



August 29, 2024

WELCOME Public Hearing

FM 624 (Northwest Boulevard) from Wildcat Drive to CR 73

Nueces County, Texas

CSJ: 0989-02-057

National Environmental Policy Act Assignment to 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 FHWA and TxDOT.

Welcome to the Texas Department of Transportation Corpus Christi District pre-recorded Public Hearing presentation for the proposed improvements to FM 624, locally known as Northwest Blvd., from Wildcat Drive to CR 73 in Nueces County, Texas. We appreciate your interest in this project and thank you for your participation.

This is a pre-recorded presentation made available online on Thursday, Aug. 29, 2024, by 5:30 p.m.

The National Environmental Policy Act review and approval process applies to this project. 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 Dec. 9, 2019 and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

The slide features a dark background with the Texas Department of Transportation logo in the top left and the slogan "Connecting you with Texas." in the top right. The main text reads "HELP #EndTheStreakTX" in large, bold, yellow and white letters, followed by the tagline "End the streak of daily deaths on Texas roadways." in smaller yellow text. At the bottom, there are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, a QR code, and the text "TxDOT.gov (Keyword: #EndTheStreakTX)" and "#EndTheStreakTX Toolkit". A small blue number "2" is in the bottom right corner.

Because safety is a priority at TxDOT, we begin each meeting with a safety minute. Today we will highlight TxDOT's End The Streak campaign. The last deathless day on Texas roadways was November 7, 2000. That means for 23 years, at least one person has died every single day on Texas roadways. We all have a part to play in changing that. Texans can play a major role to End the Streak of deaths on Texas roadways 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.

FM 624 | Public Hearing



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What is the purpose of the Public Hearing?

- 

Learn about the project
- 

Review the proposed improvements
- 

Provide comments

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This presentation will provide an overview of the FM 624 (Northwest Blvd.) project, details of the proposed improvements, and how you can provide input.

At the end of the presentation, there are instructions on how to submit questions and comments. To be included in the official public hearing record, comments must be received on or before Monday, Sept. 16, 2024.

Your comments are an important part of this process, and the project team will consider them for design refinements where feasible. You are encouraged to talk to your neighbors and refer them to TxDOT so they can also make comments and be included in this process.

Let's get started!

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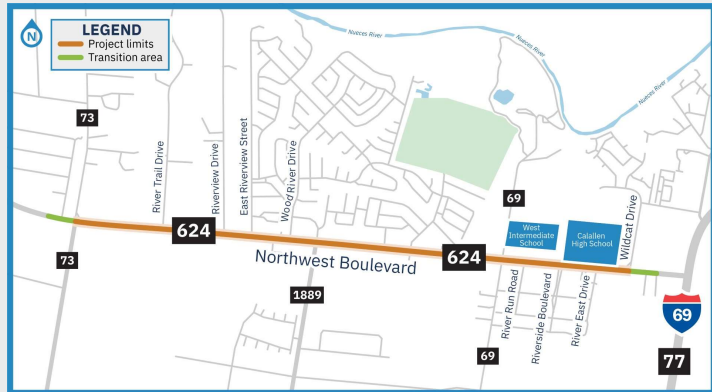


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Project Details

FM 624 (Northwest Boulevard) from Wildcat Drive to CR 73

- Safety and mobility improvements
- No additional right of way would be needed



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This project is located on FM 624 (also known as Northwest Blvd.) from Wildcat Drive to County Road 73 in Nueces County, a length of approximately 3 miles.

There will be a slight transition area of construction just east of Wildcat Drive and west of CR 73.


Safety and mobility improvements are being proposed. No additional right-of-way acquisition would be needed to build this project.

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Project Goals



Improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic



Reduce the conflict points where crashes are most likely to happen



Improve how people travel through the project area

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The goals of this project are to:

- Improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic.
- Reduce the conflict points where crashes are most likely to happen, and
- Improve how people travel through the project area.

Recent public involvement: Open House, Nov. 2, 2023



WHAT WE HEARD

- Improve safety
- Concern for changes to business access
- Consider adding additional traffic lights
- Concerns about drainage and lighting
- Consider the turning radius of large vehicles at the U-turns

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TxDOT held an open house on November 2, 2023. Public input from this meeting was incorporated into the design that you will see here today.

What we heard:

- Improve safety
- Concern for changes to business access
- Consider adding additional traffic lights
- Concerns about drainage and lighting
- Consider the turning radius of large vehicles at the U-turns

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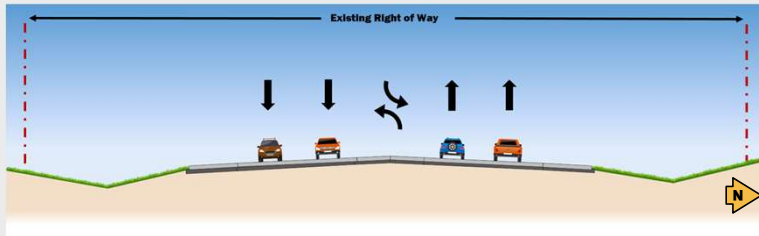


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Existing conditions

FM 624 (Northwest Boulevard) from CR 73 to River Hill Drive

Section without raised median



Existing typical section

- Two lanes in each direction with center lane
- 150-foot right of way



Aerial image of FM 624 at CR 73 with center turn lane

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To better understand the proposed improvements, we will look at the two different existing conditions along this stretch of FM 624.

Between County Road 73 and River Hill Drive, FM 624 has two lanes in each direction with a center turning lane.

The image on the right shows the center turn lane at the intersection of FM 624 at CR 73.

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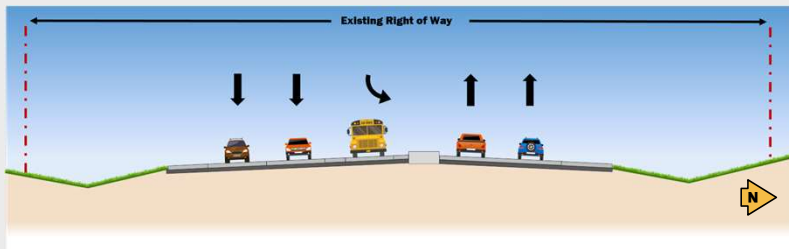


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Existing conditions

FM 624 (Northwest Boulevard) from River Hill Drive to Wildcat Drive

Section with raised median



Existing typical section

- Two lanes in each direction with a raised median
- Left turn center lane
- 150 foot right of way




Aerial image of FM 624 at River E Dr with center turn lane

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The second existing condition is the section with a raised median.

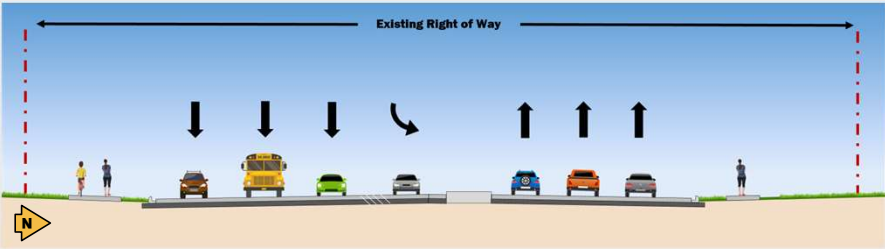
Between River Hill Drive and east of Wildcat Drive, FM 624 has two lanes in each direction with a raised center median that allows left turn and U-turn opportunities at center median openings.

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Proposed design

FM 624 (Northwest Boulevard) from Wildcat Drive to CR 73



***No additional right of way will be needed.**

Proposed typical section

- Widening the road to include three travel lanes in each direction
- Providing a shared-use path on one side and a sidewalk on the other side
- Adding additional traffic signals at intersections
- Adding a raised center median
- Installing an underground storm sewer system

Preliminary and Subject to Change

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So what is TxDOT proposing?

TxDOT's proposed design includes:

- Widening the road to include three travel lanes in each direction
- Providing a shared-use path on the south side of the road, and a sidewalk on the north side of the road
- Adding additional traffic signals at intersections
- Modifying the existing center median at Wildcat Drive and extending it west to CR 73
- Installing storm sewer in some areas of the project

This is the visual of the proposed design. Now, let's take a closer look at the design details.

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Safety highlights

Proposed safety improvements include:

- Intersection Safety Upgrades**
 - 1 Protected left turns
 - 2 Crosswalks with pedestrian signals
 - 3 Refuge islands
- Reduce Conflict Points**
 - 4 Raised center medians
- Designated Areas for Pedestrians/Bicyclists**
 - 5 Shared-use path/sidewalk
 - 6 Buffer area between traveling vehicles and sidewalk/shared-use path



Please note this image is a graphic representation of the safety highlights and is not a representation of FM 624. **10**

TxDOT's number one goal is safety, and the proposed design for this project includes a number of safety features. We'd like to highlight a few of them!

- As cross streets intersect with FM 624, TxDOT is proposing a number of safety upgrades for those intersections that benefit drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
- To reduce conflict points, TxDOT is proposing a raised center median along the project corridor.
- TxDOT proposes designated areas for pedestrians and bicycles to be separated from traveling vehicles in the corridor.


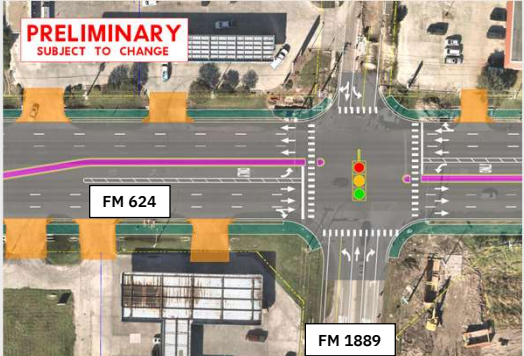
Now let's review these safety highlights one by one.

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Safety highlights: Intersection safety upgrades

GOAL: Improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic

| Existing Conditions | Proposed Design |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>Aerial image of FM 624 at 1889/Trinity River Drive Source: Google</p> |  <p>Snapshot of the proposed design of FM 624 at 1889/Trinity River Drive</p> |

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Intersections are critical safety areas. This slide shows a snapshot of the existing and proposed design at FM 624 and 1889/Trinity River Drive.

Several of the safety upgrades will be at the intersections, including changes to left turns signals, upgraded signalized crosswalks with pedestrian signals, and refuge islands. We will take a moment to explain each of these concepts.

These features are common on TxDOT roadways, but understanding how the designs improve safety for all roadway users, helps us understand this proposed project.

We'd like to point out the green shaded area north of the corridor and south of the corridor. This color denotes the new paths for pedestrians and bicyclists. On the north side, a sidewalk would be built and vary in width between six- and eight-feet. On the south side of the corridor, a 10-foot shared-use path would be built.

You can look closer at a draft schematic design online at the hearing webpage on txdot.gov.

Safety highlights: Protected left turns

GOAL: Improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic

Existing Conditions



Permissive Left Turn

Proposed Design



Protected Left Turn

The first safety feature we will highlight is the change to left turns at signalized intersections.

With the goal of improving safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic, TxDOT proposes that the left turn lights on FM 624 be changed from permissive to protective. Currently, the left turn lights on FM 624 are permissive which means left-turning vehicles must look for a gap during a yellow flashing arrow and yield to oncoming traffic.

TxDOT proposes that the left turn lights on FM 624 have a protected green turn arrow or a steady red arrow. During the green arrow, a left turn is protected from oncoming traffic.



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Safety highlights: Signalized crosswalks

GOAL: Improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic

2 What is a CROSSWALK WITH PEDESTRIAN SIGNALS?

A marked walkway across a road with traffic signals specifically designed to safely regulate the flow of vehicles and pedestrians/bicyclists.

When activated by pushing a button, a lighted signal provides time for pedestrians and bicyclists to safely cross a road.

Representative photographs



Please note this image is a graphic representation of the safety highlights and is not a representation of FM 624.

Another feature we see commonly at intersections is a crosswalk.

Signalized crosswalks are a marked walkway across a road with traffic signals specifically designed to assist with the flow of vehicles and pedestrians or bicyclists as they share roadway space. When a pedestrian or bicyclist activates the signal, a lighted signal provides time for pedestrians and cyclist to safely cross a road.

A representative photo is on the left with a graphic representation of these improvements to the right.



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Safety highlights: Refuge islands

GOAL: Improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic

3 What is a REFUGE ISLAND?
A safe space of pavement in the middle of the road where pedestrians and bicyclists can stop before they finish crossing a road.

Representative photograph



Please note this image is a graphic representation of the safety highlights and is not a representation of FM 624.

Another safety feature for vulnerable roadway users is a refuge island. You will see this is a safe space of pavement in the middle of the road where pedestrians and bicyclists can stop before they finish crossing a road.

All of these intersection upgrades, protected left turn signals, signalized crosswalks and refuge islands work toward the goal of improving safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles sharing the road.

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Safety highlights: Raised center medians

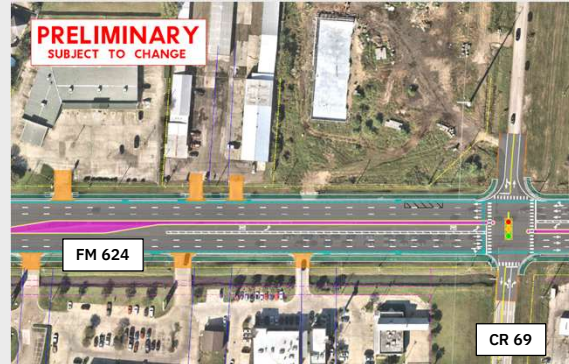
GOAL: Reduce the conflict points where crashes are most likely to happen

Existing Conditions



Aerial image of FM 624 near CR 69
Source: Google

Proposed Design



Snapshot of the proposed design of FM 624 near CR 69

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The next safety feature we will highlight is raised center medians.

A raised center median is an elevated concrete barrier in the middle of the road that separates opposing lanes of traffic.

Raised center medians offer the advantage of reducing the conflict points where crashes are most likely to happen - a left hand turn.

When there is no raised center median, sight distance issues can happen when two cars, going in opposite directions, are in the center turn lane trying to take opposing left hand turns.

With raised center medians, vehicles at a signalized intersection wait for a protected green turn arrow.

A raised center median also helps vehicles at a center median opening to gain better sight distance of oncoming traffic and make a turn when there is a clear path.



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Safety highlights: Raised center medians

GOAL: Reduce the conflict points where crashes are most likely to happen

4 What is a RAISED CENTER MEDIAN?
An elevated concrete barrier in the middle of the road that separates opposing lanes of traffic.

Representative photographs



Please note this image is a graphic representation of the safety highlights and is not a representation of FM 624.

Here are a few images of different raised medians on FM 624 near popular destinations. We also see these curbs as we drive around town. While a raised median may add some travel time to your journey, your safety is prioritized.

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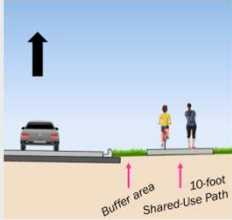

Safety highlights: Shared-Use Path and Buffer Area

GOAL: Improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic

5 What is a SHARED-USE PATH?
A concrete path that is wider than a sidewalk and is designed to accommodate the movement of both pedestrians and bicyclists.

6 What is a BUFFER AREA?
A designated space that serves as a safety barrier between the road and the sidewalk/shared-use path.

Representative photograph




Please note this image is a graphic representation of the safety highlights and is not a representation of FM 624.

Finally, let's note the designated areas for pedestrians and bicycles to be separated from traveling vehicles in the corridor.





- On the south side of the corridor, TxDOT proposes a 10-foot shared-use path. This is a concrete path that is wider than a sidewalk and is designated to accommodate the movement of both pedestrians and bicyclists.
- On the north side of the corridor, TxDOT proposes a sidewalk for pedestrians. The sidewalk would vary from six- to eight-feet wide.


TxDOT will provide a buffer area to serve as a safety barrier between the road and these two pathways.

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National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

These are some of the social, economic, and environmental resources being studied:

-  Water Resources
-  Traffic Noise
-  Cultural Resources
-  Social and Community Resources

 Environmental constraints are key areas that we need to assess and avoid, if possible, when building roadway improvements.

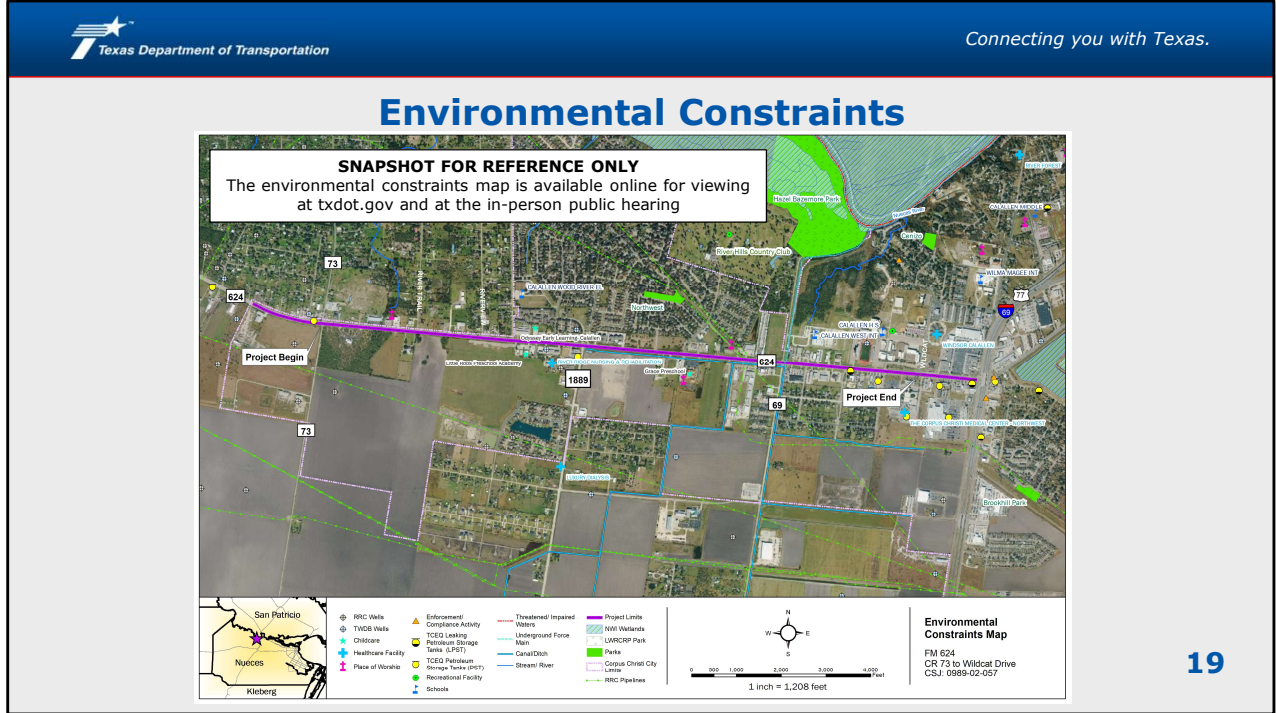
TxDOT would avoid or minimize impacts to the greatest extent feasible.

With any project that receives state or federal funds, TxDOT is required to evaluate the potential environmental impacts and follow the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, otherwise known as NEPA.

In compliance with NEPA and other federal and state environmental regulations, the environmental process has included an evaluation of potential impacts to the natural and human environment. This includes, but is not limited to, evaluations of water resources, traffic noise, cultural resources, and social and community resources. All finalized technical reports are available for review.


Environmental constraints are key areas that we need to assess and avoid, if possible, when building roadway improvements.

TxDOT would avoid or minimize impacts to the greatest extent feasible.






The project team identified environmental constraints early in the project development process to avoid or minimize impacts on environmental resources. Constraints within the corridor include community facilities and parks.

For clarity, an enlarged map is available online by going to www.txdot.gov, keyword search “FM 624 Public Hearing”, or at the in person public hearing.

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Traffic noise analysis

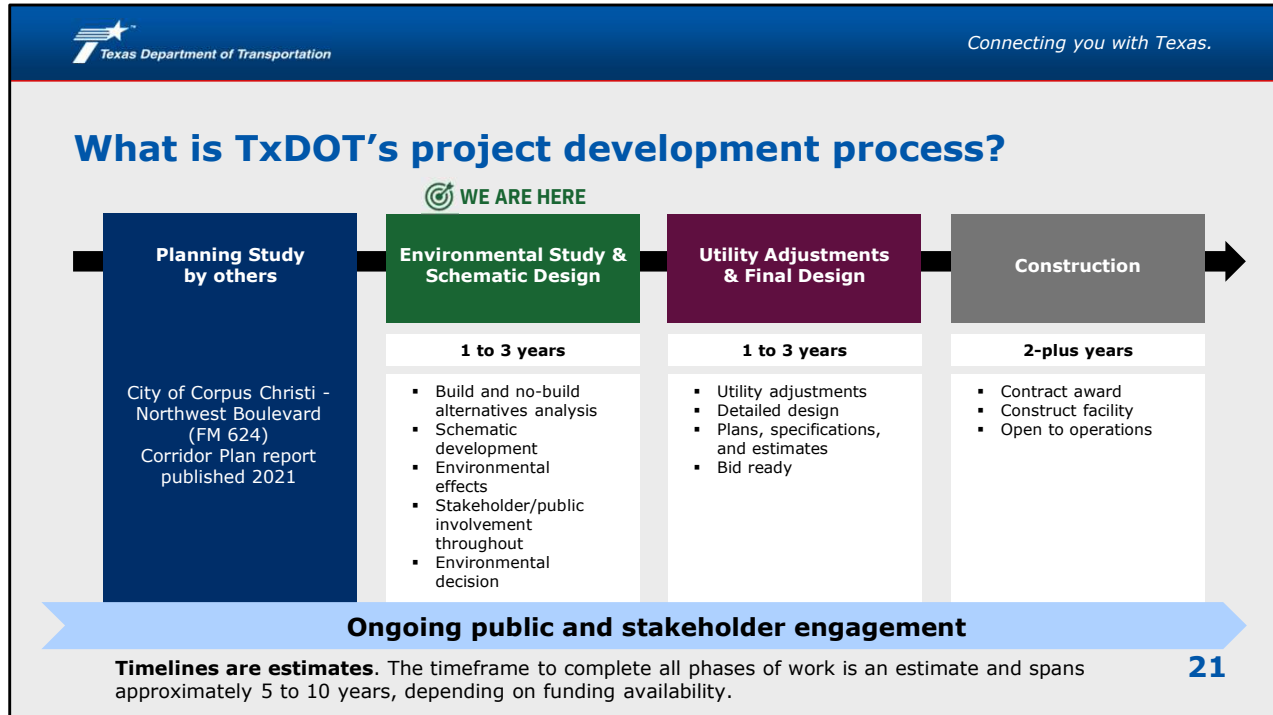
-  Using current and future traffic projections, TxDOT analyzes potential increases in traffic noise if the proposed project were to be built.
-  Based on completed traffic noise analysis, the proposed project would result in noise impacts to the Calallen Apartments.
-  TxDOT will follow current noise policy guidance to determine if a noise barrier or noise wall will be built at this location.

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Using current and future traffic projections, TxDOT analyzes potential increases in traffic noise if the proposed project were to be built.

Based on completed traffic noise analysis, the proposed project would result in noise impacts to the Calallen Apartments.

TxDOT will follow current noise policy guidance to determine if a noise barrier or noise wall will be built at this location. If additional analysis determines a noise barrier or noise wall is constructable at this location, a traffic noise workshop will be held with the property owner of Calallen Apartments.



Let's now touch on the overall process for projects. The project development process consists of multiple phases, each including public involvement.

In 2021, the city of Corpus Christi published the Northwest Boulevard (FM 624) Corridor Plan report, which included multiple proposed solutions to improve FM 624. TxDOT values the work done by the city and the input received by the community during that early planning process.

The project is currently in the environmental and schematic design phase. This phase is set to be complete in the fall of 2024.

If the decision is made to move forward with the project at the end of the environmental study, the next phase involves utility adjustments and final design. All improvements are proposed to be constructed within the existing right of way.

Advancement from phase to phase is contingent upon the outcome of the previous phase and funding availability.

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What is the process and timeline?

 WE ARE HERE



The timeline consists of six stages, each represented by an icon in a circle connected by arrows. The third stage, 'Public Hearing', is highlighted with a green circle and a target icon labeled 'WE ARE HERE'. The fifth stage, 'Final design activities begin', is highlighted with a purple circle.

| Year | Event |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 2023 | Preliminary schematic design begins |
| November 2023 | Open house |
| August 2024 | Public Hearing |
| Fall 2024 | Anticipated environmental and schematic design approval |
| Fall 2024 | Final design activities begin |
| Late 2025 | Anticipated construction begins |

This timeline is approximate and subject to change.
Advancement to utility adjustments, final design, and construction is contingent upon the results of the environmental process and funding availability.

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Looking at the project process as a detailed timeline, we see that TxDOT anticipates construction could begin at the end of 2025.


During the current environmental study phase, public involvement is crucial. Thank you for participating and TxDOT requests that you give your input on this proposed project.

FM 624 | Public Hearing




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How to Submit Your Comments




Comment Form
Submit a comment form online or in-person. You can access the online comment form by scanning the QR code or visit www.TxDOT.gov and keyword search "FM 624 Public Hearing."




E-mail
Submit a comment to:
Kimberly.Amy@txdot.gov,
Subject: "FM 624"




Voicemail
Call **361-248-2106** and leave a voicemail with your comments.



Mail
Submit a comment by mail to:
TxDOT Corpus Christi District Office
c/o Kimberly Amy
1701 S. Padre Island Dr.
Corpus Christi, TX 78416



Online
Scan the QR code to access the virtual comment form



Online Comment Form

SCAN ME

Please submit or postmark comments by:

Monday
Sept. 16, 2024

Your comments are important to TxDOT and you can submit them in the following ways:

- At the in-person public hearing, please provide written comments on the forms provided
- You may visit txdot.gov, keyword search "FM 624 Public Hearing," to submit your comments on the online comment form
- You may mail your comments to the address noted on the screen
- You may email your comments to Kimberly.Amy@txdot.gov, subject: FM 624
- You may call the number noted on the screen and verbally provide your comments
- Or, you may give verbal testimony to the court reporter/transcriber at the in-person public hearing

Questions or comments may be submitted to TxDOT and the project team at any time during project development. However, to be included in the official public hearing record, all comments must be received or postmarked by Monday, Sept. 16, 2024. Documentation of this public hearing will be included in the project record and will be posted on the project's Public Hearing page on txdot.gov, keyword search "FM 624 Public Hearing."

If you have questions at any point during the project development process, please contact Kimberly Amy by phone or email during regular office hours.



August 29, 2024

Thank You

Thank you for participating in this virtual public hearing. This concludes our presentation.