CORRIDOR E3 PLANNING & ROW PRESERVATION STUDY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated September 2021

1. What is the Corridor E3 Planning & ROW Preservation Study?

Williamson County is conducting the Corridor E3 Planning & ROW Preservation Study to plan for future growth and set the right-of-way (ROW) footprint. The road will be built in phases as growth occurs to provide an alternative transportation corridor to IH 35, from Chandler Rd to future SH 29.

2. Why is the County conducting this study now?

County governments are responsible for planning effective transportation systems. Williamson County has experienced immense growth the last two decades and current population projections predict that this growth will continue. In Georgetown specifically, the population has grown from 47,400 in 2010 to 90,262 in 2021; over a 90% increase!

It is the County's responsibility to plan for current and future transportation needs in order to keep pace with the anticipated increase in residents and vehicles. This high level of growth is inevitable and requires extensive planning that will ultimately protect the safety, mobility and quality of life of the residents of Williamson County.

Preserving the corridor for a future road before development occurs allows the County to be fiscally responsible by working with willing sellers before property values make it cost prohibitive for improvements. Preserving ROW now also minimizes impacts to businesses and homes because the corridor is preserved before more structures are built.

3. What is the timeline for the Corridor E3 Planning & ROW Preservation Study?

The County has hired an engineering firm, BGE, Inc., to identify environmental constraints, gather public input, and identify alignment options. The study team is in the process of evaluating several alignments and will begin discussions with potentially impacted property owners this summer. Although there is no construction funding available at this time, ROW acquisition from willing sellers could begin once the ROW footprint is set. Early preservation of ROW enables the County to phase in the construction of the road and build as needed.

4. What is the study process?

The process for the study involves evaluating many factors including, but not limited to:

- Social & community impacts
- Public input
- Impacts to homes & businesses
- Water resources
- Threatened & endangered species
- Vegetation & wildlife
- Land use & parkland
- Archaeological & historic resources
- Hazardous materials
- ROW analysis & land cost
- Engineering analysis

5. Is the County going to hold a large public meeting?

The County has determined over the past year that meetings with property owners are most effective when held individually or in small groups. This process allows the County to more closely work with directly impacted property owners to discuss their concerns and ensure they are being heard.

6. How is the study being funded?

The Corridor E3 Planning & ROW Preservation Study is being funded through the voter-approved 2019 Road Bond. ROW acquisition and construction funding were not included in the bond. Future funding for construction of transportation projects can come from many sources; the most common are bonds, tolling and partnerships between federal, state, county, and city governments. At this time, the corridor is not being planned as a toll road.

7. What is the Williamson County Long-Range Transportation Plan?

The Williamson County Commissioners Court adopted the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) in October 2009. The plan is regularly updated based on current needs, population projections, and anticipated future mobility and safety needs in Williamson County. The planning process to develop the LRTP involves working with the public, cities, neighboring counties, and transportation and planning agencies to gather input and coordinate connectivity and mobility.

The lines on the LRTP work as a placeholder for a network of roadways that will foster safety and mobility across the county and include a map of potential controlled access facilities and potential arterial roadways. These potential roadways are conceptual only to show general locations and connections needed. To learn more about the LRTP, click here.

8. Can the County use state-owned ROW for a new road?

If an existing state-owned road can be used as part of a new road, then the County would try to come to an agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation to take over its ownership. This would, however, also require the County to take over maintenance of the road.

9. What is a controlled-access roadway?

A controlled-access roadway is a road with main lanes that have entrance and exit ramps and frontage roads. The main lanes provide mobility for through traffic and the frontage roads provide local access to abutting properties.

10. Will Corridor E3 be a controlled-access roadway?

Corridor E3 is being planned as a controlled-access roadway; however, the first phase of the road will most likely be a two to three lane road: one lane in each direction, potentially with a center turn lane. As growth occurs and funding becomes available, the second frontage would be built, then finally the main lanes. Building the ultimate corridor will most likely take several decades.

11. Will there be noise barriers?

Noise impacts would be analyzed and addressed during the design phase of the main lanes, which would determine the need for noise barriers. The main lanes would be designed and built once they were needed due to the population growth, which could take several decades.

12. How much ROW will be needed and how will I be compensated for it?

The study team is in the process of evaluating potential alignments and then will gather input from property owners. In 2021, the ROW footprint is expected to be set. If someone is a willing seller, then the County may move forward with acquisition of their property. This is a formal process that involves independent appraisals and a negotiation process between the property owner and the County. The County will also talk to property owners as land is developed. If and when construction funding is secured, the County will approach property owners to acquire the land.

13. What happens if the County acquires enough ROW to jeopardize the agriculture valuation on my property?

To qualify for an agriculture valuation, a property must meet several requirements including a minimum acreage. If a property owner has an agriculture valuation on their property, commonly known as an exemption, that will no longer be applicable due to the amount of ROW needed for the road, the County would then work with the owner and the Williamson Central Appraisal District to maintain the valuation when possible.

14. What is the County doing to improve our current roads?

Maintaining our current road and transportation infrastructure is a great priority for the County. Williamson County is responsible for maintaining approximately 1,400 miles of county roads spread over an area of 1,124 square miles. By evaluating each road, the County has created a schedule for resurfacing neighborhood roads and county roads, as well as conducting major maintenance on county roads when necessary. Your Road & Bridge Fund property taxes pay for the maintenance of existing roads. If you have a question or request about maintenance on a county road, please email roadadmin@wilco.org or call 512-943-3330.

15. How can I get involved in the Corridor E3 Planning & ROW Preservation Study?

If you have input, questions, or wish to be added to the email updates list, you may contact the County:

- Phone: 512-943-1195 (leave a message for a call back within 48 hours)
- Email: roads@wilco.org (include "Corridor E3" in the subject line) Please visit wilco.org/CorridorE3 for more information.

* *Sources:, Texas Demographics Center webpage, World Population Review webpage.*