

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS REPORT

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

Project Number: PTF
Travis County

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

FM 1626 is proposed to be widened to five lanes consisting of two 12-foot travel lanes in each direction, five-foot shoulders, and a continuous center-turn lane. The proposed right-of-way (ROW) width would vary from approximately 120 to 180 feet. Six-foot sidewalks would also be constructed throughout the length of the project limits on the north side of the roadway, and from Manchaca Baptist Church to Manchaca Road on the south side of the roadway.

PURPOSE AND NEED:

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve mobility and enhance safety while addressing the increased demand for transportation infrastructure resulting from population growth.

NOTICES AND ARTICLES:

Direct mail: The meeting notification was mailed to 71 individual addresses including adjacent property owners, the Mayor of Austin, the Travis County Judge and precinct commissioner, and those individuals who requested to be included in the project mailing list, on December 11, 2015.

Legal notices: A legal notice was placed in the Austin American Statesman on December 15, December 21, December 28, 2015 and on January 4, 2016. The legal notice also ran in Spanish in *jahora sí!* on December 17, 2015 and January 7, 2016.

Website: The public hearing announcement was also placed on the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and Travis County Transportation and Natural Resources Department websites.

Signage: Five meeting notification signs were posted along the project limits beginning Thursday, January 7, 2016. Two mobile message boards were also placed on either end of the project limits beginning January 6, 2016.

Email Notifications: An email notification of the public hearing was sent to the project email list on December 14, 2015, to 119 email addresses. Two additional email reminders were sent on January 5, 2016 to 120 email addresses, and January 12, 2016 to 121 email addresses.

DATE AND PLACE:

Thursday, January 14, 2016 at Manchaca Elementary School Cafeteria, 12120 Manchaca Road, Austin, TX 78748.

ATTENDANCE:

124 people signed in at the hearing, of those, 18 were identified as project team members, TxDOT, or Travis County representatives.

EXHIBITS AND PROJECT INFORMATION:

Exhibits: Two copies of the proposed schematic were printed in large format and displayed on tables for attendees to view. Large printed versions of the typical sections were also displayed.

Handouts: An information packet was distributed which contained instructions on how to submit comments, a project overview, a location map, Right-of-Way Acquisition and Relocation Assistance page, and a comment sheet. Relocation Assistance Brochures were also made available. A Spanish translator was in attendance and a court reporter was available to record verbal comments.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Five people presented verbal comments at the hearing and an additional 22 written comments were received at the hearing or by email or mail. All comments were received by the close of the comment period on Monday, January 25, 2016. Two email reminders of the comment period were sent to the email list on January 21 and January 25, 2016 to 151 email addresses. Comments are summarized below:

Issue	# of Comments	Summary of Comments
Bicycle/Pedestrian Concerns	13	Extend sidewalks on Rancho Alto; Need designated bicycle lanes not a shared shoulder; Bicyclist safety concerns; Increase shoulder width to 5-6 feet so bikes have minimum 5 feet (must consider gutter and drainage); Change sidewalk to hike/bike path; Bike lanes are not needed
ROW Acquisitions	8	Concern for Moreland home; Concern for slope easement needed; Concern for Redeeming Grace Lutheran Parking
Driveways	4	Comments on a new driveway needed for Mi Ranchito; Questions of driveway planned for 1707 FM 1626; Questions of driveway at 12316 Rancho Alto
Retaining Walls	3	Desire to move retaining walls closer to ROW, raise height and use a different type of wall near Rancho Alto
Tree Concerns	3	Need to preserve trees within ROW; Concern for oak wilt at Manchaca Elementary; Concern for plants on personal property
Support	3	Support for improvements; desire to move quickly
Turn Lanes	2	Extend right turn lane heading west to turn onto Manchaca from 1626; Left turn lane and deceleration lane needed for Marbridge property
Water Line Construction	2	Extension of water line to the east is needed; Desire to widen the driving lanes of Rancho Alto with water line construction
Alignment	2	Preference for North alignment rather than the center alignment
Need for project	2	Project will not alleviate congestion (railroad, bottleneck to the east of Manchaca); Other projects should have priority
Construction Timing	1	Postpone construction of 1626 until SH 45SW is complete
Noise	1	No noise abatement studied for Austin Christian Academy
Documentation	1	Desire to update and document and plans to incorporate property owner concerns due to concerns from previous Rancho Alto project
Comments on Areas Outside of the Project Limits		
Safety on 1626	6	Safety concerns for 1626 east of Manchaca and at "S" curve at Knolls of Slaughter Creek
Extension of project needed	6	Extend project to I-35; Questions on the current expansion of 1626 near I-35
Signals Needed	3	Traffic signal and turn lane needed at 1626/Wayne Riddell intersection; Traffic signal at 1626/Old San Antonio intersection
Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety	2	Safety concerns for bike and ped traffic east of Manchaca
Congestion	1	Concern for Manchaca congestion
Speed Limit	1	Reduce speed limit to the east of the project

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Analysis and Recommendations:

The majority of the comments pertained to areas outside of the project limits and scope, which cannot be addressed as a part of this project. Many comments were received regarding bicycle and pedestrian concerns. Bicycle and pedestrian improvements are required for the project due to funding requirements and planning mechanisms that have been previously approved. These improvements are meeting AASHTO guidelines and will move forward as proposed. Travis County will continue work with property owners once the final Environmental Assessment has been approved through right-of-way negotiations to address individual concerns.

Based on public input, the project schematics will be updated to include an extended right turn lane on westbound FM 1626 at Manchaca Road, and to reflect two points of access for a driveway located at 1707 W FM 1626.

Responses to all other comments did not result in the need to change the design or require further documentation in the Final Environmental Assessment. Therefore, the proposed FM 1626 from Brodie Lane to FM 2304 (Manchaca Road) project is recommended with the changes noted above for further consideration.