Adjournment

During tonight's public hearing presentation, we will share the need and purpose for a project on Wellborn Rd..... We will share the preferred design alternative for addressing those needs....and then...most importantly...gather feedback from you, the public, on this Wellborn Rd. project.

I'll have some help tonight presenting the technical aspects of the project from Juan Quiroz our TxDOT District Planning Engineer, and Sean Beal our Lead Consultant Engineer.

Being that this is an official hearing, there are items that must be covered as part of the federal environmental process...so please bear with us....some of the items are a little dry, even for us engineers....so hopefully Juan and Sean can keep it interesting.

Alright, once we present the project overviews, we will have a verbal comment period for elected officials and anyone here who wishes to speak.

So that we can have a record of tonight's discussion, this hearing is being recorded and will produce a transcript of all that is said tonight for inclusion in the final environmental documentation.

Project Location

Location:

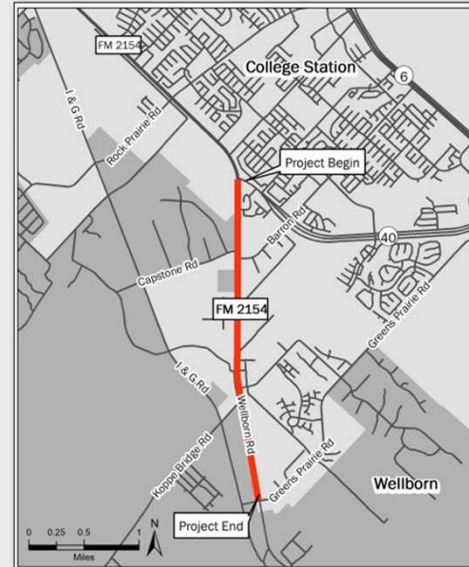
On: FM 2154 (Wellborn Rd.)
In: Wellborn Community, College Station,
Brazos County

Limits:

From: SH 40 (William D. Fitch Parkway)
To: Greens Prairie Rd.

Length:

2.7 miles



The proposed project that we will cover this evening is located in the Wellborn Community within the City of College Station. The limits for the proposed project on FM 2154 are...SH 40 on the north end, then extending along Wellborn Rd. for approximately 2.7 miles to Greens Prairie Road on the south end.

Project Timeline



*Schedule is preliminary and subject to change.

The general project development schedule is shown on this slide.

Going back to the year 2016, the City of College Station identified the need for a project on Wellborn Rd. and submitted it to the B/CS Metropolitan Planning Organization for funding consideration. In 2017, the MPO, as its known, allocated TxDOT funds to the Wellborn Rd project. through its project identification and ranking process known as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

In 2019, when it became time to begin development on the project, the City of College Station and TxDOT worked closely together... in partnership....to develop the preliminary design. Through routine interactions, City and TxDOT staffs worked with a consultant team to produce a project schematic. An initial design was complete in 2021 and due to the impact of COVID, a virtual public meeting was held for the project. We'll cover the project's public involvement in more detail a bit later.

With on-going public interactions and design refinements since the meeting in 2021, a preferred design was developed and is what we will share with you this evening...for your review and feedback.

Move along the timeline, you can see that the project's construction is not anticipated to begin for another 5 years. That leaves time to receive feedback and make further design refinements as needed.

So, understand, that we want to deliver the best possible project and its why we're here tonight.

I will now hand it over to Juan to go over the project details.

Project Need and Purpose

NEED

- Insufficient roadway capacity to accommodate current and future traffic volumes, resulting in increased congestions along the corridor, and
- High crash rates along the project corridor that exceeds statewide average for similar roads.

PURPOSE

- Reduce traffic congestion by adding capacity, additional travel lanes, to accommodate future traffic volumes, and
- Reduce crash rates along the corridor and enhance safety by providing a roadway that meets current roadway design standards.

Thanks, Doug.

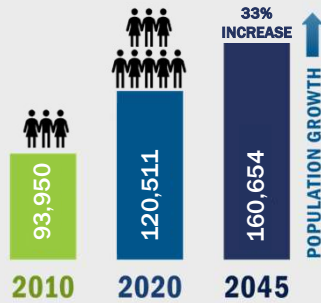
A project on Wellborn Road is needed for two primary reasons. First, there is traffic congestion because of the high number of vehicles that travel the corridor and second, a need for improved safety due to the high number of crashes that occur.

The purpose of the proposed project is to address those needs by adding roadway lanes to handle the congestion...and adding safety features to the expanded roadway that minimize the risk of crashes.

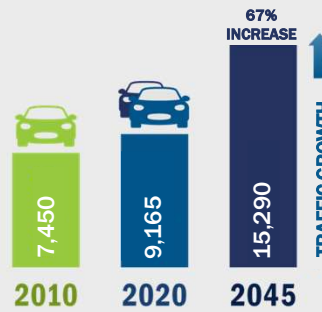
Basis of Need

Congestion

Growing Population Means More Travelers on the Road



More Vehicles on FM 2154 Means More Congestion

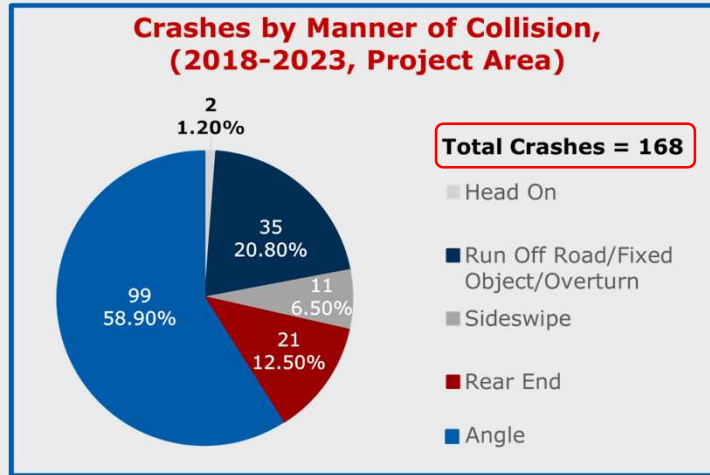


Anyone who has driven along Wellborn Road is familiar with the amount of traffic on the road each day. As the growth of the local community continues its upward trend, the average daily traffic volumes also continue to increase. The latest traffic count numbers from 2023, show that the average traffic on Wellborn Road has grown to 12,505 vehicles per day.

In general, the capacity of a two-lane roadway is about 10,000 vehicles per day, which has been far exceeded at this location.

Basis of Need

Safety



A crash analysis was conducted within the project limits. There were 168 reported crashes in the time period from 2018 to 2023. As illustrated on the pie chart, over 79% of the crashes involved collisions between multiple vehicles.

Basis of Need

Safety

Crash Rate Comparison	Crash Rate (Crashes per 1MM Vehicle Miles Traveled)
Statewide avg. by Highway Group (Urban Farm-to-Market)	2.49
FM 2154 Project Limits (168 crashes)	3.19
FM 2154 Center Left Turn Lane Segments (117 crashes)	5.33

In order to compare the safety of similar roadway types across the State that have different numbers of cars and crashes, we use a roadway's **crash rate**.

In Texas, for roads similar to Wellborn Road, there is a crash rate of 2.49 crashes per million miles traveled.

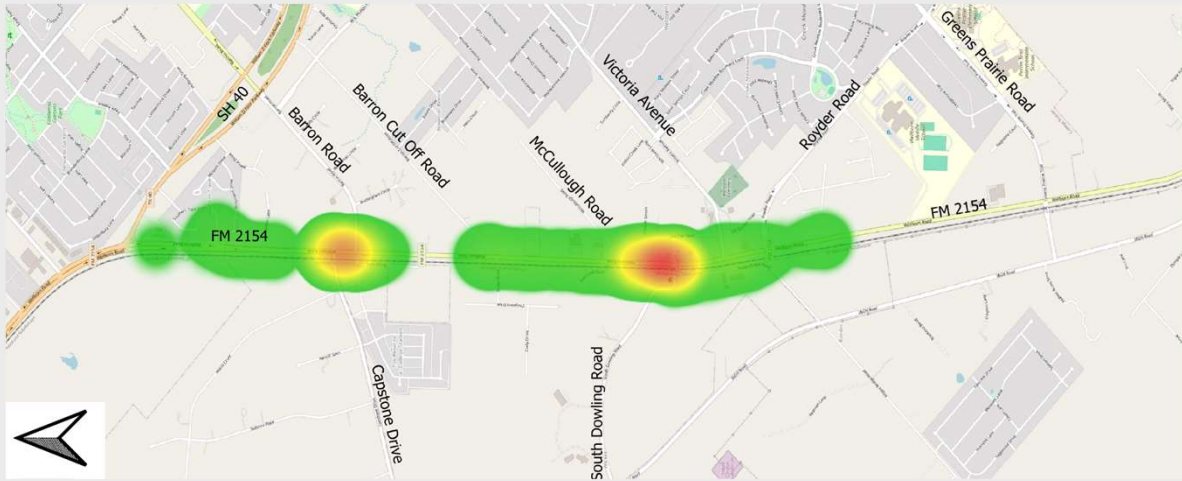
For the current Wellborn Road configuration, within the limits of the proposed project, there is a crash rate of 3.19 which is 28% higher than the statewide average.

A further analysis of the crashes along Wellborn Rd, shows that 117 of the 168 total crashes have occurred where the roadway currently has segments of Center Left Turn Lanes. This results in a crash rate of 5.33 in those segments, which is 114% higher than the statewide average.

Basis of Need

Safety

Crash Location Heat Map



This heat map represents the location of the 168 crashes along the corridor. The two **red** areas highlight hotspots of the largest concentration of crashes, which are located between Capstone Drive and Barron Road....and...between McCullough Road and Victoria Ave.

Basis of Need

Safety

Crash Location Map McCullough Rd. to Victoria Ave.



This map shows a symbol for each crash near the red hotspot between McCullough Road and Victoria Ave as highlighted the previous slide.

Zooming in further shows the concentration of the crashes in this area.....59 of the 168 crashes have occurred in this location...each crash is identified with a symbol that represents the type of crash that occurred.

Proposed Improvements

Congestion

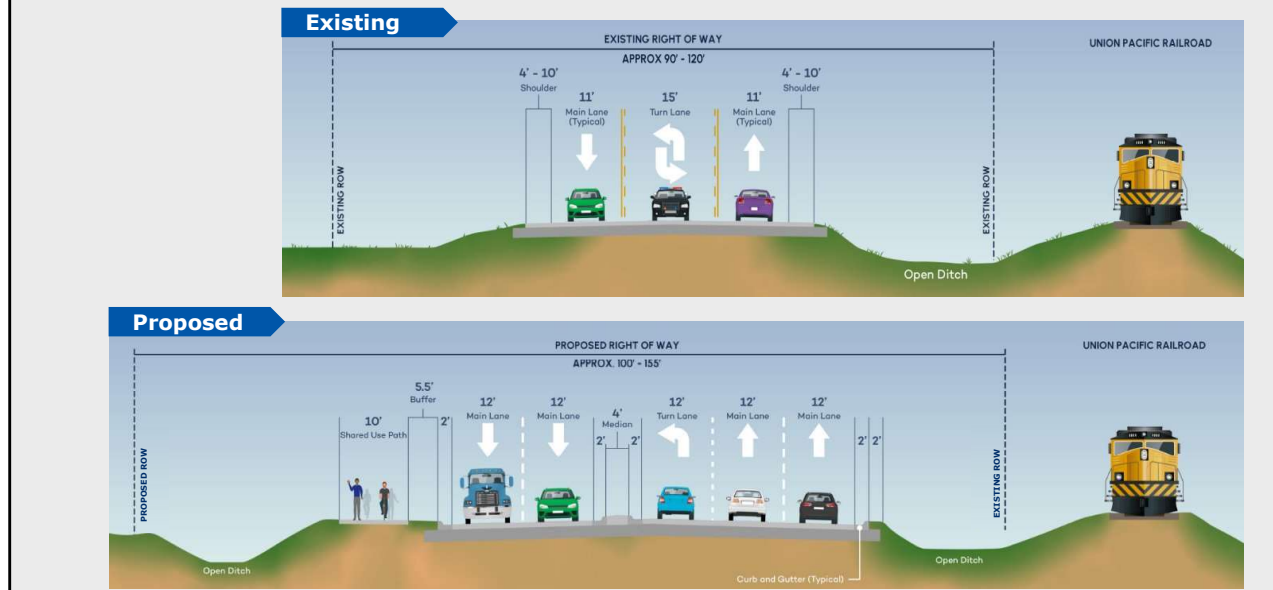
- Add travel lane in each direction—widen the roadway from 2 to 4 lanes

Safety

- Add traffic signal at McCullough Rd
- Re-align Barron Cut Off Rd and McCullough Rd
- Add right turn lanes at Barron Rd and Barron Cut Off Rd
- Extend center left turn lanes with raised median protection
- Add a Shared Use Path for pedestrians and bicyclists

The proposed improvements would address the project needs and align with the project purpose of reducing congestion and enhancing safety along the corridor, and I'll cover each of these items in the following slides.

Typical Roadway Sections



Here are representative roadway sections showing the existing and proposed roadway features along the Wellborn Road corridor from the ground level perspective.

The existing two-lane section, shown at the top, includes two 11-ft travel lanes in each direction with variable width outside shoulders and an approximately 15-ft wide center left turn lane on some segments of the roadway.

The Union Pacific Railroad is located adjacent to Wellborn Road along the entire length of the corridor. Proposed right-of-way widths along Wellborn can vary from 100 to 155 ft and slightly more in some locations.

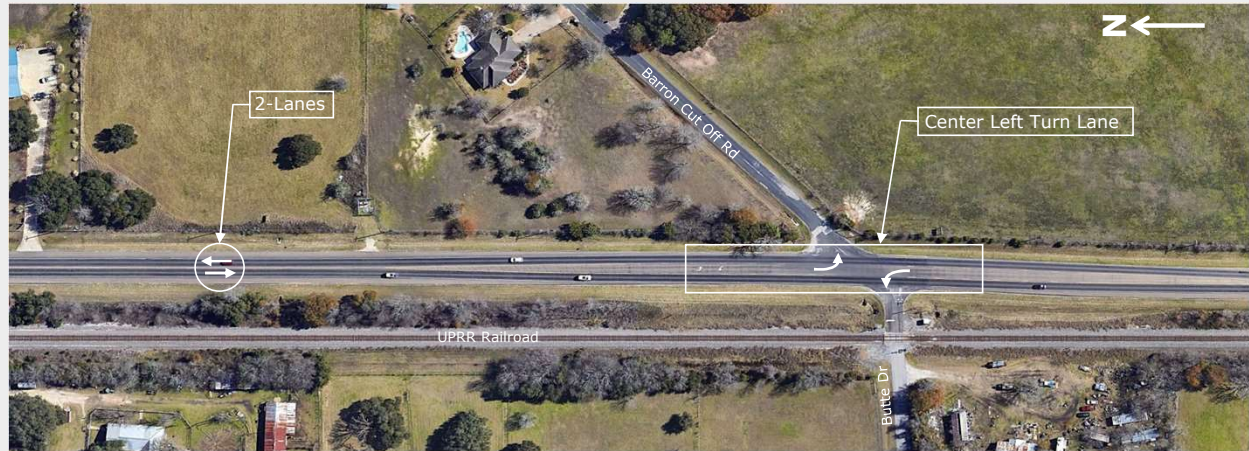
The proposed 4-lane widening roadway configuration, shown at the bottom, would include two 12-ft travel lanes in each direction separated by a 16 to 22-ft wide raised median which includes dedicated left turn lanes at selected intersections.

Additional features of the proposed widening project include the construction of a 10-ft wide shared use path which, as previously mentioned, is essentially a wide sidewalk that can be utilized by both pedestrians and bicyclists.

Storm water drainage would be provided primarily with open ditch swales and short segments of storm sewer along the corridor.

Existing Roadway

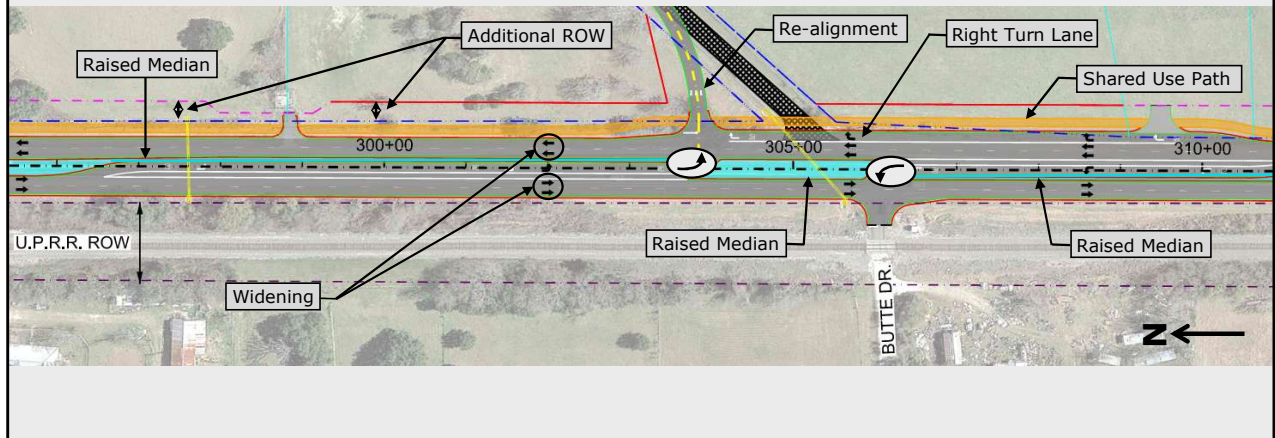
Wellborn Rd at Barron Cut Off Rd Intersection



To illustrate the proposed improvements along the corridor, let's focus on the Barron Cut Off Road intersection—on this graphic north is to the left. Today, as you approach this intersection northbound or southbound, the existing **two-lane roadway** widens to include a **center left turn lane** to access Barron Cut Off Road to the east and Butte Drive to the west.

Proposed Improvements

Wellborn Rd at Barron Cut Off Rd Intersection



This graphic presents an aerial perspective of the proposed improvements at the Barron Cut Off Road intersection previously described. For orientation purposes, the proposed improvements and relevant features have been color coded. The existing right-of-way line east of Wellborn Road is dashed blue, the proposed right-of-way line is dashed pink or solid red, and the Union Pacific Railroad right of way lines west of Wellborn Road are dark purple. The proposed roadway lanes are shown in gray color, the raised medians are shown in light blue, and the shared use path is shown in orange.

The proposed improvements along the Wellborn Road corridor include:

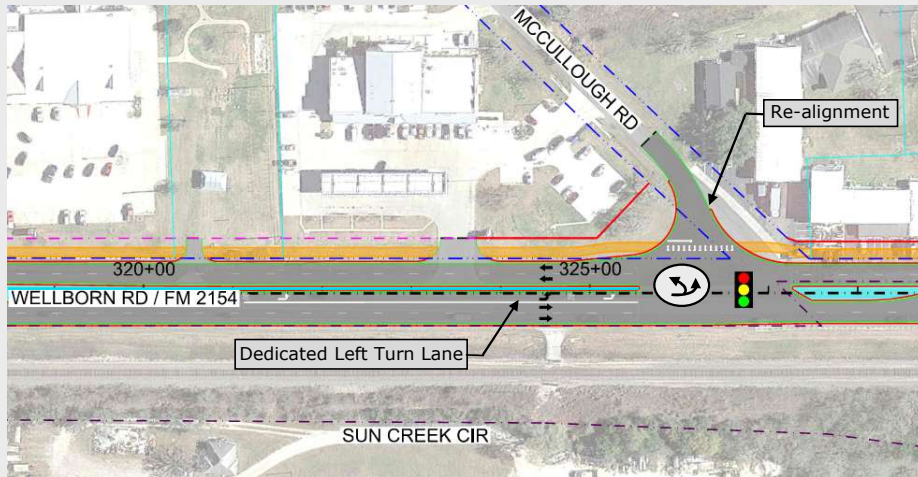
- A **roadway widening** consisting of two travel lanes in each direction, with **raised medians** and **dedicated left turn lanes** at selected locations—in this case, extended left turn lanes that allow for vehicle queuing when turning at Barron Cut Off Road and Butte Drive would be provided, and
- A 10-ft wide **share use path** for pedestrians and bicyclists would be constructed along the east side of the corridor.

The widening along the corridor would require acquisition of **additional right of way** of variable width along the east side of Wellborn Road.

Additional improvements at the existing skewed intersection include a **re-alignment of Barron Cut Off Road** as shown to enhance safety by improving sight-distance for drivers as they approach Wellborn Road, and installation of a **right turn lane** for northbound traffic wanting to turn onto Barron Cut Off Road—in general, right turn lanes improve traffic flow along the corridor by allowing turning vehicles to get off the main lanes of travel.

Proposed Improvements

McCullough Rd Intersection



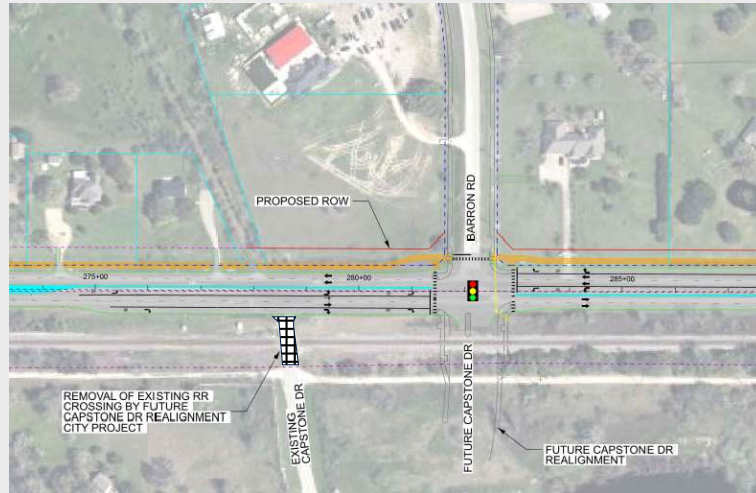
A traffic signal would be installed at the McCullough Road intersection to account for future growth and traffic demand also coming from anticipated future connections to McCullough Road. It would provide left turning traffic the ability to maneuver safely through the intersection with a protected left turn.

Similar to Barron Cut Off Road previously discussed, the existing skewed intersection is not ideal. The proposed intersection design would re-align McCullough Road to enhance safety by improving sight-distance for drivers as they approach Wellborn Road.

Southbound Wellborn Road traffic would also be able to make an uninterrupted U-turn to change direction using the wider pavement at the intersection. This location is one of seven provided along the corridor with wider pavement.

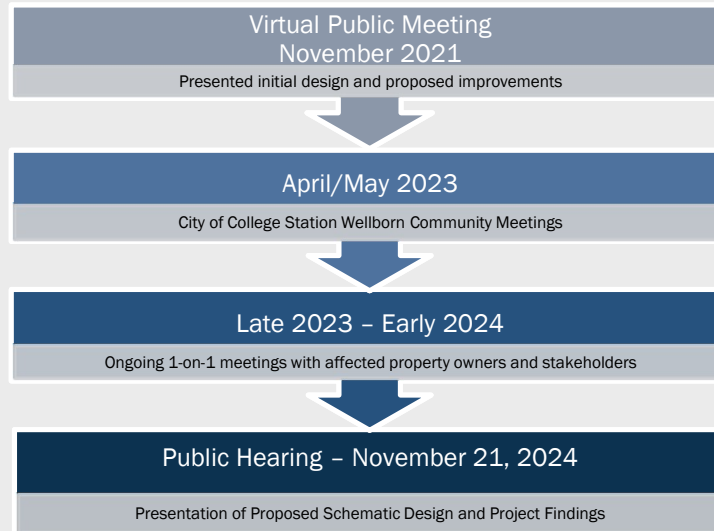
Proposed Improvements

Capstone Dr Realignment at Barron Rd



Finally, it is worth mentioning that TxDOT is working closely with the City of College Station on a proposed traffic signal at the Barron Road intersection. The traffic signal would be installed by the City prior to this project and would be constructed as part of their Capstone Drive re-alignment project. The resulting intersection configuration would significantly enhance safety by aligning Barron Road and Capstone Drive which was shown to be a red hotspot area on the Crash Location Heat Map previously presented.

Public Involvement



Now I will introduce our public involvement efforts, and Sean will help cover the next series of slides.

The public involvement process provides opportunities for stakeholders and the public to share feedback on the proposed alternatives for consideration in shaping the final design of the project.

TxDOT's first public involvement event was in November of 2021 with a virtual public meeting where the initial design for the proposed improvements was presented.

In April and May of 2023, TxDOT attended two City of College Station sponsored Wellborn Community Meetings in order to answer questions from the community about the project.

In addition to the public meetings held during project development, TxDOT had numerous one-on-one meetings with affected property owners, stakeholders, and city staff to continuously update and refine the design of the project.

Generally, there was recognition from property owners that there are safety and operational issues along this section of Wellborn Road that should be addressed. We also heard questions and comments about the ROW, medians and the shared use path.

Now I will hand it over to Sean.

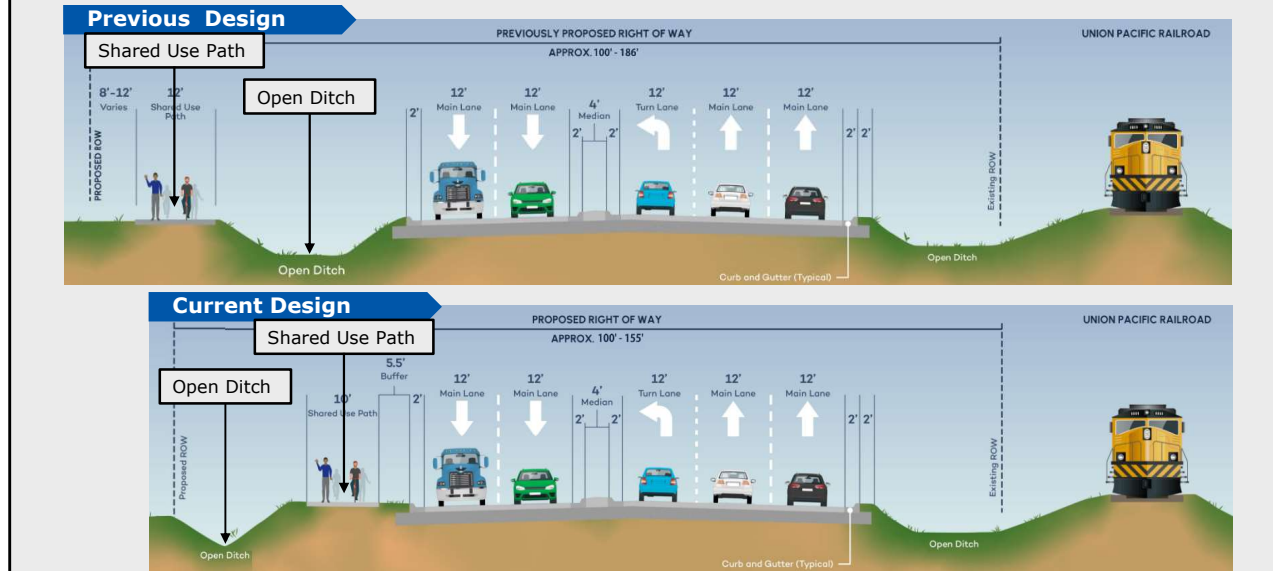
What We Heard



- **Why is so much right-of-way required?**

As Juan Mentioned we heard concerns from the community about the amount of proposed ROW that was required for the project, and in the area to the North of Wellborn in particular.

Response to Feedback - Right of Way Width



Many of you know that the area to the North of Wellborn is subject to somewhat frequent flooding events. The previous design included a large roadside ditch to capture offsite run off along with a Shared Use Path that was proposed to go on the other side of that ditch.

As the schematic refinements progressed, an in-depth drainage analysis identified that the width of the roadside ditch, and the amount of ROW required, could be reduced while still addressing the localized flooding.

It was also determined that the shared use path, could be moved closer to the road, while still maintaining the required buffer distance between it and the road. This change also reduced the amount of ROW required.

Due to these refinements, the project team was able to reduce the total proposed ROW need from 10 to 7 acres, and by widths of up to 50 feet in some areas.

What We Heard



- **Why is so much right-of-way required?**
- **Why are raised medians proposed?**



Now, on to the topic of medians. We have heard from a number of folks on this topic. Our team understands that medians have been an important topic of discussion both for the community of Wellborn and throughout Bryan/College Station. There are strong feelings throughout the area and people are frustrated. *We hear the frustration...trust me our public involvement folks HEAR your frustration* Some folks feel that they are being restricted by medians, and are mad that it affects the way they have traveled for years to your favorite local business, restaurant, or even to church. We understand where you are coming from. It is ok to not like medians. Many of us get frustrated at traffic signals. I know when I'm sitting at a red light that just won't turn green, it can be hard to see the benefits.

We are here tonight to listen to your feedback about the project, including those on raised medians... and it is ok to have different opinions. We want to hear concerns and your experiences with raised medians both with the comment opportunities tonight and after tonight's hearing concludes. Our primary responsibility as engineers to provide a safe roadway system, and our goal is to deliver the best possible projects. Your feedback is key a component to achieving that goal.

Now I'd like to hand it over to Juan to talk about his experiences driving on Wellborn Rd.

Driver Observations



Let's look at a typical situation on Wellborn Road during the morning commute. **I live a few blocks from the Wellborn Community and frequently take Wellborn Road on my way to work.**

This view sequence is from Church Street. The vehicle highlighted takes a left out of the South Dowling Road railroad crossing and uses the center left-turn lane illegally as an acceleration lane. For a period of time, the car is hidden behind other vehicles. This presents a challenging and potentially unsafe situation for a driver attempting to take a left turn out from Church St.....or sets up a potential collision with anyone travelling in the opposite direction wanting to turn left into the post office, **which is a place my family and I visit often in the Wellborn Community.**

Driver Observations

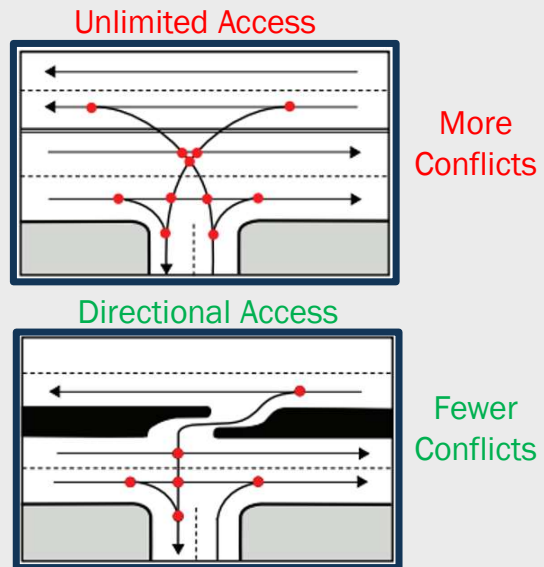


Another example from the same location. Again, the highlighted vehicle is hidden for a period time behind other vehicles. This same situation would become even more challenging if the proposed project were to add two more travel lanes but without the inclusion of medians. Those additional lanes would make it even more visually challenging for drivers to find gaps to make safe left turns **out** from side streets and driveways. **In my experience, there are times, when I want to turn left in this area—I reroute instead—it may take a little bit longer, but I get there safely.**

Sean, back to you.

Medians: It's About Reducing Crashes

- Nationally – Raised medians have shown to reduce crashes by up to 27%
- Locally – Recent raised median projects have reduced crashes by up to 68%
- Conflict points are the points where two vehicles can potentially collide
- Fewer conflict points = fewer crashes
- Left turn crashes result in the most serious crashes



Source: Adapted from the Florida Department of Transportation

The fact is...medians...reduce...crashes. Nationwide medians have shown an average of a 27% reduction in crashes, and local projects have resulted in up to a 68% reduction.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) both support raised medians as a proven safety counter measure.

Reducing the number of vehicular conflict points, represented by the red dots on these images, is an effective way to improve safety.

Left turns result in the most serious crashes...and in-particular, the most challenging left turn is when it is taken from a side street or a driveway on to the main roadway because the driver must navigate through multiple lanes of traffic and conflict points to make the turn..

Additionally. We've heard many people say that U-turns are unsafe. When there is space for a vehicle to make an uninterrupted U-turn, they are safer than taking left turns on to a roadway. There are fewer conflict points when you are taking a U-turn when compared to left turns on to the main roadway from side streets and driveways. There are also fewer visual distractions or opportunities for vehicles to be hidden from sight when compared to crossing up to 5 lanes of traffic.

Local Changes Observed with Raised Medians – Texas Ave.

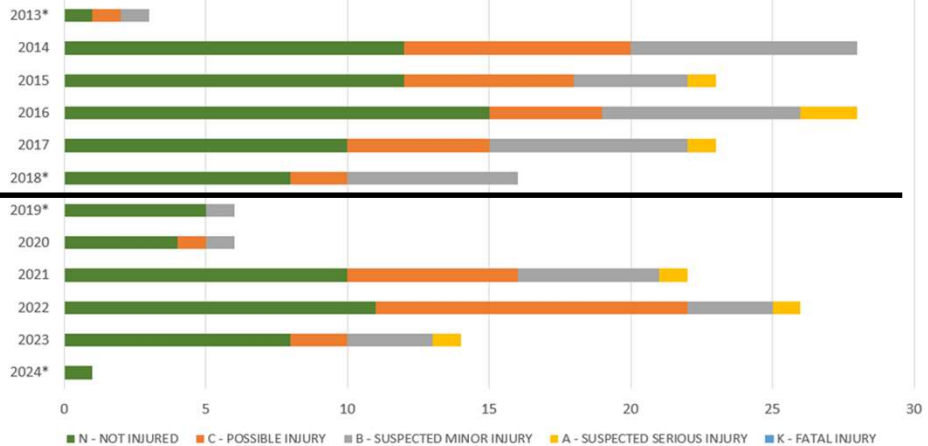
Texas Ave from FM 2818 to Deacon Dr

Average Crash Rate of **3.82** crashes per million vehicle miles

BEFORE Raised Medians

AFTER Raised Medians

Average Crash Rate of **1.68** crashes per million vehicle miles



➔ Installation of medians resulted in a **56% reduction in crash rate along Texas Ave.**

* Partial year due to construction

There are two local median projects where we have been able to collect crash data for the 5 years before and 5 years after the construction of the medians. The project represented on this slide was for construction on Texas Ave. from FM 2818 to Deacon Dr. in College Station.

The chart shown here on the right-hand side of the slide represents all of the crashes in that 10 year timeframe. Above the solid black line you can see all of the crashes that occurred in the five years before construction, and below the black line you can see all the crashes that occurred for five years after construction of the project, excluding crashes during the months of construction that occurred in 2018 and 2019.

I know this slide presents a lot of information, however the main takeaway is the crash rate prior to construction of the medians was 3.82 crashes per million vehicle miles travelled...and after construction of the medians, the crash rate dropped to 1.68...this represents a 56% reduction in the crash rate along Texas Avenue following construction of the raised medians. To compare the actual number of crashes, there were 121 crashes before the medians were built and 83 crashes afterward.

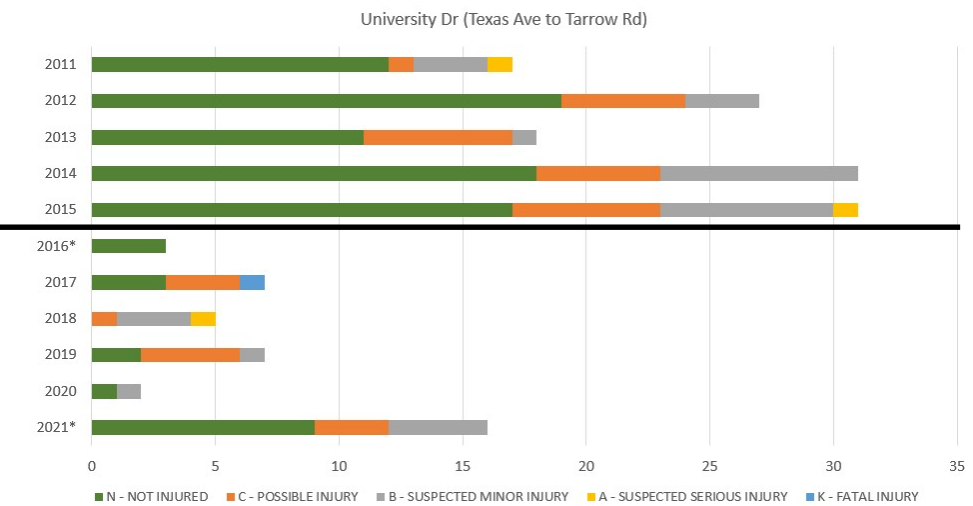
Local Changes Observed with Raised Medians – Univ. Dr.

Average Crash Rate of **3.91** crashes per million vehicle miles

BEFORE Raised Medians

AFTER Raised Medians

Average Crash Rate of **1.26** crashes per million vehicle miles



Installation of medians resulted in a **68% reduction in crash rate along University Dr**

* Partial year due to construction

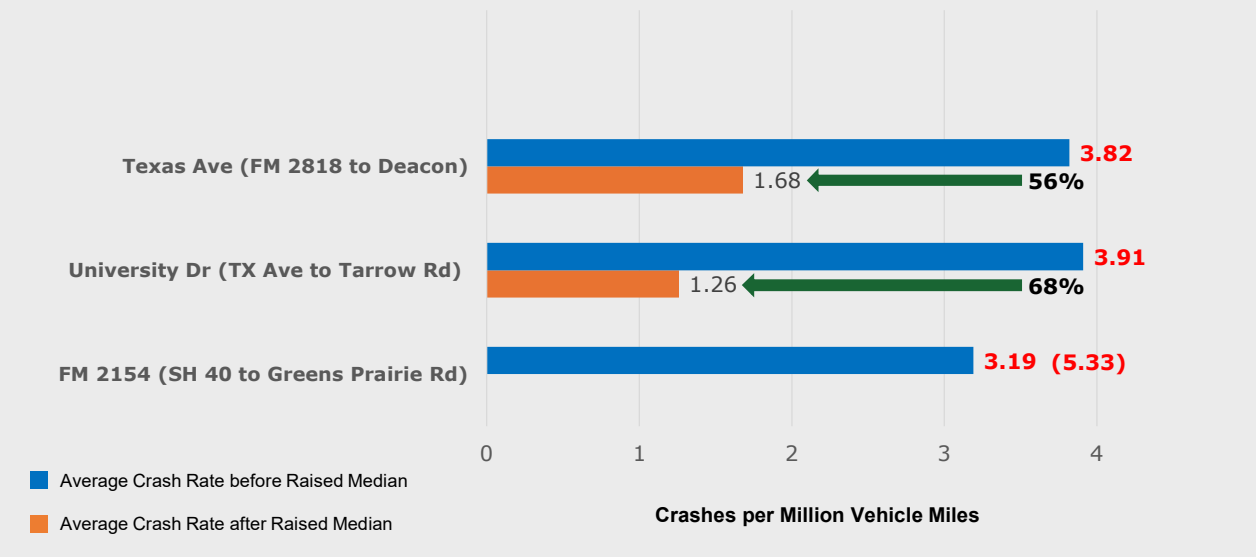
The second of the two local projects is represented on this slide. This was for median construction on University Dr from Texas Ave to Tarrow St.

Similar to the previous slide, this chart represents all of the crashes in a ten 10-year timeframe along University, excluding the months of construction that occurred in 2016.

The main takeaway is that the crash rate for the 5 years prior to construction of the medians was 3.91 crashes per million vehicle miles...and for 5 years after construction of the medians, the crash rate dropped to 1.26....this represents a 68% reduction in crash rate following construction of the medians. There were 124 crashes before construction of the medians and 40 crashes following construction. That's a difference of over 80 people following construction of the medians.

Comparing Previous Projects to FM 2154

The current Crash Rate on FM 2154 is comparable to Crash Rates observed on Texas Ave and University Dr prior to installation of medians



This slide summarizes the before and after crash rates for the two local projects shown in the previous slides...along with the crash rate for FM 2154 in its current configuration. The three crash rates before median construction are comparable with each other and all three exceed the statewide average that was shown earlier in the presentation.

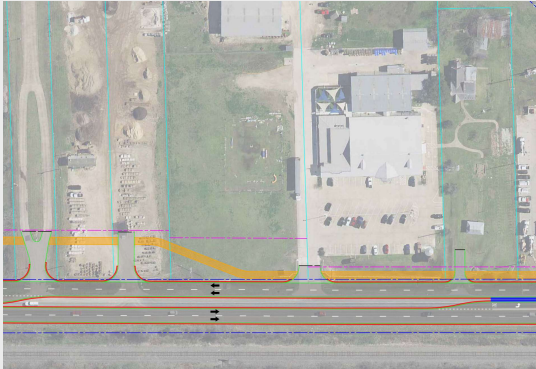
It should be noted that the Texas Ave and University Dr. projects were 4 lane roadways with existing center turn lanes prior to the median construction...while Wellborn Rd. is currently a 2-lane roadway with a center left turn lane for a portion of the limits. The Wellborn Rd. crash rates shown are 3.19 for the entire length of the project and 5.33 for the segments with an existing center left turn lane.

For another comparison of note, the nearby Wellborn Rd....north of SH 40, is a 6-lane roadway with a median....in 2023, it had a crash rate of 1.58.

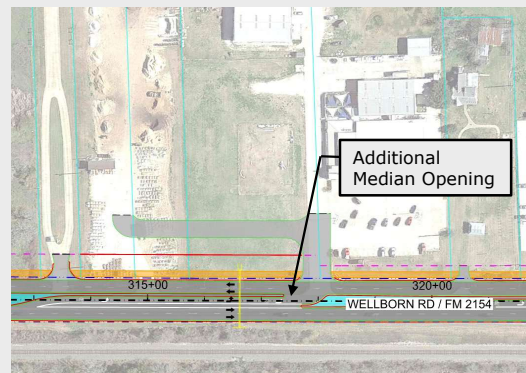
Response to Feedback - Median Openings

- Meetings with businesses along the corridor helped the project team to identify additional left-in locations and driveways that could be consolidated

November 2021 Public Meeting Schematic



Current Proposed Schematic



We received feedback from the community requesting additional median openings to avoid potentially impacting access. We held several meetings with businesses like America's Country Store and Aggieland Grass and Stone to understand their concerns, to understand the type of vehicles that access their business, and how to facilitate their access.

Through those discussions the project team was able to identify driveway and median revisions and obtain consensus on changes that allowed for left-in access to America's Country Store and Aggieland Grass and Stone as shown in this slide.

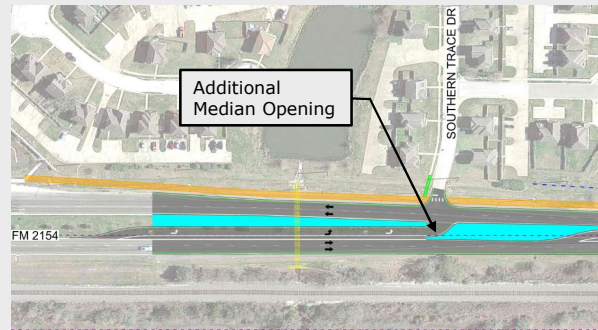
Response to Feedback - Median Openings

- Meetings with property owners and collaboration with the City helped the project team to identify additional left-in locations along the corridor

November 2021 Public Meeting Schematic



Current Proposed Schematic



The project team also developed additional median openings within the project including at the Southern end of the project near Greens Prairie Road, and at the Northern side of the project near Southern Trace as shown in this slide.

Another point of feedback that we have heard from the community is that there are challenges with emergency vehicles when there are medians along a roadway. While these additional median openings help address those concerns, it should also be noted that in City of College Station all of the traffic signals and emergency service vehicles have transponders that turn traffic lights green in the direction they are heading. This allows for traffic to clear the intersection and creates a path for the emergency vehicles to continue through.

What We Heard



- **Why is so much right-of-way required?**

- **Why are raised medians proposed?**



- **Why is a shared use path proposed?**

Another point of feedback that we received is related to the shared use path that is proposed with the project.

Response to Feedback - Shared Use Path



According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), accessible pedestrian facilities should be considered part of every new transportation project



Provides an alternate transportation method



Consistent with the Bryan/College Station MPO's Draft Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and the Wellborn District Plan



There's community desire for safer bicycle accommodations.

Example comment from first virtual public meeting held in November 2021:

"Tried riding on the shoulder of 2154, but it was far too dangerous."

Example comment from City of College Station Meeting held in April 2023:

"I personally use a bicycle for about 50% of my transportation needs. I would absolutely use this path."

In order to plan for the future, all new transportation projects must consider accessible pedestrian facilities and additional modes of transportation. This consideration is required by the Federal Highway Administration for every new transportation project where pedestrians are permitted.

The proposed shared use path is consistent with the draft Bryan/College Station MPO regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Additionally, a shared use path in-lieu of on-street bike lanes is consistent with the City's Wellborn Plan.

Comments such as these shown on the slide indicated that there is a community desire for safer bicycle accommodations along Wellborn Rd.

There was also feedback from the community that questioned the width required for the shared use path. To address these concerns, the project team was able to reduce the width from 12' to 10'. This change also reduced the ROW width while still safely accommodating for the alternative method of transportation.

Environmental Overview – NEPA Assignment

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 FHWA and TxDOT.

From here we will move onto the Environmental Overview... Please bear please bear with us, while we cover these required items

TxDOT's Bryan District conducted the environmental studies and documentation for this project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act often referred to as NEPA.

The statement shown on this slide is required to be shared at public outreach activities and environmental documents. Its purpose is to notify the public and other agencies that the Federal Highway Administration, FHWA, has delegated some of its responsibilities to TxDOT when it comes to the environmental review and approval of certain types of transportation projects.

Environmental Overview – Categorical Exclusion

The project would be environmentally approved as a Categorical Exclusion (CE) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Projects that qualify for a CE, consist of activities which, based on past experience, do not involve significant environmental impacts. The purpose of this process is to document environmental findings and verify that no significant environmental impacts would be anticipated. Once the environmental studies and public involvement are complete, the CE can be approved.

The project team identified and assessed potential impacts to the natural and human environment, including:

- Air Quality
- Archeological Resources
- Non-Archeological Historic Properties
- Community Impacts
- Biological Resources
- Hazardous Materials
- Traffic Noise
- Water Resources

This project would be environmentally cleared as a Categorical Exclusion, referred to as a CE. This type of environmental clearance is used when the project consists of activities that, based on past experience, do not involve significant environmental impacts. The purpose of this process is to document the findings of the environmental studies and confirm that the project would not result in significant environmental impacts. If no significant impacts are found, the process is concluded by approving the CE.

The environmental study identified and evaluated the potential impacts by the proposed project regarding specific aspects of the natural and human environment that are listed on this slide.

We anticipate that after all studies are completed, including the public input received from this hearing, the findings of the CE for this project would show that this project has no significant impact on the environment and that no unusual circumstances exist.

The proposed project plans along with details on the environmental studies performed and the conclusions reached, will continue to be available for review at the TxDOT Bryan District Office.

Environmental Overview – Project Coordination

- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- Federally-recognized Tribes with an interest in TxDOT projects
- Texas Historical Commission (THC)
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)

TxDOT coordinated with various state and federal agencies, as well as local stakeholders. This was done in order to develop a project that complies with all applicable regulations and takes in to account the concerns of civic and business interests as well as private citizens.

Environmental Overview

Air Quality

- National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)
- No Impact

Archeological Resources

- Archeological Background Study
- No Impact

Non-Archeological Historic Properties

- National Register of Historic Places – no impacts to any listed or eligible properties

The results of the environmental study for the proposed FM 2154 widening project is summarized as follows:

The proposed project would not impact air quality. Under both the Build and No Build Alternatives, continuing trends in air quality improvement are expected to continue.

There would be no impact to undisturbed archeological resources. The Archeological Background Study conducted for the project found that a survey was not warranted.

TxDOT determined that no non-archeological historic properties are located within the proposed ROW and would not be impacted by the project.

TxDOT also determined that there was one historic age bridge along the project, however it was not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Environmental Overview

Biological Resources

- Threatened and Endangered Species – Brazos County
 - Project is within the range of and with suitable habitat present for federal candidate species, state-listed species, and species of greatest conservation

- Vegetation Types – potential impacts
 - Intermittent Stream
 - Riparian Hardwood Forest
 - Upland Hardwood Forest
 - Urban

Biological resources including vegetation, wildlife habitat, and threatened and endangered species were evaluated for potential impacts.

In accordance with the 2021 Memorandum of Understanding, TxDOT coordinates with Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. on federal and state CE-level transportation projects at the discretion of the TxDOT District. The intent is to foster communication, collaboration, and cooperation between Texas Parks and Wildlife and TxDOT on the review of transportation projects and protection of State natural resources. The project activities would be conducted in accordance with the 2021 MOU.

Potential habitat for state and federal listed species is present within the study area. TxDOT would implement best management practices as specified in its programmatic agreement with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department to avoid impacts to state listed species. **No adverse effects or impacts to the listed species or their habitats are anticipated.**

Environmental Overview

Hazardous Materials

- Initial Site Assessment
 - Six high risk sites of concern were identified
 - No hazardous material impacts are anticipated

Community Impacts

- No disproportionately high or adverse impacts to Environmental Justice or Limited English Proficiency populations

A Hazardous Material Initial Site Assessment was completed. Six of these sites were identified as high risk for contamination. However, hazardous materials impacts are not anticipated from the facilities that were identified as potential risks.

It was determined that there would be no disproportionately high or adverse impacts to minority and/or low-income populations. Overall, the proposed design features would enhance mobility and access, and would reduce congestion and improve safety for both minority and non-minority populations. It was also determined that there would be no disproportionately high or adverse impact to Environmental Justice or Limited English Proficiency populations.

Environmental Overview

Traffic Noise

- Traffic Noise Model – TNM (FHWA approved)
- 52 representative receivers modeled
- Noise Barrier was not determined to be reasonable and feasible

Water Resources

- Construction General Permit is applicable (coordinate with TCEQ)
- Waters of the US are present. Work would be covered under a non-reporting Nationwide Permit authorized by the US Army Corps of Engineers

Conclusion

- Environmental studies, analyses, and evaluation of the proposed project indicate no significant impacts

Existing and predicted traffic noise levels were modeled using the approved FHWA traffic noise model. Fifty-two representative receivers were modeled. Noise abatement measures were determined to not be reasonable and feasible for any impacted receivers. A noise barrier would not be proposed as part of the proposed project.

For impacts to water resources, TxDOT would comply with all state construction permitting, storm water management, and notification requirements.

It is anticipated that work within Waters of the U.S. would be authorized under a non-reporting Nationwide Permit 14 issued by the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Regarding the items that have been summarized above and other potential impacts that were evaluated..., the environmental studies, analyses, and evaluation performed thus far indicate that the proposed improvements would not result in significant environmental impacts.

The environmental technical reports for the proposed project are available at the Environmental Table here at the in-person meeting and will continue to be available for review at the TxDOT Bryan District Office.

Project Funding

- Project ID: CSJ 0540-04-074
- Upon approval, the proposed project is included within:
 - Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
 - 10-year Unified Transportation Program (UTP)
- Total Estimated Construction Cost: \$43.5 Million
- Funding Source: Federal and State Transportation Funds

Upon approval, the proposed project will be included in the applicable federal and state planning documents. The project has an estimated construction cost of approximately \$43.5 million. This estimate is still preliminary and subject to change. The source of the construction funds are distributed through the Statewide Transportation Funding Program and the Unified Transportation Plan, which consists of both federal and state funds.

Right-of-Way Acquisition Overview

Project Impact

- Approximately 7 acres of new right of way
- Potential Displacements: 1 residential structure and 3 non-residential structures

Laws and Regulations

- The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act, as amended, commonly called the **Uniform Act**, is the primary law for acquisition and relocation activities on Federal or federally-assisted projects and programs. This law was passed by Congress in 1970 for making public acquisition of private property as fair and equitable as possible. Several provisions of the law were amended in 1987 as part of Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987 (STURAA).
- **State of Texas Landowner's Bill of Rights** prescribed by the Texas Legislature in Texas Government Code Sec. 402.031 and Chapter 21 of the Texas Property Code.

The project requires approximately 7 acres of new right of way. Potential displacements include one residential and three non-residential structures.

When acquiring right-of-way, TxDOT follows the Federal Uniform Act and the State of Texas Landowner's Bill of Rights as noted on the slide.

All impacted landowners have been contacted by letter and offered one-on-one meetings with TxDOT staff to discuss the project and potential impacts. We have held many meetings with property owners, and in several instances multiple meetings to develop and refine the design refinements that we mentioned earlier in our presentation.

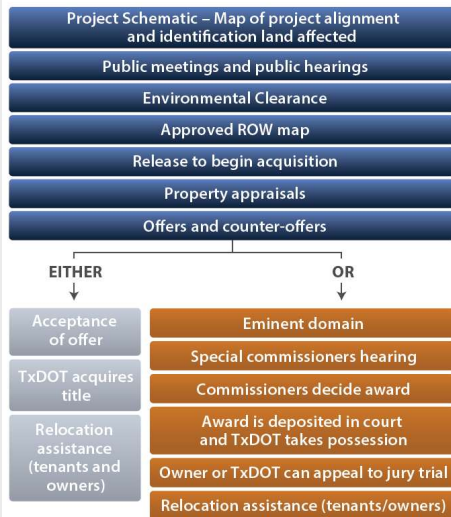
Letters to impacted landowners were sent using addresses available from the Brazos County Appraisal District.

I'll pause for a moment so that people can read this slide before moving onto the ROW acquisition Process

[Pause for a moment to allow for the public to view the slide]

Right-of-Way Acquisition Process

TXDOT'S RIGHT OF WAY PROCESS



← We are here in the Right of Way Process

For More Information:

Christine Solomon

ROW Project Manager

TxDOT Bryan District
Christine.Solomon@txdot.gov

The right-of-way acquisition process begins with a survey at each tract of land of the proposed right-of-way. These survey documents are then turned over to an independent appraiser who will set up a meeting with the property owner to conduct an appraisal of the parcel and property.

The independent appraiser will determine the fair market value of the parcel, including the value of any damages to the remainder, and the value of all improvements on the parcel. TxDOT will provide the landowner with a copy of that report along with a letter offering that value as the purchase price. The landowner may make one counteroffer if there are elements affecting the value that have been neglected in the report.

TxDOT has an administrative settlement team who will consider a counteroffer and recommend whether to accept it or not. If the landowner agrees to the offered value or an administrative settlement value, then TxDOT will process the necessary records of the transaction to take possession of the right-of-way.

If the landowner does not agree with the value of the offer and an administrative settlement is not reached, then the next avenue is a special commissioners hearing. The special commissioners are three local citizens knowledgeable of local land values who are appointed by the judge whose court has jurisdiction over the area. These commissioners hear from the landowner and from TxDOT as to the value of the property, and then make their own judgment as to that value. The amount of that judgment is deposited by the state in the registry of the court and the state takes possession of the right-of-way at that time. The landowner may decide whether to withdraw the awarded funds or seek further remedy through a jury trial. The state may also seek a jury trial if the state does not agree with the commissioners' award. The trial is heard before a jury in the district court and the jury decides the appropriate award. This jury award may also be appealed by either side through the civil appeals process.

The Uniform Act also provides for relocation assistance to those who are displaced by a project. This assistance may cover moving expenses, business losses during the move, and other expenses for a commercial displacement. It may cover moving expenses for relocating residents, whether they are tenants or owners. Relocation resources would be made available to all eligible displaced residents, including tenants, without discrimination.

Additionally, you can contact the TxDOT Right of Way Project Manager directly at the email addresses shown on this slide.

Now I'd like to hand it over to Doug to handle the rest of tonight's presentation.

Takeaways

Partnership with B/CS MPO and City of College Station

Project goals to address congestion and safety

Successful safety improvements on similar local projects

Construction anticipated to begin in 2029

Responded to Feedback

- Reduced Right of Way need: 10 acres to 7 acres
- Reduced Shared Use Path: 12 ft to 10 ft
- Additional median openings

Opportunity to hear feedback

Thank you, Sean and also Juan for providing that information – and good job, everyone appears to still be awake. Alright, before we go on to the comments period, I'd like to briefly summarize a few key takeaways that we've heard so far:

First-

- From the beginning, the project has been a partnership with the B/CS MPO and the City of College Station

Next-

- The goals of the project are to address congestion and safety
- There have been similar projects locally, that have successfully reduced the crash rate and number of crashes
- As it stands, construction isn't anticipated to begin until 2029, so there is time to make further project refinements.
- The preferred design includes changes from feedback that has already been received– including:
 - Reducing the ROW need from 10 to 7 acres
 - Reducing Share Use Path width from 12 to 10 ft, and
 - Providing additional median openings
- And finally—tonight's hearing is another opportunity for the public to provide feedback...and we do want to hear from you



Next, I would like to welcome and recognize the elected officials who are in attendance tonight...and allow them to speak if they choose.

(Read the names from the sign-in sheet)

If there are any other elected officials present tonight, and you'd like to be recognized, please raise your hand.

(Recognize each person)

First, we will hear from _____; If you would, please join me at the front and utilize our microphone stand.

Elected Official #1 speaks

Repeat if necessary.

Thank you _____. Next, we'll have _____.

Are there any other elected officials or representatives that would like to be recognized or say a word at this time?

(If not)...(Now) we'll move along to public comments.

Thank you.

Public Comments

OPTIONS FOR COMMENTING

1. Register to speak during the verbal comment period following the presentation of the project
2. Complete a comment form and place in the comment box
3. Comment form available online at www.txdot.gov - type "**FM 2154 Widening**" in the keyword search box
4. E-mail comments to: BRY_PublicComment@txdot.gov
5. Mail comments to: TxDOT – Bryan District
ATTN: Sydney Fox
2591 N. Earl Rudder Freeway
Bryan, Texas 77803-5190

**Comments must be submitted or postmarked by
December 6, 2024 to be included in the public
hearing documentation**

There are several ways to comment on the proposed project. You may present your comments verbally here tonight. If you would like to speak for the public record, and have not filled out a speaker card, please pick up a speaker card from the sign-in table or from one of our staff members. **[Hold up a card]**

If you do not wish to make a verbal comment, you can submit written comments. You can leave the written comments in the comment box tonight or you have the option to email or mail comments after tonight's hearing. The contact information on this slide is shown on the comment form.

Both written and verbal comments will have equal consideration. If you submit your comments in writing, it is not necessary to repeat your comments verbally this evening.



We are now going to begin the verbal comment period.

Prior to this evening's hearing presentation, there have been opportunities for the public to engage in 2-way conversations with our engineering staff....at the open house this evening, at the previous meetings, and during our many one-on-one meetings.

For this verbal comment session, the purpose is to allow for you to provide feedback...on the Wellborn Rd. widening project presented tonight....and....to do so without debate....we **want** to hear **your** comments....we will formally respond to your comments and questions in the public hearing summary report developed after this hearing. Also, Once the hearing is adjourned, TxDOT staff will remain available this evening.

Public Comment Session

- Submit a Speaker Registration card
- Limit your comments to 3 minutes
- Use the microphone
- State your name and whom you represent (if applicable)
- Unused time may not be given to another speaker



0:41

When making your comments, we ask that you make your comments respectful, specific to this **FM 2154 widening** project, and limit them to **3** minutes so everyone has equal opportunity to speak. A timer, located on the screen, will track the allotted 3 minutes. Unused time may not be given to another speaker. If you have additional comments, please complete a written comment form. Additionally, please direct your comments toward me and speak clearly into the microphone to ensure your comments are recorded properly.

When I announce your name, please come to the microphone and state your name and if you represent a group, any interest you may have in the project, and provide your comments.

And now I will call the speakers listed on the comment registration cards. First, we will hear from _____, followed by _____ . If you could please make your way to the front or raise your hand if you need assistance.

Alright Mr./Mrs. _____, please proceed.

[Speaker gives comments]

Thank you. Next, we will have _____, followed by _____ .

[Once all verbal cards are gone through]

Is there anyone else that would like to speak? If so raise your hand to fill out a speaker registration form.

[Pause for that opportunity and look around the room – if there is no one else, proceed to next slide]

Adjournment

Thank You For Your Participation!

**Please remember to submit your comments on or before
December 6, 2024
to be included in the public hearing summary report**

- Written comments can be placed in the comment box
- E-mail comments to: BRY_PublicComment@txdot.gov
- Mail comments to: TxDOT – Bryan District
ATTN: Sydney Fox
2591 N. Earl Rudder Freeway
Bryan, Texas 77803-5190

This concludes the verbal comment session. I would like to thank you for all your comments. Your statements and comments will be given consideration in the preparation of the final design of the project. After the closing date of the hearing comment period on **December 6, 2024**, TxDOT will process all the comments received and complete a Public Hearing Summary Report for review and approval, which can be obtained at the TxDOT District Office.

District staff is available for questions regarding this project anytime during the project development process.

As a reminder, if you did not sign in when you came in, please do so now. This is for our records in documenting attendance at this hearing.

Please feel free to continue viewing the project exhibits. The TxDOT staff with name tags are available to answer your questions.

On behalf of TxDOT, again, let me thank you for your participation in this public hearing. It is now X:XX PM and the public hearing for the proposed FM 2154 widening project is officially adjourned. Thank you.