

RM 2243 IMPROVEMENTS

Williamson County, Texas

Virtual Public Meeting
May 25 – June 9, 2021



Welcome to the Virtual Public Meeting for the RM 2243 Project. We appreciate you taking the time to view the details of this project and welcome you to contact our team if you have any questions. We are also interested in your comments. Contact information for questions or comments is noted at the end of this presentation. Your comments or questions are welcome any time but to be documented in the virtual public meeting record, we must receive them by Wednesday, June 9, 2021.

Given the unique circumstance of the COVID-19 outbreak, along with our commitment to protecting public health during this national emergency, TxDOT and Williamson County are conducting this virtual public meeting to avoid in-person contact. At this time, the online format will be in lieu of an in-person public meeting. The presentation will cover the same information Williamson County and the TxDOT Austin District would have shared at an in-person public meeting.

During the virtual meeting, you may pause the presentation and navigate forward or backward using your video player. We will walk you through the project overview, background, environmental overview, the project development process, and how to share comments.

RM 2243

From 183A to Southwest Bypass

The project would address safety, mobility and connectivity for motorists in the rapidly growing area by ultimately widening and realigning to straighten RM 2243.



TxDOT and the County are proposing the reconstruction and widening of RM 2243 from 183A to Southwest Bypass to improve roadway design and address safety, mobility, and connectivity for motorists in this rapidly growing area.

The proposed project would be constructed in phases, ultimately resulting in a controlled-access roadway with mainlanes and two one-way frontage roads. In this virtual meeting, we will discuss the design process for the ultimate improvements and explain which improvements are anticipated in the first phase of construction.



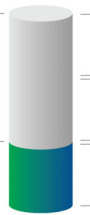
WILLIAMSON COUNTY GROWTH



Williamson County
has seen a
**population
increase of 39.8%**
between 2010 and 2019

2050 POPULATION
ESTIMATE
1,638,796

CURRENT
POPULATION



3X Population Growth

The population of WilCo is
estimated to be 1,638,796
by 2050—nearly three times
what it is now

29.4% Growth in Home Sales
From September 2019 to
September 2020

Sources: US Census Bureau, Texas Demographics Center, Austin Board of Realtors Central Texas Housing Market Report

This project is being developed in the context of rapid growth and development in the area. Williamson County has experienced immense growth in recent years, and current population projections predict that this trend will continue.

Williamson County is the 9th fastest growing large county in the nation, having increased its population by nearly 40% between 2010 and 2019. Looking to the future, it is estimated that by 2050 the County will have nearly three times its current population, which amounts to just over 1.6 million residents. This growing population has brought with it a nearly 30% increase in home sales between September 2019 and September 2020.

It is the County's responsibility to plan for and address transportation needs now and in the future. Current growth requires additional roadway infrastructure to keep pace with the increased number of residents and vehicles and to better protect residents' quality of life.

Project Need

The project is needed because (a) the existing capacity of the roadway is inadequate to meet current and future traffic volumes resulting in reduced mobility between the 183A Toll Road and Southwest Bypass within central Williamson County; (b) past, present and future population growth; and (c) overall safety improvements to accommodate growth in the corridor.

Project Purpose



Improve mobility and capacity by adding additional lanes



Improve safety by realigning to straighten curves along RM 2243

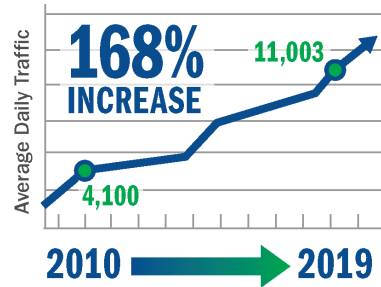


Provide paths for safe pedestrian and bicycle travel

The project is needed for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the existing capacity on the roadway is inadequate to meet current and future traffic volumes, resulting in reduced mobility between 183A and Southwest Bypass within central Williamson County. Second, this project also addresses overall safety improvements to accommodate current and future population growth in the corridor.

The existing RM 2243 roadway currently has several features that do not meet current design standards, such as:

- Sharp curves
- Lack of full width shoulders
- Lack of turn lanes
- Trees and other objects located alongside the roadway



By **2040**, average daily traffic is projected to reach **25,000 vehicles**

This project aims to address several problems with the existing roadway. RM 2243 has features that do not meet current design standards and that create safety and mobility issues for drivers, including:

- Sharp curves that require vehicles to suddenly slow down to safely navigate
- Lack of full width shoulders that provide shelter for vehicles to recover from swerving, conflicts with other vehicles, and other errant driving
- Lack of turn lanes and shoulders that allow vehicles to slow down and move out of the main travel lane prior to turning
- And large trees and other objects along the roadway that create safety issues

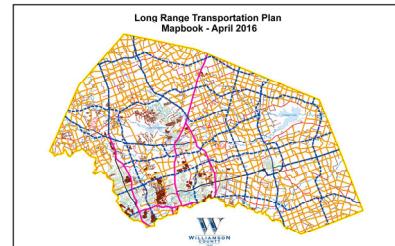
The need to address these issues becomes more pressing as traffic volumes increase and more drivers utilize RM 2243. Between 2010 and 2019, RM 2243 saw a 168% increase in daily traffic volumes – that means the number of vehicles more than doubled in just 9 years. By the year 2040, this volume is expected to double again, with a projected 25,000 vehicles using the roadway daily.

2016

- Need for improvements identified in Williamson County Long-Range Transportation Plan

2018

- TxDOT Feasibility Study identified safety and mobility improvements
 - Determined type of roadway needed
 - Created preliminary schematic to connect 183A to I-35
 - Presented at November 2018 public meeting with approximately 220 attendees and 110 comments submitted



Feasibility Study Summary Report

RM 2243
From 183A to I-35
Williamson County, Texas
CSJ: 2103-01-032
June 2019

Texas Department of Transportation, Austin District

This presentation, report, consultation, and other information is provided for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be used for any other purpose. The user assumes all responsibility for the use of this information.

In 2016, Williamson County identified the need for improvements to RM 2243 in its Long-Range Transportation Plan. In 2018, the TxDOT Austin District launched a feasibility study on RM 2243 to identify needed safety and mobility improvements to address traffic growth and connectivity between 183A and I-35. The study was conducted to determine the type of roadway and right-of-way requirements needed to address the growing traffic demands along RM 2243.

TxDOT held a public meeting in November 2018 to share a preliminary schematic connecting 183A to I-35 and gather public input to help identify the best options that could move into further development.

2019

- CAMPO awarded funds to complete preliminary design and environmental clearance between 183A and Southwest Bypass
- Voters approved the 2019 Road Bond, which secured funding for the design, construction, and right of way for the first phase of the project

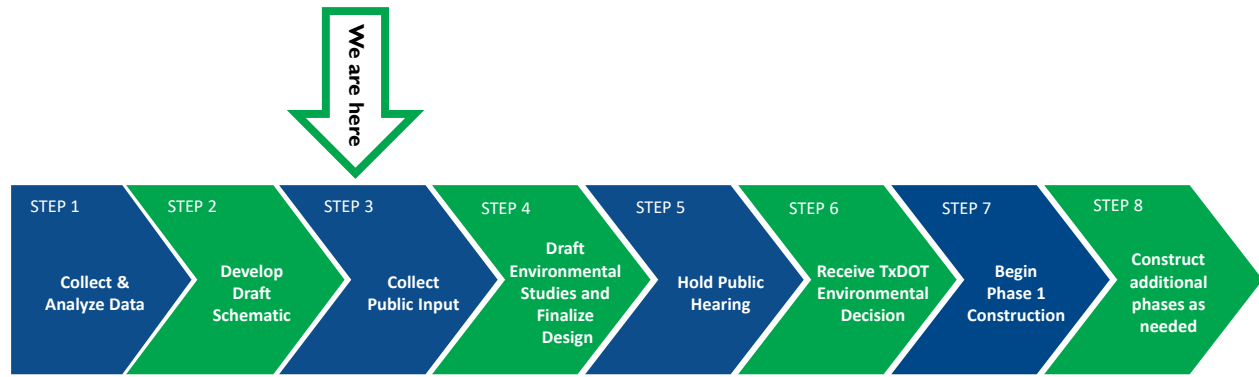
2020

- Williamson County and TxDOT begin RM 2243 detailed design and environmental review process



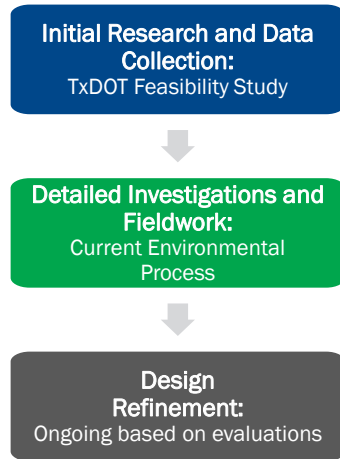
In 2019, the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (or CAMPO) awarded funds to complete preliminary design and secure environmental clearance for the RM 2243 project between 183A and Southwest Bypass. The same year, voters approved the 2019 Road Bond which secured funding for the design, construction, and right-of-way acquisition for the first phase of the project.

In 2020, TxDOT and the County began working together to build on the feasibility study findings to create a detailed design and conduct environmental review for the recommended improvements. This process will lay out the design for future phases and construction plans for one frontage road to be constructed in the first phase.



There are several steps in developing this project before construction. The project engineers have collected and analyzed technical data to develop the preliminary detailed schematic, which is available for viewing on the project webpage. We are collecting feedback from the community and will use that feedback in conjunction with additional technical evaluations to refine the plans in future phases. Once we complete draft environmental studies and finalize the project design, TxDOT would review the environmental documents and a public hearing would be held to gather additional input. TxDOT would subsequently provide an Environmental Decision. Then the first phase would be constructed. As growth occurs and the need arises, funding would be identified for subsequent phases of the project to move forward.

Evaluation Phases:



Environmental Factors:



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.

Throughout the development of this project, TxDOT and the County are evaluating several environmental factors to identify and design improvements. This process began in the feasibility study and is carried forward in this more detailed design phase, which will evaluate potential impacts to the environment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA. The same factors will continue to be evaluated as the design is refined, ultimately resulting in an environmental decision for the project.

Factors considered in the feasibility study that are now being evaluated through fieldwork and engineering analysis include:

- Engineering and construction feasibility
- Environmental impacts
- Community impact and public comments
- Right-of-way analysis
- Cultural resources, and
- Land use



PROPOSED NEAR TERM IMPROVEMENTS



Construction funding has only been identified for the first phase of improvements through the **voter-approved 2019 Road Bond**.

In the near term, the County is proposing to:

Construct a three-lane frontage road to serve two-way traffic

Upgrade drainage

At this time, construction funding has only been identified for the first phase of this project through the voter-approved 2019 Road Bond. In the near term, the County is proposing to:

- Construct a single three-lane frontage road, which would serve two-way traffic until the other frontage road is built in a future phase, and
- Upgrade drainage

Limits of the first phase of construction will be dependent on funding.



PROPOSED LONG TERM IMPROVEMENTS



Once growth occurs and the need arises, future phases will be constructed as funding is identified. Future phases could:

Construct a second three-lane frontage road and convert both frontage roads to one-way travel

Widen to create two controlled access lanes in each direction separated with a concrete barrier

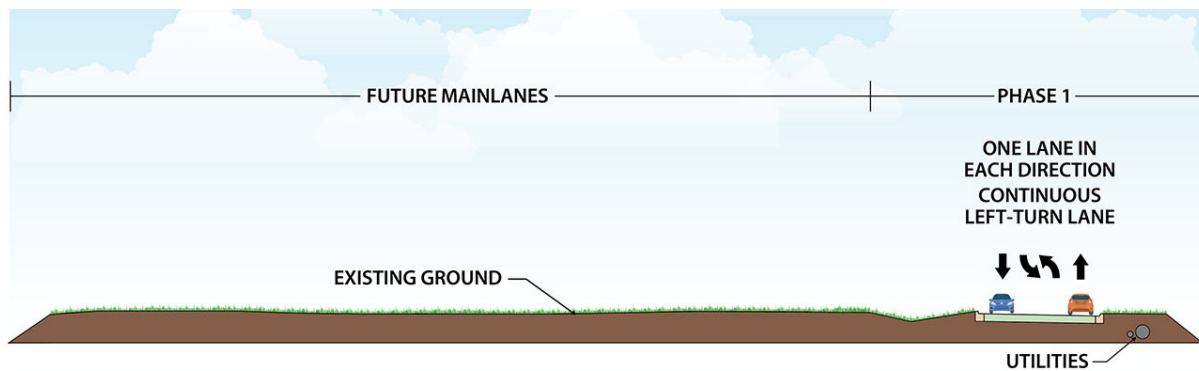
Construct a 10-foot shared-use path for pedestrians and bicycles on the either side of the roadway

While design and planning for all future phases will be completed as part of this effort, Williamson County and TxDOT will evaluate the priority for moving this project forward and explore options for securing funding as the need arises. Possible sources of funding include state or federal dollars as well as local funds from Williamson County.

Once growth occurs and the need arises, future phases will be constructed as funding is identified. Future phases could:

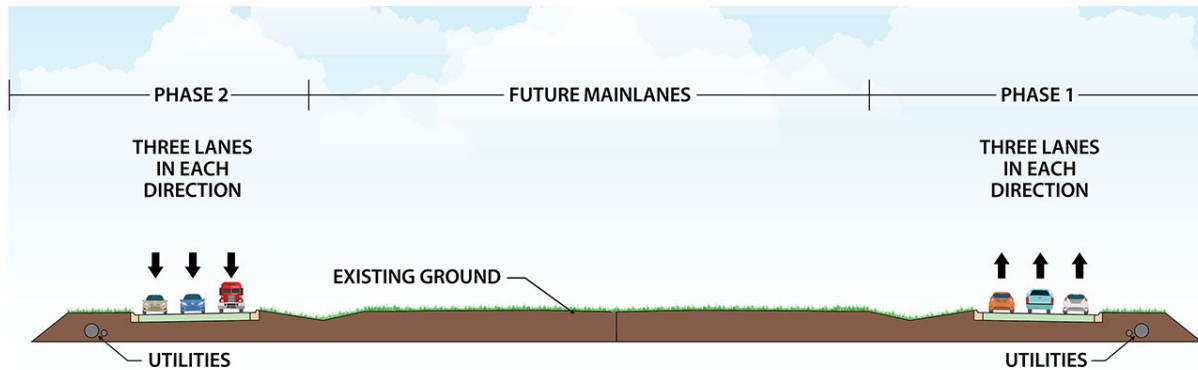
- Construct a second three lane frontage road and convert both frontage roads to one-way travel,
- Widen to create two controlled access lanes in each direction with a divided barrier, and
- Construct a 10-foot shared-use path (SUP) for pedestrians and bicycles on either side of the roadway.

Potential Phasing Concepts for RM 2243 from 183A to Southwest Bypass



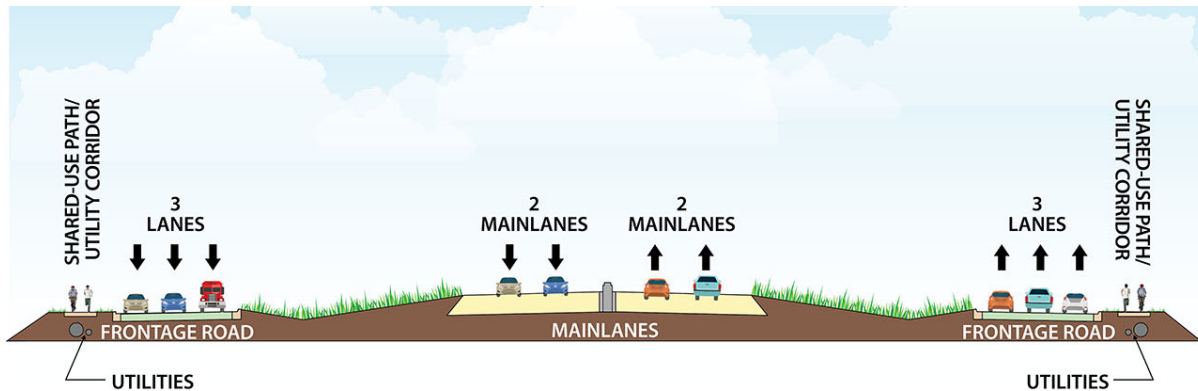
The ultimate project would be constructed in phases. The first phase – the only phase with construction funding identified - could look similar to what is shown in this graphic. This includes one travel lane in each direction with a center-turn lane.

Potential Phasing Concepts for RM 2243 from 183A to Southwest Bypass



Because the County is designing and preparing now for possible future improvements, as more growth occurs and the need arises, additional capacity can be added in phases as shown here.

Potential Phasing Concepts for RM 2243 from 183A to Southwest Bypass



The full project schematic is available for viewing or download on the meeting webpage. The schematic provides a more in depth look at details such as shared use path locations, driveway changes, and where right of way may need to be purchased.



COMMENTS



How to Provide Comments

Your comments and questions are welcome. To submit an official comment for the meeting report, please use one the following methods:



Mail:

Williamson County Public Information Office
710 S. Main Street, Suite 101,
Georgetown, TX 78626



Email:

roads@wilco.org



Leave a voicemail:

512-400-4162 ext. 2

All comments must be received or postmarked by June 9, 2021 to be included in official meeting documentation.



The information shared in this virtual meeting will continue to be available on our meeting webpage. We welcome any feedback you might have on the information presented and the proposed project plans. Please send your comments by mail, email, or voicemail.

Your input will be documented and used to further refine the plans and in developing more in-depth design when the project moves forward in future phases. Responses to comments received by Wednesday, June 9, 2021 will be published with the virtual meeting report on the meeting webpage in the coming months.

Thank you!

Please reach out to the project team with any questions.

 512-400-4162 ext. 1

 roads@wilco.org



The public may call 512-400-4162 ext. 1 during regular office hours to speak with a project team member or email roads@wilco.org for more information at any time in the project development process.

Thank you for your interest and we look forward to hearing from you.