



SH 45 GAP STUDY

Documentation of Public Meeting

Project Location:

Hays County, Texas

SH 45 between I-35 and RM 1626

Meeting Location

Sunfield Station Event Center, 2610 Main St., Buda TX 78610

Meeting Date and Time

Thursday, December 7, 2023, 4:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Elected Officials in Attendance

Commissioner Walt Smith, Hays County Precinct 4

Total Number of Attendees (approx.): 36

Total Number of Commenters: 88

- Comment Cards at Public Meeting: 10
- Tabletop Mapped Comments at Public Meeting: 11
- Emailed: 13
- Online Comment Form: 19
- Online Map: 35

Contents

- Summary
- Comment Response Matrix
- Appendix

Appendix

Meeting Notices

- Postcard
- Email Notices
- Signage
- Advertisement
- News Release
- Social Media
- Project Website

Sign-in Sheets

Website Analytics

Meeting Materials

- Exhibit Boards
- Maps
- Comment Card
- Photos

Comments Received

Meeting Summary

Community Open House Meeting – December 7, 2023

The purpose of this second open house was to share background information about the study, the ideas and suggestions received through the first open house, and the route concepts developed from those suggestions. Most importantly, this second open house was meant to receive feedback and input. The in-person open house was held on December 7, 2023, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. The information shared at the meeting was available online at sh45gap.com. The comment period was open from December 7 to December 22, 2023. Comments could be submitted through the website, during the in person open house, or by email, mail, text, or phone.

Meeting Notices

Meeting notices were shared in several different formats to generate awareness of the study, open house meeting, and the opportunity to comment.

Mail – A postcard was sent to 66 property owners in and around the study area on November 20, 2023.

Signage – 24"x36" signs were placed on December 4, 2023, at 5 different neighborhood entrances.

Email notices were sent to 203 addresses on November 28, 2023, a reminder was sent to 203 addresses on December 6, 2023, and a final comment period reminder to 203 addresses on December 11, 2023.

Social Media – Notifications were distributed through the Hays County Twitter and Facebook accounts.

Advertisements – were placed in the following publications:

- Community Impact advertisement ran from December 1 to December 7 in the Dripping Springs, San Marcos, Buda and Kyle distribution.
- Hays Free Press advertisements ran on November 22, 2023, and December 6, 2023.

Media Release - Hays County distributed a media release on November 29, 2023, with information on the project and the open comment period. Media coverage included:

- Hays Free Press – December 6, 2023
- KXAN – December 7, 2023
- Community Impact, Austin – December 14, 2023
- KEYE – December 20, 2023
- KXAN – December 20, 2023

What We Heard – Public Comments

Public comments were shared through several different means including 10 written comment cards, 13 by email, 19 online forms, 35 online mapped comments, and 11 in person mapped comments. All public comments are included in the comment response matrix.



797

Virtual Open House
Unique Views



36

Open House
Attendees



88

Total Comments
Collected

Comment Response Matrix

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
1	12/20/2023	Caitlin Admire	Online Comment	The routes and concepts are so high level at this point, I don't have a major preference. My priorities include noise mitigation and environmental impacts (our neighborhood is very close to the proposed routes).	The feasibility study will include a high-level assessment of potential environmental impacts. Should the project advance beyond the feasibility study, more detailed environmental studies and investigations would occur in association with future phases of project development. These detailed studies would include a traffic noise analysis and community impact assessment in accordance with applicable rules and regulations.
				If you can address the train horn in the area as part of this project and get us some quiet zones (Horsethief, 1626) that would be a nice positive thing to do for the neighborhoods nearby that will be impacted by the project.	Concerns regarding train noise are noted; however, establishment of a quiet zone is beyond the scope of the SH 45 feasibility study.
2	12/11/2023	Wayne Allen	Emailed Comment	I am against the 45 Gap project ENTIRELY. We are past the point of solving "problems" with more roads, as we MUST begin *reducing* road use, not increasing it.	Comment noted.
				And believe me, if you open Mopac to I35 traffic, it will clog Mopac to a crawl, using *more* fuel, creating *more* development sprawl with land and resource degradation. You'll make some billionaires and developers richer, but no one else will really benefit in the long run. It's time to stop the madness.	The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination studies, and an operational analysis. These studies will assess potential project-related impacts on roadways in and around the study area including MoPac.
3	12/19/2023	Matt Baker	Online Comment	Without fixing the inefficient 71/290 & MoPac northbound interchange, the increase in traffic from this	The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination

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				project will make an already difficult northbound commute nearly impassable.	studies, and an operational analysis. These studies will assess potential project-related impacts on roadways in and around the study area.
4	12/12/2023	Rob Baxter	Emailed Comment	I have absolutely nothing good to say about this connector project and stand firmly against it.	Comment noted.
				Mopac South is severely congested as it is during rush hours and this will only exacerbate the problem turning it into a veritable parking lot. Not only that, it will guarantee substantially increased truck traffic when in point of fact, MOPAC should ideally be a truck free zone. MOPAC was designed to be a car commuter highway, but it is too narrow now for the cars it now has, let alone additional trucks and more cars. Prior to this connector going in, which you obviously and cynically intend to do no matter what we say, there needs to be at least double the lanes on Mopac South that there are now. And on top of that, when it happens, the SW 45 connector should be made a truck free tollway. Put the cart behind the horse for once here.	The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination studies, and an operational analysis that will also incorporate/consider truck traffic. These studies will assess potential project-related impacts on roadways in and around the study area, including MoPac.
5	12/19/2023	Nathaniel Carty	Online Comment	As someone that drives from my circle c home to all over East Austin, South Austin and down all the way to San Marcos regularly, I absolutely support this extension. This will help relive the existing connection a lot.	Comment noted.

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
6	12/7/2023	Leslie Currens	Emailed Comment	<p>I am writing to express my opposition to any extension of SH 45 connecting it to I-35. The potential extension of SH 45 from its current southern terminus at 1626 to a connection point with IH 35 somewhere near Buda would complete a western loop around Austin, and open up SH 45 and Mopac — which run right through the heart of the aquifer recharge zone — to interstate traffic. I live directly West of MoPac in north central Austin, and I am completely opposed to this proposal.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
				<p>If completed, the proposed 45 SW "gap" extension would immediately convert Mopac from a local commuter highway into a western I-35 alternative, diverting interregional and interstate traffic over the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone. Our most vulnerable aquifer and Barton Springs would be polluted: Mopac would be overwhelmed with new "I-35 West" traffic. This is terrible environmental and transportation planning.</p>	<p>Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the study will include identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to protect and preserve water quality.</p>
				<p>This proposal would directly impact my neighborhood and home for the worst. We do not need to draw interstate traffic which should be on the Interstate Highway I-35 into our city and neighborhoods, and particularly not across the Barton Springs recharge area.</p>	<p>The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination studies, and an operational analysis. These studies will assess potential project-related impacts on MoPac and other roadways in and around the study area.</p>

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				These studies are moving forward against the objection of both the Travis County Commissioners Court and the Austin City Council, yet whichever route is chosen would traverse Austin and Travis County jurisdictions. The studies should be immediately halted absent an agreement with Austin and Travis County that the studies consider alternatives to the proposed 45SW extension on equal footing with the proposal to find a "least damaging" route for the extension. Hays County Commissioners and Buda should instead work together with the City of Austin and Travis County to prioritize transportation investments that support development and intercity travel in the areas east and downstream of the Edwards Aquifer, in the I-35/SH 130 corridor. Please stop this reckless planning and look at regional solutions that does not dump traffic across inner neighborhoods and sensitive environmental areas of Austin.	One of the study goals is to facilitate coordination between property owners, local partners, regional stakeholders, and the surrounding community in planning for transportation needs. Accordingly, the study includes coordination with Travis County and the City of Austin.
7	12/7/2023	Walter Dale Davis	Comment Card	THE SOUTHERN ROUTE W/ 400' ROW IS THE CORRECT AND LOGICAL CHOICE. BETTER TO GET THE ROW NOW THAN PAY 10 TIMES AS MUCH TO WIDEN THE ROW FROM 250' TO 400' IN THE FUTURE. GET THIS PROJECT BUILT!	Comment noted.
8	12/7/2023	Donna Egen	Emailed Comment	I am vehemently opposed to the proposed plan to connect I-35 South with Mopac for the following reasons: 1) The destructive impact to Barton Springs caused by the pollution that will occur throughout the construction phases and beyond. If we've learned anything from all the conversations of climate change, we know we MUST safeguard our natural environment by saying NO to projects like these. This project will devastate our pristine and sensitive Barton Springs!	Comment noted. Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to protect and preserve water quality.

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				2) Our neighborhoods along Mopac cannot support -- and will not survive -- the dramatic increase in traffic that "bypassing" I-35 will cause. Our tax dollars went to the construction of 130 for bypass traffic! As someone who has lived less than 100 yards from Mopac for 30 years, I can tell you that the increase in traffic especially since the introduction of the toll roads has absolutely negatively impacted quality of life in our neighborhood, from relentlessly loud noise levels (sound walls were not built in our stretch!!) to road debris and driving hazards, to congestion. Mopac cannot sustain more traffic and our neighborhoods can't either!	The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination studies, and an operational analysis. These studies will assess potential project-related impacts on MoPac and other roadways in and around the study area.
9	12/7/2023	John Elwell	Comment Card	LAST OPEN HOUSE Requested route that would only include HAYS COUNTY. ALL PUBLIC INFO FROM TRAVIS CO. has been to block the project. SH 45 gap extension should not be delayed because of TRAVIS CO.	As part of the planning process, the study team investigated options that would allow the SH 45 Gap to remain entirely within Hays County; however, it was determined that the most-viable connection point to I-35 is at the existing interchange with SH 45 SE (in Travis County).
				HAYS CO. should move forward ASAP to build the extension.	Comment noted.
10	12/7/2023	Ed Erdmann	Comment Card	I have no preferences regarding the specifics of construction. It is time to get this project (the loop) completed. Dallas and Houston have completed one loop and started another while Austin has been unable to complete one loop. Let's get this done.	Comment noted
11	12/11/2023	Leticia Estavillo	Emailed Comment	I am in favor of building this connective section. It will help improve safety, improve traffic congestion, and reduce stress overall.	Comment noted.
12	12/19/2023	Aaron Flagg	Online Comment	To Whom It May Concern: I fully support the connection of the SH45 gap. I frequently travel to the 78719 zip code and this would save time, fuel and headaches navigating the side roads through Manchaca.	Comment noted.

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				<p>Additionally, the amount of traffic flow currently using the side roads to navigate back to I-35 is unsustainable especially with new housing developments popping up throughout that specific area. I have witnessed many close calls with people using neighborhood roads as an overflow route. The traffic back ups at stop signs and stop lights is a danger. The city of Austin needs to support the proper infrastructure growth to sustain the needs of commuters. Without the right infrastructure, commuters and everyday citizens will continue to be put in harms way. Austin and the surrounding cities attracted all of the additional people now living in the area, so the cities should work together to do what's best for people now and the future.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
13	12/22/2023	Beki Halpin	Emailed Comment	<p>I wish to submit the following comments to be included in the SH 45 Gap Study.</p> <p>Completing SH-45 would divert major, interstate, I-35 traffic to Mopac, a local commuter highway (which is already overburdened with no room for expansion) and encourage massive development over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, Texas's most vulnerable aquifer. The aquifer and Barton Springs will be polluted. This is truly poor transportation and environmental planning when there is a better alternative.</p>	<p>The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination studies, and an operational analysis. These traffic studies will assess potential project-related impacts on MoPac and other roadways in and around the study area. Should the project advance beyond the feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner, to that end, the feasibility study will include identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to protect and preserve water quality.</p>

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				<p>The Travis County Commissioner’s Court and the Austin City Council object to the studies moving forward which don’t consider least damaging routes, yet whatever route is chosen will go through Travis County and Austin’s jurisdictions. SH 130 already exists as a bypass around the city of Austin for IH-35 traffic. This route should be encouraged, because it’ll be cheaper and not environmentally sensitive.</p> <p>Hays County Commissioners and Buda should instead work with the City of Austin and Travis County to find a route that supports development and intercity travel in the areas east and downstream of the Edwards Aquifer, in the I-35/SH 130 corridor.</p>	One of the study goals is to facilitate coordination between property owners, local partners, regional stakeholders, and the surrounding community in planning for transportation needs. Accordingly, the study includes coordination with Travis County and the City of Austin.
14	12/20/2023	Rebecca Kennedy	Online Comment	This roadway would be a major improvement for Hays to Travis commuting. It is also needed as the entire corridor between Georgetown to San Marcos expands. I am supportive of completing this section of the roadway.	Comment noted.
15	12/7/2023	Matt Holm	Comment Card	Extending Lowden at the south end to connect Horsethief to Lowden and 1626 would be easier than adding an exit. Needs a bridge over Bear Creek.	Comment noted.
16	12/22/2023	Annie Johnson	Online Comment	This should not happen with Travis County and Austin against it.	One of the study goals is to facilitate coordination between property owners, local partners, regional stakeholders, and the surrounding community in planning for transportation needs. Accordingly, the study includes coordination with Travis County and the City of Austin.
				The current road structure with 45 and mopac cannot handle an increase of traffic. Until that is resolved putting more traffic on it is a horrible idea.	The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination studies, and an operational analysis. These traffic studies will assess potential project-

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					related impacts on existing SH 45 Southwest, MoPac, and other roadways in and around the study area.
17	12/7/2023	Bobby Levinski	Comment Card	This land is more valuable as an environmentally protected corridor. Work with Travis County and Austin on preservation options.	Comment noted.
				Where is the information on field studies? Where is the information on species & habitats? This is not an adequate environmental study.	This feasibility study includes a high-level assessment of potential environmental impacts. Should the project move beyond the feasibility study, future phases of project development would include detailed environmental studies and field work, coordination with natural resource agencies (when applicable), and preparation of required environmental documentation.
				Please consider alternative projects such as improvements to FM 1626 & I-35 with a new overpass over the highway.	The current feasibility study is focused on the gap between I-35 and RM 1626. The Gap Project would serve to enhance the regional transportation network (inclusive of existing roadways as well as projects included in the CAMPO 2045 Plan - the current transportation plan for the region). Improvements to RM 1626 and I-35 are included in the 2045 Plan. If the Gap Project is ultimately constructed, it would be in addition to the already planned improvements to RM 1626 and I-35.
18	12/15/2023	Bobby Levinski	Emailed Comment	These comments are submitted on behalf of the Save Our Springs Alliance and on behalf of myself as a resident of Hays County. The comment period is open until December 22, 2023.	Comment noted.

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				The focus of the environmental study for the extension of SH 45 is too narrow. Hays County residents need immediate traffic relief through improvements to local roadways and intersections, without forcing Hays County residents to pay daily toll fees and with less impact on Hays County tax dollars.	Comment noted.
				Despite the misleading label of the study, there is no "GAP." The completion of a loop is not on the CAMPO regional plan, and the current highway ends intentionally to avoid environmentally sensitive lands that should be protected. SH 45 will increase harmful highway stormwater runoff in the area, contaminating ground water supplies that Hays County residents rely upon. It will also destroy areas of dense tree canopy and impact high-quality creeks that are extremely vulnerable to erosion, localized flooding, and pollutants that increase in volume even with best available treatment methods.	The Gap Project is included in the Hays County and City of Buda transportation plans. In addition, the CAMPO 2045 Plan (the current regional transportation plan) identifies the project for "study"; thus, the feasibility study is consistent with all three plans. Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to protect and preserve water quality.
				Building this new segment of SH 45 would not bring any long term traffic relief to the residents of northern Hays County. New traffic from I-35 and S Mopac will spill over onto already congested roadways and increase access and development in an area with limited growth controls.	The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination studies, and an operational analysis. These studies will assess potential project-related impacts on roadways in and around the study area.

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				<p>With significant opposition from local residents and nearby jurisdictions, this project will be the source of prolonged debate, as experienced with similar projects. Right now, the study offers no true alternatives—repeating the same basic road configuration with multiple lines on a map. Other alternatives should be considered that can offer Hays County commuters more immediate relief.</p>	<p>Early in the study process (Open House #1), the public was asked to provide route suggestions. Those suggestions were displayed at Open House #2 and served as the basis for the development of route options. Comments/suggestions received from the public will continue to be considered as the Study progresses.</p>
				<p>Please reset the focus on these efforts towards localized traffic solutions, such as improvements to the intersection of FM 1626 and I-35, with expansion of FM 1626 east/northeast of SH 45 to I-35 and either a new overpass bridge over I-35 or a relocation of Onion Creek Parkway overpass. These improvements would likely gain more community support, while providing the necessary east-to-west access that Hays County commuters need. Despite this alternative being raised in Open House #1 by commenters, it is not reflected on any of the materials provided at Open House #2. The FM 1626 overpass could be completed without tolls, with fewer bridges and environmental impacts, and potentially quicker, with collaborative support from other jurisdictions.</p>	<p>The current feasibility study is focused on the gap between I-35 and RM 1626. The Gap Project would serve to enhance the regional transportation network (inclusive of existing roadways as well as projects included in the CAMPO 2045 Plan - the current transportation plan for the region). If the Gap Project is ultimately constructed, it would be in addition to the already planned improvements to RM 1626, I-35, and other roadways.</p>
				<p>We believe there are more environmentally friendly and fiscally responsible solutions than this expensive and controversial path, and we hope to work with Hays County in pursuing such options.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
19	12/7/2023	Michael Littrell	Comment Card	First off, thank you for hosting this meeting. I, and most of my neighbors are in very close proximity to the blue route proposed. I talk to my neighbors regularly and feel I have a good pulse of their views on this. We fully support the blue route as it is now. We have been very involved in the progress of the Persimmon development and strongly feel this extension will minimize the impact of the development adjacent to our neighborhood. I strongly support the 400' wide option. The width allows for future expansion while providing more options and more accessibility with the service roads. This road system can not be built soon enough! I will gladly assist with any neighborhood meetings, etc. to get this project moving along. Thank you again.	Comment noted.
20	12/17/2023	John Lockyer	Online Comment	Looks great! Approved and build it!	Comment noted.
21	12/21/2023	Richard Mendoza (CoA)	Emailed Comment	On behalf of the City of Austin, the following comments on the SH 45 Gap Study are being submitted during the second round of engagement. City staff would like to thank the project team for their continued commitment to conducting a thorough analysis of the study area and coordinating with all stakeholders involved.	Comment noted.
				The information presented during this second phase of engagement is as anticipated. The roadway configuration options show a controlled access facility with four main-lanes with and/or without frontage roads.	Comment noted.
				Similarly, the alignment options connect to each segment of SH 45 at FM 1626 and at I-35, in the same general alignment as previously envisioned.	Early in the study process (Open House #1), the public was asked to provide route suggestions. Those suggestions were displayed at Open House #2 and served as the basis for the development of route options. All route suggestions received from the public reflected connections to existing SH 45 at both ends (east and west).

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
				<p>Two new route concepts shifted the alignment north between the same two end points but were eliminated from further study due to residential displacements and less desirable geometry. However, there is an active development (SP-2021-0328C) within the approved Estancia Planned Unit Development west of I-35 at SH 45 that wasn't included in the open house materials. This development is anticipated to receive approval in 2024. The recommended preliminary alignment will need to be adjusted to reflect the right of way being dedicated and reserved for the extension of Puryear Road and SH 45.</p>	<p>The Study Team will re-evaluate the recommended alignment in the vicinity of the Estancia development.</p>
				<p>Additionally, it is unclear if a southern route alignment wholly within Hays County was considered and evaluated.</p>	<p>As part of the planning process, the study team investigated options that would allow the SH 45 Gap to remain entirely within Hays County; however, it was determined that the most-viable connection point to I-35 is at the existing SH 45 interchange (in Travis County).</p>
				<p>Furthermore, at this stage in the process it is important to not conflate the purpose of the study with the purpose and need of the gap project. The purpose of the study is to examine the feasibility of building the segment of SH 45 between I-35 and FM 1626, but it shouldn't presuppose that it is the only solution. The proposed gap project does not automatically satisfy the purpose and need without evaluating all reasonable project alternatives. We are hopeful that in the next phase of analysis and round of engagement that an objective review of the need can be established and that the purpose does not predetermine a specific solution, such as closing a "gap" in the system. City staff is supportive of enhancing regional mobility but all options will need to remain on the table.</p>	<p>The purpose of the study is to evaluate the feasibility of the SH 45 Gap project and, if determined feasible, to establish a preliminary alignment that could be evaluated further during future phases of project development. If the project advances beyond the current feasibility study, the next step would be to undertake detailed environmental investigations and required environmental studies.</p>

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				Per Austin City Council direction, City staff will continue to seek cooperative efforts with Hays County, offering support to find ways to improve transportation connections, between the city, Travis County, and Hays County that do not threaten harm to the Edwards Aquifer watershed or to lands overlying the Edwards Aquifer that have been dedicated to permanent watershed or to lands overlying the Edwards Aquifer that have been dedicated to permanent watershed and wildlife habitat protection. We look forward to supporting the project team in the development of the traffic study and assessment of potential impacts during the next phase in 2024.	Comment noted. Hays County and the Study Team appreciate the opportunity to work with the City of Austin and appreciates City's interest and input.
22	12/7/2023	Lisa + Kevin McAdams	Comment Card	Curious about new development just started west of Old San Antonio @ Puryear. That's right where I imagine 45 being connected.	Development is currently occurring in the Study Area and this growth is expected to continue. When planning for the potential Gap Project, efforts are being made to avoid and/or minimize impacts to existing and planned development, when feasible.
				We need another way over the railroad tracks other than downtown Buda and 1626 near Manchaca Rd.	If ultimately constructed, it is anticipated that the project would include an overpass of the railroad.
				I avoid I-35 for my commute as much as possible. This project needs to be completed while it is still possible to do so, given the development happening in the area.	Comment noted.
23	12/7/2023	Martha McKee	Comment Card	Support frontage road full length of road with limited # entrances/exits.	Comment noted. The feasibility study will include an assessment of frontage roads and other access needed to effectively serve areas adjacent to the Gap Project.
24	12/19/2023	Danielle Morin	Online Comment	I am against this expansion and the associated study due to environmental concerns	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection.

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				and in accordance with regional long-range transportation goals - this expansion does not comply.	The Gap Project is included in the Hays County and City of Buda transportation plans. In addition, the CAMPO 2045 Plan (the current regional transportation plan) identifies the project for "study"; thus, the feasibility study is consistent with all three plans.
25	12/19/2023	Terry Nance	Online Comment	<i>(NOTE: Only contact information was provided; no comments were submitted.)</i>	Contact information was added to study database/ mailing list.
26	12/23/2023	Dr. Craig Nazor	Emailed Comment	Connecting SH45 to IH35 at the southern end through northern Hays County is not a good idea, for the reasons listed below:	The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination studies, and an operational analysis. These traffic studies will assess potential project-related impacts on MoPac and other roadways in and around the study area.
				1) Doing so would greatly increase traffic on the entire length of MoPac, requiring more expensive enlargements to MoPac that will damage the character of many neighborhoods, Zilker Park (particularly Zilker Botanical Gardens), and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center.	
				2) After years of congestion, MoPac finally works reasonably well due to the addition of the tolled express lane. Adding even more traffic, essentially turning MoPac into an Austin bypass, will completely undo the progress made.	The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination studies, and an operational analysis. These traffic studies will assess potential project-related impacts on MoPac and other roadways in and around the study area.
				3) Building this section of road across a very sensitive part of the Barton Springs recharge zone will continue to reduce the water quality in Barton Springs, which is worth many millions of dollars to the Austin economy.	No part of the study area is in the recharge or contributing zones. A portion of the study area is in the Edwards Aquifer transition zone. Should the project advance beyond the feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the study will include identification of potential environmental best practices and strategies to protect and preserve water quality.

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				3) Water and noise pollution from this section of road threatens to damage the habitat of at least 4 endangered species, as well as pollute a valuable clean water source.	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to protect and preserve water quality, wildlife, and other natural resources.
				4) The bypass for through traffic around Austin should be Texas 130, not MoPac. Because we haven't done that, IH3 is now almost always congested, and is being enlarged (another boondoggle). Building large highways causes more traffic and does not reduce traffic congestion (a prime example is the Katy Freeway). Not using Texas 130 as an Austin bypass is one of the worst traffic errors ever made in Central Texas, and continuing to avoid that solution continues to damage traffic flow through Austin.	Comment noted.
27	12/19/2023	Alexander Novotny	Online Comment	Please build this - and quickly. It's the last piece to the puzzle. When driving to dripping springs from SE Austin I have to take the long way around and this would solve that. Don't listen to the harsh rhetoric from Travis County. If Travis County/COA is worried about Mopac becoming a route alternative to I35 - maybe they should remove the tolls from the 130 bypass or make that road the official I35 corridor. This is the problem right now. Build it today!	Comment noted.
28	1/4/2023	Carol Pennington	Online Comment	I added this on the interactive map, but the idea is at Bliss Spillar and I did not want it to get overlooked. If this is built, an entrance ramp heading east and an exit ramp heading west should be built at Bliss Spillar. There is an entrance ramp off Bliss Spillar heading west, but not one heading east. There needs to be one heading east so we can get to IH35. There is not an exit ramp	The feasibility study is focused on the area between I-35 and RM 1626. Bliss Spillar Road is outside these limits; additional ramps at this location would not be provided as part of the Gap Project.

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				coming from east to west at Bliss Spillar. Don't do it half ass like Davis Rd. at MoPac is.	
				Also, the intersection at 1626 needs to be rebuilt to be a flyover. The traffic signals is what causes the congestion, especially for those entering from Buda.	Comment noted; suggestion will be considered as the study progresses.
				There should also be a design at IH35 that does not include traffic signals to reduce traffic backup. Y'all need to think about those end points as part of the problem when designing this thing.	Comment noted; suggestion will be considered as the study progresses.
29	12/7/2023	Ed Pensock	Comment Card	The "recommended alignment" is the best solution for the project. If possible 400 ft of right-of-way should be incorporated into the project. The region would benefit significantly from the constructed project.	Comment noted
30	12/19/2023	Julie Perkins	Online Comment	Please do not connect I35 to Mopac and thus also FM 1826. Both of those roadways are already overloaded and this would create a bypass for interstate traffic from I35 that is shorter than the 130 bypass. This would also bring I35 traffic not going north on Mopac directly to the intersection of 45 and 1826. That has already been redesigned several times and still has problems. 1826 is a narrow, hilly and winding road with no shoulder on most of it. The potential problems are innumerable with residents unable to leave their neighborhoods to drive to work, school and anything in central Austin. Please note there is no public transportation to this area.	The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, origin/destination investigations, and an operational analysis. These traffic studies will assess potential project-related impacts on MoPac, RM 1826, and other roads in and around the study area.

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31	12/7/2023	Rick Perkins	Comment Card	<p>I SUPPORT THIS PLAN TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT. PREFERABLY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *BUILT WITH 6 LANES and limiting access points to 2 or 3 along the Route. *USING THE SAME ENVIRONMENTAL RUN OFF CONTROLS AS SH 45 SW. *MINIMIZING ILLUMINACION TO PRESERVE DARK SKY, POSSIBLY ONLY AT ACCESS POINTS. UTILIZING MAXIMUM CUT OFF LIGHTING FIXTURES. *12 FOOT WIDE SHARED-USE SIDEWALKS ON BOTH SIDES, JUST LIKE SH 45 SW. *SOUND WALLS AS APPROPRIATE FOR "RECEIVERS" REGARDLESS IF THEY MEET THE TXDOT MINIMUM STD. *WILDLIFE PASS-UNDER CORRIDORS. <p>THANKS FOR YOUR WORK; PLEASE EXPEDITE. THANKS, Rick Perkins.</p>	Comment noted; these suggestions will be considered as the study progresses.
32	12/18/2023	William Rodriguez	Online Comment	<p>As a member of the Bear Creek Park neighborhood, we have seen drastic changes to our home and legacy neighborhood as a result of the new development happening here just to date.</p> <p>I'm genuinely concerned about the county's handling of the toll road 45 extension, particularly regarding the evident gaps in planning that raise critical issues affecting our community. Safety remains a paramount concern as the increased traffic stemming from this extension strains the existing infrastructure. The roads off of 1626 are ill-equipped to handle this growth, lacking essential features such as stop lights, which compromises safety for commuters and residents alike. Moreover, the lack of cohesive development planning for the surrounding areas poses a significant risk, potentially exacerbating the challenges posed by increased traffic flow.</p>	The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination studies, and an operational analysis. These traffic studies will assess potential project-related impacts on RM 1626 and other roadways in and around the study area. Hays County is committed to providing a safe and efficient transportation system.

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
				<p>Environmental considerations are equally pressing. The absence of adequate plans to address flooding and fire hazards in the wake of rampant development is deeply troubling. I've personally experienced the consequences of such oversights, having dealt with flooding in my own home due to insufficient planning by developers permitted by the county. This negligence in environmental foresight not only endangers our homes but also jeopardizes the ecological balance of the region.</p>	<p>Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to protect and preserve water quality, wildlife, and other natural resources. If ultimately constructed, the project would comply with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to floodplains and stormwater management.</p>
				<p>Equally distressing is the lack of comprehensive city planning to counterbalance the extension's impact on residents. The absence of strategic development planning compounds the challenges faced by our community. The haphazard growth without proper infrastructure or amenities significantly diminishes the quality of life for residents and demonstrates a clear oversight by the city in ensuring sustainable and beneficial development.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
				<p>As a concerned member of this community, I strongly urge the county and city authorities to reevaluate their planning strategies, prioritize safety and environmental considerations, and engage in more comprehensive and responsible development planning. The well-being and future sustainability of our community depend on proactive and far-sighted measures that address these pressing concerns.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
33	12/18/2023	Kevin Rolfes	Emailed Comment	<p>The focus of the current environmental study concerning the SH45 extension is too narrow. Please consider other alternatives to this expensive and environmentally harmful project. Hays County residents need immediate traffic relief, and this can be achieved by improving local roadways, without forcing Hays County residents to pay for an expensive highway expansion project with tax dollars and/or daily toll fees.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
				<p>The current highway ends intentionally to avoid environmentally sensitive lands that deserve protection. There are dense tree canopies that support migrating birds, and several creeks that are extremely vulnerable to erosion, localized flooding, and pollutants. SH45 will increase harmful highway stormwater runoff in an area of Hays County where many residents rely upon clean groundwater for drinking water.</p>	<p>Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to protect and preserve water quality, vegetation, and wildlife. If ultimately constructed, the project would comply with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to floodplains and stormwater management.</p>
				<p>Building this new segment of SH45 will not bring any long term traffic relief to the residents of northeastern Hays County, especially if the new extension is accompanied by new developments in an area of the county with few regulations. New traffic from I-35 and S Mopac will spill over onto our already congested roadways. We need Hays County to work with nearby jurisdictions on alternative routes to refocus efforts on localized traffic solutions, such as consideration of improvements to FM 1626, including a potential new or relocated overpass to improve its intersection with I-35 in South Austin. This would improve relieve immediate traffic problems, while improving east-to-west access for Hays County commuters.</p>	<p>The feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination studies, and an operational analysis. These traffic studies will assess potential project-related impacts on roadways in and around the study area. The Gap Project would serve to enhance the regional transportation network (inclusive of existing roadways as well as projects included in the CAMPO 2045 Plan - the current transportation plan for the region). If the Gap Project is ultimately constructed, it would be in addition to the already planned improvements to RM 1626, I-35, and other roadways.</p>

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
				Please put this study on hold until a full range of alternatives are properly developed and considered.	Request noted.
34	12/11/2023	Tim Savoy	Emailed Comment	Speaking as a resident who lives in the Hills at Estancia near SH 45 and IH 35, I am writing to offer my absolute support for creating a connection that bridges SH 45 at 1626 and SH 45 at IH 35. This road is essential. I would support any plan, but specifically, I like the Southern Route Concept noted in the public forum materials in blue. In sum, not having the road will not reduce the growth and traffic in the area. In fact, not having the road would be worse for the environment because it would lead to greater congestion on existing roads that are not designed to handle the traffic. Congestion requires cars to idle much longer than necessary. Additionally, the connection segment may well lead to more traffic on Mopac, but that is a good thing. Mopac is designed to handle the traffic much better than Old San Antonio Road, Main Street in Buda, and 1626. Austin in a major metropolitan area that will continue to grow and it needs a true loop around the city. All of the benefits we enjoy living in a large city are dependent on our cities ability to move people efficiently to where they need to be. Please let me know what more I can do to help ensure this roadway is constructed with the least possible delay.	Comment noted.
35	12/20/2023	Maria Schmelter	Online Comment	We have lived in Shady Hollow for more than 30 years, east of Brodie. The traffic has intensified greatly. People just want to get to I35 and MOPAC and they now use Brodie as a short cut. As for as the environmental issues, they are driving over the Aquifer right now. What does a few miles difference matter? FYI, Years ago I demonstrated in favor of SH45 at Brodie and Slaughter and I still support SH45 to be built!	Comment noted.

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
36	12/19/2023	Heidi Simmons	Online Comment	Do NOT connect these roads. Mopac needs to remain commuter traffic only. We do NOT want I-35 through traffic nor semi - trucks making it dangerous to live our daily lives. Mopac is already at capacity with residential vehicles.	Comment noted.
37	12/19/2023	Mike Simmons	Online Comment	No! We do NOT want these roads to connect. TXDOT needs to come up with better ways to incentivize Hwy 130. Mopac is already packed and cannot handle semi-trucks and additional through traffic.	Comment noted.
38	12/22/2023	Stahl Urban	Emailed Comment	<p>I am having some trouble through both the website and the download getting enough magnification to look at the comments on exhibit:</p> <p>OPEN HOUSE #1 – JUNE 15, 2023 ROUTE SUGGESTIONS</p> <p>If someone could send me a high res of this exhibit for us to properly weigh in, that would be greatly appreciated. I understand this might not be done soon, but I would like to reserve the right for additional input after the deadline due to the lack of clarity on the exhibit.</p> <p>It appears that the public input that I submitted for the preferred off ramp/on ramp/exit at the intersection of SH45SW and Garrison road has been omitted from the first open house comments. I find this odd since this is the primary location exit from a traffic design point of view, allows for future light rail, and satisfies The City of Buda's desire to keep east-west traffic out of down town. On a side note it appears Persimmon development suggestion for an on/off ramp made the cut to publish from the first open house, as mine did not. Needless to say I find this curious.</p>	Comment noted. The comment concerning Garrison Road (submitted in response to Open House #1) is included as comment #229 in the Open House #1 Summary Report. Because the comment was submitted on-line and did not include the commenter's name there was no way to attribute it to an individual; thus, it was listed as "anonymous".

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
				<p>I would like to endorse for frontage roads through out the road way, in particular towards the intersection of 35 and SH 45 SW to facilitate easy traffic movement at The City of Austin's southern regional hub.</p>	<p>Comment regarding frontage roads is noted. The feasibility study will include an assessment of frontage roads and other access needed to effectively serve areas adjacent to the Gap Project.</p>
				<p>Recently I read the attached letter from Travis County, I'm curious what studies they are basing their objection to SH 45 SW. If the SH 45 gap studies have any knowledge or documented studies that support Travis counties prediction of heavy truck traffic preferring MOPAC over 35 or SH45 SE I would like to see them and would be happy to approach the Travis County commissioners court in the event these documents don't exist.</p> <p>Thank you so much for your efforts and Merry Christmas!</p>	<p>The study team is unaware of previous studies by Travis County or others that are specific to the Gap Project. Please note, the feasibility study will include traffic modeling, traffic origin/destination studies, and an operational analysis. These traffic studies will assess potential project-related impacts on MoPac and other roadways in and around the study area.</p>
39	12/19/2023	Dan Vavasour	Online Comment	<p>I oppose the proposed development. The negative environmental and quality of life impacts are too great to ignore. Maybe consider building effective public transportation options</p>	<p>Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. Comment regarding public transportation is noted.</p>

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
40	12/22/2023	Charlie Watts (Travis County)	Emailed Comment	<p>Please find attached, the official SH 45 Gap Study comments from the Travis County Commissioners Court, unanimously approved at its December 19, 2023 Voting Session. If you need any additional information, please contact Cynthia McDonald, County Executive TNR, at [REDACTED]</p> <p>For many years, both the City of Austin and Travis County have opposed the inclusion of the I- 35 to FM 1626 connection in the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (CAMPO) regional transportation plans. This project is also not included in TXDOT’s recently updated 10 year funding plan, the 2024 Unified Transportation Program.</p>	Comment noted.
				<p>Making the connection from I-35 to FM 1626 would effectively make Mopac an I-35 bypass, dramatically increasing vehicular and truck traffic. The traffic impacts of this decision by Hays County would have a profound and detrimental effect almost entirely on Austin and Travis County, as well as the residents and unique environmental and other resources located in Travis County. The fact that there has been virtually no effort to coordinate this action with either Austin or Travis County is unacceptable. We cannot imagine a scenario where a similar action by Austin or Travis County, that would have such an enormous traffic impact on a neighboring County, would be considered acceptable without extensive regional coordination and cooperation. Accordingly, we want to state our concerns on the record about the lack of transparency and input in connection with this proposed project.</p>	<p>The SH 45 Feasibility Study has been conducted in an open and public forum. To date, two public open houses have been conducted and a third open house is planned. In an effort to maximize public participation, the open houses are held in-person and virtually. Input and suggestions from the public have formed the basis for the route options developed by the Study Team and presented at the second Open House. In addition to the open houses, the Study Team has held numerous meetings with stakeholders (including three meetings with Travis County staff and a meeting with City of Austin staff). Hays County is committed to continuing the dialogue about SH 45 and the region’s transportation needs with City, County, and other stakeholders.</p>

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
				<p>Furthermore, currently CAMPO requires any projects that are partially inside another jurisdiction have written concurrence from the jurisdiction in which the project is partially located in order for a project to be included in the CAMPO Regional Transportation Plan. This has not happened.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Although the feasibility study is consistent with the CAMPO Plan, the actual Gap Project is not included in the CAMPO Plan nor has Hays County submitted a request to do so.</p>
				<p>Additionally, this connection will significantly increase traffic over environmentally sensitive lands that include Balcones Canyonlands Preserve lands, City of Austin Water Quality Protection lands, karst features, Edwards Aquifer, endangered species habitat, and conservation easements. The increased traffic and accompanying growth would put the region's water quality and environment at greater risk. Yet, there has been no comprehensive analysis of the impacts of this project (and less damaging alternatives) in order to inform whether and how this project should proceed.</p>	<p>Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to protect and preserve water quality and other natural resources. The feasibility study will include a high-level assessment of potential environmental impacts. Should the project advance beyond the feasibility study, more detailed environmental studies and investigations would occur in association with future phases of project development.</p>

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
				<p>Both Austin and Travis County have invested heavily, using voter approved bonds, in preserving Barton Springs and its watershed, as well as habitat for numerous endangered species. For more than two decades the City of Austin, with broad community support, has enacted policies and made significant investments in the protection of water quality in the Barton Springs Zone of the Edwards Aquifer. Measures taken include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Implementation of the citizen-initiated Save Our Springs ordinance, which limits impervious cover and requires non-degradation levels of stormwater treatment for development of sites in the Barton Springs Zone; and requires mitigation plans/infrastructure for potential hazardous and/or toxic waste spills over the aquifer, which is especially important for any proposed route that would reroute truck traffic from I-35 across the Aquifer; o Investment of \$143 million in voter-approved bonds (to date) in the acquisition and preservation of 27,000 acres of land in the recharge and contributing zones o Commitment, both legally and financially, to protect rare and endangered species pursuant to two permits issued under the Federal Endangered Species Act.”¹ <p>¹Transportation and Environmental Challenges Associated with the Proposed State Highway 45 Southwest, City of Austin, August 2011.</p> <p>We are concerned that this project, as proposed, would substantially undermine Travis County’s longstanding efforts to fund and protect these sensitive and unique resources—issues that we urge you to examine in detail (with Travis County’s input) before any decision is made.</p>	<p>Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to protect and preserve water quality and other natural resources. Hays County shares Travis County’s desire to protect and preserve its unique environmental resources and is committed to an on-going dialogue with Travis County about SH 45 and the region’s transportation needs.</p>

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
				<p>Status of Project in Local and Regional Transportation Plans</p> <p>The current adopted transportation plan for Travis County, the Travis County Transportation Blueprint, approved unanimously by Commissioners Court in July 2019, does not include this segment in its Roadway Plan. Also, the current regional transportation plan, the CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan, does not include the connection of SH 45 SW from I-35 to FM 1626 in the “Constrained Project List”, “Illustrative Project List” (used for ROW reservation) or in any maps of those lists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o There is a study identified in the Study List sponsored by Hays County called “New Facility” with limits from FM 1626 – I-35. o The study includes the following project description: “Design of environmental and preliminary engineering for new freeway”. o No associated project is identified in the Constrained Project or Illustrative lists. 	<p>Comment noted.</p>
				<p>In conclusion, we are submitting these comments to express the Travis County Commissioners Court’s vigorous opposition to the SH 45 Gap Study. At minimum, we request an in-depth evaluation of these issues, with input from affected jurisdictions (including Travis County), to consider alternatives for avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating harm to people and resources located mostly in our jurisdiction.</p> <p>Please contact Cynthia McDonald, County Executive for Transportation and Natural Resources, [REDACTED] to discuss this Project.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
41	12/20/2023	Ann	Online Comment	Did y'all ever stop to consider providing an option to 35 and MoPac (aka train) and preventing sprawl in the first place would alleviate the traffic folks bemoan? No new highways until the land use is better!	Comment noted.
42	12/8/2023	Stefan	Online Comment	Please move forward with this project and close the gap. This should have been done 30+ years ago.	Comment noted.
43	12/11/2023	Anonymous	In-Person Mapped Comment	Build the 400' scenario. More room for future expansion. Same environmental issues as 250'. Build it!	Comment noted.
44	12/7/2023	Anonymous	In-Person Mapped Comment	Direct connects please (Note: Comment placed on FM 1626 at the Travis/Hays County line.)	Comment noted; suggestion will be considered as the study progresses.
45	12/7/2023	Anonymous	In-Person Mapped Comment	6 lanes please	Comment noted.
46	12/7/2023	Anonymous	In-Person Mapped Comment	Dark sky lighting complete cut off please	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to minimize fugitive light. To minimize light impacts, illumination would be limited to those areas where necessary for safety. Where illumination is necessary shields and low-impact lighting would be used to direct lighting toward the roadway (and away from adjacent areas).

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
47	12/7/2023	Anonymous	In-Person Mapped Comment	Wildlife passage points	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection. The need for and potential placement of wildlife crossings will be considered as the study progresses.
48	12/7/2023	Anonymous	In-Person Mapped Comment	Runoff MGMG like 45 SW	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to protect and preserve water quality.
49	12/7/2023	Anonymous	In-Person Mapped Comment	Consider alternative improvements to FM 1626 to I-35	The current feasibility study is focused on the gap between I-35 and RM 1626. The Gap Project would serve to enhance the regional transportation network (inclusive of existing roadways as well as projects included in the CAMPO 2045 Plan - the current transportation plan for the region). Improvements to RM 1626 and I-35 are included in the 2045 Plan. If the Gap Project is ultimately constructed, it would be in addition to the already planned improvements to RM 1626 and I-35.
50	12/7/2023	Anonymous	In-Person Mapped Comment	Consider route all in Hays Co.	As part of the planning process, the study team investigated options that would allow the SH 45 Gap to remain entirely within Hays County; however, it was determined that the most-viable

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
					connection point to I-35 is at the existing SH 45 interchange (in Travis County).
51	12/7/2023	Anonymous	In-Person Mapped Comment	Too much road noise from 1626 bridge @ Little Bear Crk. Make new sections wider.	Comment noted.
52	12/7/2023	Anonymous	In-Person Mapped Comment	1626 145 intersection: Maintain dark skies. No tall light towers as in I-35 @ 45. Keep light shining down.	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to minimize fugitive light. To minimize light impacts, illumination would be limited to those areas where necessary for safety. Where illumination is necessary shields and low-impact lighting would be used to direct lighting toward the roadway (and away from adjacent areas).
53	12/7/2023	Anonymous	In-Person Mapped Comment	What type of pavement? Road noise from bad bridge lanes to main lanes.	Pavement design/type would be determined during future phases of project development.
54	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Looks good. Pretty straightforward alignment.	Comment noted.
55	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	You must ensure that none of the nearby residential neighborhoods are impacted. The creek and wildlife should also be considered and preserved.	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
					for environmental protection. This would include strategies to minimize impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, wildlife, and water quality.
56	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Increased access means increased traffic utilizing 1626; lack of proper street lights and turn lanes makes accessing legacy neighborhoods risky and difficult	Comment noted.
57	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Pollution and fencing will destroy wildlife habitats	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection. This would include strategies to minimize impacts on wildlife.
58	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	This new thoroughfare will not introduce any additional green space for residents of this area.	If ultimately constructed, the project would include a shared use path for pedestrians and bicyclists. This path would be similar to the shared use path (aka "the trail") along existing State Highway 45 Southwest. Connections between the shared use path and other area trails/creeks would be considered during future phases of project development.
59	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Increased traffic led to multiple fatalities at these intersections; Increasing traffic flow onto 1626 needs to be studied	Comment noted.

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
60	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Noise pollution	Should the project advance beyond the feasibility study, more detailed environmental studies and investigations would occur in association with future phases of project development. These detailed studies would include a traffic noise analysis in accordance with applicable rules and regulations.
61	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Access to creeks and trails	If ultimately constructed, the project would include a shared use path for pedestrians and bicyclists. Connections between the shared use path and area trails/creeks would be considered during future phases of project development.
62	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Access to water ways for recreation	Comment noted; this suggestion will be considered as the study progresses.
63	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Traffic build up is already very much a thing - waiting 10+ minutes with just one part of 45 to deal with - ensuring ease of access on and off the toll road is essential	Comment noted.
64	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Removal of trees in mass seems is troubling to me; What forestation plans are in place for the replacement from this work	If ultimately constructed, efforts would be made during construction to minimize tree removal. Trees located within the right-of-way but outside the limits of actual construction and outside of "clear zones" (safety zones adjacent to the roadway) would be protected and remain in place. Upon completion of construction, disturbed areas would be revegetated.

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
65	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	light pollution for neighborhoods in the area	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to minimize fugitive light. To minimize light impacts, illumination would be limited to those areas where necessary for safety. Where illumination is necessary shields and low-impact lighting would be used to direct lighting toward the roadway (and away from adjacent areas).
66	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	well water pollution	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to protect and preserve water quality. Any wells located within the right-of-way would be plugged in accordance with applicable standards.
67	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	speed limits	Comment noted.
68	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Displacement of wildlife	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection, this would

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
					include strategies to minimize impacts on wildlife.
69	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Disrupting of historic burial sites (Note: comment placed on the northwest end of the alignment near 1626)	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, the next phase of project development would include detailed environmental studies and investigations. Studies would include historic and archeological surveys. If burials are discovered during those surveys, appropriate steps would be taken to mitigate impacts.
70	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Increased traffic	Comment noted.
71	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	If this is built, an entrance ramp heading east should be built at Bliss Spillar. There is an entrance ramp off Bliss Spillar heading west, but not one heading east. There needs to be one heading east for this project.	The feasibility study is focused on the area between I-35 and RM 1626. Bliss Spillar Road is outside these limits; additional ramps at this location would not be provided as part of the Gap Project.
72	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	This intersection should be a flyover like originally planned for the people getting on from 1626. Traffic signals create the traffic congestion. This intersection needs to be rebuilt without traffic signals. (Note: Comment placed at intersection of RM 1626 and 45 Southwest.)	Comment noted; suggestion will be considered as the study progresses.
73	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Needs to be sound barriers placed here for the neighborhood for the increased traffic this will create. Its already loud as is.	Should the project advance beyond the feasibility study, more detailed environmental studies and investigations would occur in association with future phases of project development. These detailed studies would include a traffic noise analysis in accordance with applicable rules and regulations.

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
74	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Assist the neighborhoods with getting UPRR quiet zones in the area, as a part of good faith effort to be a good neighbor to those of us who will be impacted by the project.	Concerns regarding train noise are noted; however, establishment of a quiet zone is beyond the scope of the SH 45 feasibility study.
75	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Implement Dark Skies standards for lighting along the roadway.	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to minimize fugitive light. To minimize light impacts, illumination would be limited to those areas where necessary for safety. Where illumination is necessary shields and low-impact lighting would be used to direct lighting toward the roadway (and away from adjacent areas).
76	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	One way to show a good faith effort for the nearby neighborhoods would be to help get UPRR quiet zones nearby.	Concerns regarding train noise are noted; however, establishment of a quiet zone is beyond the scope of the SH 45 feasibility study.
77	12/22/2023	Anonymous		Traffic calming options need to be explored. Turning 1626 into a race track will lead to even more fatalities.	Comment noted.

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
			Online Mapped Comment	What about roundabouts?	The feasibility study will include the development of a preliminary schematic for the recommended alternative. The preliminary schematic will identify anticipated access, intersection, turn lane, and bridge locations as well as other roadway details. This comment will be taken into consideration as the preliminary schematic is developed. It is important to note that the preliminary schematic would be subject to revision and refinement during future (post-feasibility study) phases of project development.
78	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Is the option of continuing the hike and bike trail down this new section of 45 being explored? Seems like a once in a life-time opportunity to create better recreation and multi-model transportation options	Yes. If ultimately constructed, the project would include a shared use path for pedestrians and bicyclists. This path would be similar to the shared use path (aka "the trail") along existing State Highway 45 Southwest.
79	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	This part of Bear Creek is one of the most beautiful parts of our community. Everything possible to protect this water quality and rock formations should be done	Comment noted. Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection and strategies to protect and preserve water quality.
80	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Would be good to look at creating wildlife corridors on the non-elevated parts of this road	Should the project advance beyond the current feasibility study, Hays County is committed to developing the project in an environmentally sensitive manner. To that end, the feasibility study will include the identification of potential best practices

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					for environmental protection. The need for and potential placement of wildlife crossings will be considered as the study progresses.
81	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	There is an active development (Estancia PUD) going through the site plan approval process that includes a different alignment for SH 45. The preliminary recommended alignment will need to be adjusted.	Comment noted.
82	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	This property was initially platted around 2006-8 with the current 45 dedication required by Travis County. As such the current development in play for the last 4 years knew about the dedication and planned accordingly.	Comment noted.
83	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	TxDot should take advantage of the railroad grade cut of 20+' here to avoid a huge, high overpass blighting the area around it, diminishing the quality of live and devaluing the surrounding land values.	Comment noted.
84	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	This location is the primary exit on/off/ramp for SH45SW, it allows a connection north to Lowden lane, It is centered in between 35 and 1626, it is the only exit that diverts traffic from the downtown Buda. (Note: Comment placed between Dove Dr and Garrison Rd; south of Horsethief Trail near the railroad.)	Comment noted; suggestion will be considered as the study progresses.
85	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Frontage roads are necessary for safe access particularly around the intersection of 35 and SH 45SW as the southern hub of Austin	The feasibility study will include an assessment of frontage roads and other access needed to effectively serve areas adjacent to the Gap Project.
86	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Preferred exit on SH45 to allow for future light rail commuting and parking (Note: Comment placed near Garrison Road and railroad.)	Comment noted; suggestion will be considered as the study progresses.

Comment Number	Date Received	Name	Source	Comment	Response
87	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	wrong location for a primary exit on SH45SW it will not alleviate the congestion in down town Buda, fix the east-west corridor issue, and will not benefit from future light rail (Note: <i>Comment placed on the west side of the alignment south of county line and near Ranger Drive.</i>)	Comment noted.
88	12/22/2023	Anonymous	Online Mapped Comment	Good alignment utilizing the easement previously granted for 45 by the developer	Comment noted.

Appendix

Meeting Notices

- Postcard Notice Pg. 45
- Email Notices Pg. 50
- Signage Pg. 53
- Print Advertisement Pg. 54
- Website Advertisement Pg. 56
- News Release Pg. 57
- Social Media Notices Pg. 58
- Project Website Notice Pg. 59

Postcard

**SH 45
GAP STUDY** SH 45 Gap Study
PO Box 5459
Austin, TX 78763

SHARE COMMENTS

The information shared at the meeting will also be available online and **the comment period is from Dec. 7 to Dec. 22, 2023**. Comments may be submitted through the website, during the in-person open house, or by email, mail, text, or phone.


We encourage you to participate and share your thoughts.



SH 45 Gap Study

 sh45gap.com

 512-400-6107

 info@sh45gap.com



Hays County, in partnership with the City of Buda, is conducting a study to explore the feasibility of constructing SH 45 between I-35 and RM 1626.

A second open house meeting for the study is being held. Background data, input from the first open house, and preliminary route concepts will be shared for public comment and feedback.

Attend the open house meeting to learn more and share your comments.

OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, Dec. 7, 2023
4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Sunfield Station Event Center
2610 Main St., Buda, TX 78610



Postcard Mailing List

OWNER NAME	MAILING ADDRESS LINE 1	MAILING ADDRESS LINE 2	CITY	STATE	ZIP
HAYS COUNTY	111 E SAN ANTONIO ST		SAN MARCOS	TX	78666-5534
HAYS COUNTY OF	ATTN: COUNTY JUDGE 712 S STAGECOACH TRL	STE 1063	SAN MARCOS	TX	78666-6230
TEXAS CHILDRENS HOSPITAL	1919 S. BRAESWOOD BLVD	STE MO4206	HOUSTON	TX	77030-4444
ARMBRUSTER LAND INVESTMENTS LP	2100 NORTHLAND DR		AUSTIN	TX	78756-1116
ARMBRUSTER LAND INVESTMENTS LP	2100 NORTHLAND DR		AUSTIN	TX	78756-1116
BAILEY LAND INVESTMENTS LP	PO BOX 17008		AUSTIN	TX	78760-7008
BAILEY LAND INVESTMENTS LP	PO BOX 17008		AUSTIN	TX	78760-7008
MILESTONE DEVELOPMENT INC	PO BOX 17008		AUSTIN	TX	78760-7008
MILESTONE DEVELOPMENT INC	PO BOX 17008		AUSTIN	TX	78760-7008
JEFFERY LEE GRUBERT	PO BOX 587		MANCHACA	TX	78652-0587
JEFF L GRUBERT	PO BOX 587		MANCHACA	TX	78652-0587
GRUBERT SENDERO VERDE LLC	PO BOX 587		MANCHACA	TX	78652-0587
GENE LEDOUX	PO BOX 176		MANCHACA	TX	78652-0176
GENE LEDOUX	PO BOX 176		MANCHACA	TX	78652-0176
GUINN R R ESTATE	675A PONDEROSA RD		BASTROP	TX	78602-5090

YMCA OF AUSTIN	465 BUDA SPORTSPLEX DR		BUDA	TX	78610
MARK & LUCILLE K DROSOS	14605 OLD SAN ANTONIO RD		BUDA	TX	78610
TERRY A & VEDIA SHERMAN	14505 OLD SAN ANTONIO RD		BUDA	TX	78610
DAVID W MENARD	PO BOX 191		BUDA	TX	78610- 0191
HFH INVESTMENTS LP	PO BOX 399		BUDA	TX	78610
HFH INVESTMENTS LP	PO BOX 399		BUDA	TX	78610- 0399
TETE LLC	PO BOX 399		BUDA	TX	78610- 0930
TETE LLC	PO BOX 399		BUDA	TX	78610- 0399
YARARA LLC	PO BOX 930		BUDA	TX	78610- 0930
YARARA LLC	PO BOX 399		BUDA	TX	78610- 0399
KING EDWARD IX LLC	PO BOX 399		BUDA	TX	78610
3648 LLC	PO BOX 399		BUDA	TX	78610
3648 LLC	PO BOX 399		BUDA	TX	78610- 0399
BOONE & HERMANS LLC	PO BOX 399		BUDA	TX	78610- 0399
ELEVEN MILE HILL LLC	PO BOX 399		BUDA	TX	78610- 0399
CAPITAL LAND INVESTMENTS I LP	1709 WETHERSFIELD ROAD		AUSTIN	TX	78703
CAPITAL LAND INVESTMENTS I LP	505 WALSH ST		AUSTIN	TX	78703

SCHURIG CHILDREN'S 2002 TRUST	MICHELE MORGAN ROBERTS TRUSTEE 10415 MORADO CIRCLE	STE 1-310	AUSTIN	TX	78759- 6198
TWC-1626 LLC	12701 LOWDEN LN	STE 701	MANCHACA	TX	78652- 0047
M/I HOMES OF AUSTIN LLC	7600 N CAPITAL TX HWY	BLD C STE 250	AUSTIN	TX	78731
RING COMPANY OF HARRIS CO	PO BOX 128		FLATONIA	TX	78941- 0128
ALLISON LIVING TRUST	8902 RANCH RD 1888		BLANCO	TX	78606- 2616
TWIN OAKS RANCH INC	PO BOX 457		BUDA	TX	78610- 0457
MARY LOUISE PORTER BAILEY	5609 SHOALWOOD AVE		AUSTIN	TX	78756- 1623
BUDA CREEKSIDE PARK PUD HOMEOWNERS ASSN INC	PO BOX 700128		DALLAS	TX	75370- 1989
BYRON & COMPANY BENOIT	PO BOX 1060		MANCHACA	TX	78652- 1060
HEJL CLIFF LLC	802 AUGUSTA		SAN ANTONIO	TX	78215- 1643
DAVID J & MARGERY HOPKINS	PO BOX 1944		MANCHACA	TX	78652- 1944
MANCHACA OPTIMIST INC	PO BOX 444		MANCHACA	TX	78652- 0444
ELIOT & ISABEL SERRANO MAYS	2205 FM 1626		MANCHACA	TX	78652
SUZANNE & CHARLES SHERO	2206 BIG VALLEY		MANCHACA	TX	78652- 9737
SUZANNE SHERO	2006 BIG VALLEY DR		MANCHACA	TX	78652- 9737
JOSE & MERCEDES SERRANO	2200 BIG VALLEY DR		MANCHACA	TX	78652- 2006
LEROY W YOUNG	2001 BIG VALLEY DR		MANCHACA	TX	78652- 9737

JERONIMO & ROSA PALACIOS	8816 THUNDERBIRD RD		AUSTIN	TX	78736
PATTON ARLENE KINCHEON ESTATE	2005 E 9TH		AUSTIN	TX	78702-3437
PATTON SHERWYNN ETAL	2005 E 9TH		AUSTIN	TX	78702-3437
ALBERTO DIAZ	3501 N 43RD ST		MCALLEN	TX	78501-3472
YAOTONALCUAUHTLI ROSA TUPINA &	506 HORSETHIEF TRL	#2	AUSTIN	TX	78652-4744
LUCKIE LINDA & VICKI BELL TRUS	1809 FAIR OAKS DR		AUSTIN	TX	78745-2891
TERRY TULLOS	PO BOX 952		MANCHACA	TX	78652-0952
CRAIG F HARDIE	PO BOX 36		MANCHACA	TX	78652-0036
MATTHEW HOLM	2003 WYCHWOOD DR		AUSTIN	TX	78746-7866
WILLIAM HAY CARSON	5067 HORSETHIEF TRL		MANCHACA	TX	78652
LIZARD CRAWL LLC	PO BOX 399		BUDA	TX	78610-0399
SHAFFER HARRIET HEEP	604 W 12TH ST		AUSTIN	TX	78701-1718
S M & AMANDA SORRELLS ESTATE	1608 GRANEX DR		KILLEEN	TX	76542-5836
RANDOLPH COMPANY THE	PO BOX 128		FLATONIA	TX	78941-0128
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN	1124 S IH 35 FRONTAGE RD		AUSTIN	TX	78704
GCP XXVI LTD	12750 MERIT DR	STE 1175	DALLAS	TX	75251-1235
AUSTIN LAND PURCHASE LLC	4145 TRAVIS ST	STE 300	DALLAS	TX	75204-1830



Hays County, in partnership with the City of Buda, is conducting a study to explore the feasibility of constructing SH 45 between I-35 and RM 1626. A second open house meeting for the study is being held.

OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, December 7, 2023

4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Sunfield Station Event Center
2610 Main St., Buda, TX 78610



Background data, input from the first Open House, and preliminary route concepts will be shared for public comment and feedback. Attend the Open House meeting to learn more and share your comments.

SHARE COMMENTS

The comment period is from Dec. 7 to Dec. 22, 2023. Comments may be submitted at the in-person Open House, through the website, or by email, mail, text, or phone. All information shared at the open house will also be available online.

We encourage all those that are interested in the Study to participate and share their thoughts.

CONTACT

sh45gap.com
info@sh45gap.com
512-400-6107

Share with Friends and Contacts



Email Reminder 1

December 6, 2023



REMINDER: We will be hosting a second open house for the SH 45 Gap Study. At the open house, we will share background data, input from the first open house, and preliminary route concepts will be shared for public comment and feedback.

Attend the open house meeting to learn more and share your comments.

OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, Dec 7, 2023
Drop in anytime 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Sunfield Station Event Center
2610 Main St., Buda, TX 78610

COMMENT PERIOD

Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023
sh45gap.com



Information shared at the meeting will also be available online at sh45gap.com.

The open house will be conducted in English. Project materials will be available in English for both meeting formats (on-line and in-person). If you need an interpreter or document translator because English is not your primary language or have difficulty communicating in English, one will be provided to

you. If you have a disability and need assistance, special arrangements can be made to accommodate most needs. If you need interpretation or translation services or you are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation to attend and participate in the in-person or virtual open house, please contact the Project Team at 512-400-6107 no later than 4 p.m. CT, Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2023. Please be aware that advance notice is required as some services and accommodations may require time to arrange.

SHARE COMMENTS

The comment period is from Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023. Comments may be submitted through the website, during the in-person open house, or by email, mail, text, or phone.

We encourage all those that are interested in the Study to participate and share their thoughts.

About the Study

Hays County in partnership with the City of Buda is conducting a study to explore the feasibility of constructing SH 45 between I-35 and RM 1626. An important part of this study includes coordinating with property owners, the community, and regional and local partners to identify local priorities.

The open house report for the first SH 45 Gap Study open house will be published online on Thursday, Dec 7, 2023.

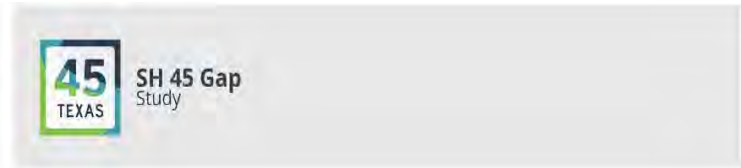
CONTACT

sh45gap.com
info@sh45gap.com
512-400-6107

Share with Friends and Contacts



Email Reminder 2
December 11, 2023



Thank you to everyone who attended and shared input at the second open house for the SH 45 Gap Study last night. The goal of the second open house was to gather comments on the study and feedback on the route concepts and roadway configurations.

All information shared at the in-person open house is available online at sh45gap.com.

Comments are still being accepted through the website or by email, mail, text, or phone. The comment period is open from Dec. 7 to Dec. 22, 2023.

All comments received during the comment period will be included in the meeting summary.

[Visit the Virtual Open House](#)

All materials and meeting summary report are now available to view online at sh45gap.com.

Contact Us

Email: info@sh45gap.com

Phone: 512-400-6107

Mail: SH 45 Gap Study

P.O.Box 5459

Austin, TX 78763

Share with Friends and Contacts



Signage

24" x 36" signs were placed on December 4, 2023 at 5 different neighborhood entrances

OPEN HOUSE

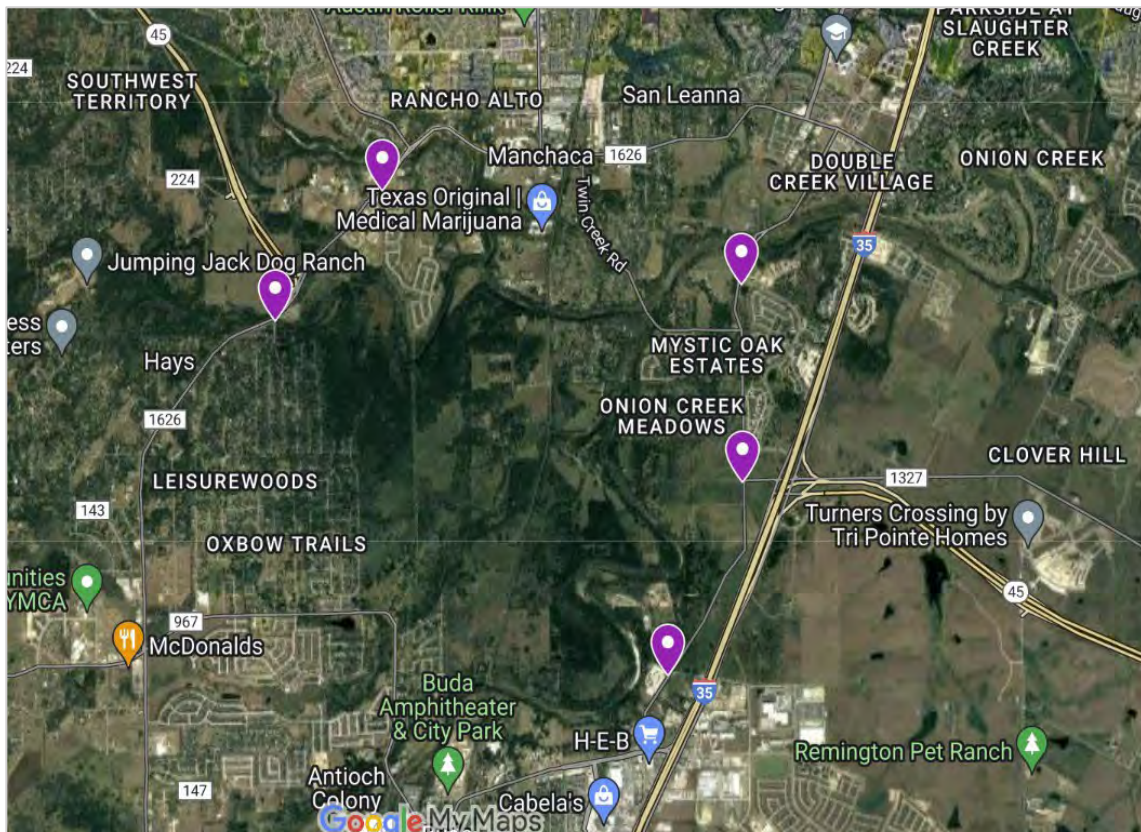
SH 45
TEXAS
SH 45
GAP STUDY

Thursday, Dec. 7
4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Sunfield Station Event Center
2610 Main St., Buda, TX 78610

Visit sh45gap.com

Locations:



Print Advertisement

Published in Hays Free Press on November 22, 2023.

Buda, Kyle libraries host community events



PHOTO BY ASHLEY KONTNER
 Ezra Childs, 2, checks out a garbage truck alongside his dad, Aaron Childs, at the Buda Library's second Annual Touch a Truck event on Saturday, Nov. 18. In addition to the garbage truck, there was a fire truck, police cars, a hydro-excavator, a dump truck and more. Follow the library on Facebook at @BudaLibrary to learn more about upcoming events.

PHOTO BY BRITTANY KELLEY
 Residents browse books at the Fall Book Sale hosted by Friends of the Kyle Public Library on Nov. 18. Books were \$0.50 for paperback, \$1 for hardcover or \$1.5 to fill a library tote bag.

45 TEXAS SH 45 GAP STUDY

OPEN HOUSE
Thursday, Dec. 7, 2023
 Drop in anytime from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

☑ Sunfield Station Event Center
 2610 Main St., Buda, TX 78610

🌐 Visit sh45gap.com to participate online

If you need interpretation, translation services, or require accommodation due to a disability to attend and participate in the open house, please reach out to the Project Team at 512-400-6107.

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THE CITY OF BUDA PRESENTS

DOWNTOWN BUDA DEC 1-3 BUDAFEST 2023

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🌐 WWW.BUDAFEST.ORG

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Local news needs people to verify information, gather the news and do the hard work of reporting. The Hays Free Press is a for-profit business, but we are your best ambassadors on the street and you are our stakeholders. As outlined in our First Amendment rights, we are a "free" press which gives us the independence to cover local government without restriction. But we cannot possibly sustain our business by giving away our product for free. What company could?

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Hays Free Press News-Dispatch
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Local cake artist competes to be 'The Greatest Baker'

By Megan Navarro
megan@haysfreepress.com

KYLE — A baker in Kyle is continuing the legacy of her mother and ensuring that her memory stays alive through every cake she makes. And she is hoping to share her story with the world by competing to earn the title of 'The Greatest Baker.'

Susana Otolara has been baking for the past year through her local home-based business, Susana's Dessert House, where she is recognized specifically for her bundt cakes that are infused with fresh fruits and soft creams that make the desserts just sweet enough. When she bakes bundt cakes for orders, Otolara feels like she is a child again when her mom would bake different desserts during the holidays, special occasions and just because.

"In my country [Columbia], my mom used to bake as a hobby. Basically, she was my first teacher and that was my first experience baking. Unfortunately, she passed away on July 20, 2021, and I just had my daughter, she was 11 months old. It was a hard time for me and I just keep baking because it reminds me of my mother," she explained. "She had a plan to open a bakery in my country. She was taking professional classes there, but her dream stopped because of COVID-19 and she got sick. It was a huge loss for our family, and obviously for me ... I just keep baking to keep away from the pain."

The baker has only had her hobby turned into a business for a short time, but she has felt a tremendous amount of support from Kyle and neighboring communities. She also credits La Olla Top Shop and Doloritas (the former of Sweet Cakes 4 U prior to its closure earlier this year, for their guidance and advice. "I was doing it as a hobby,

basically ... [When it] was Valentine's Day, we had lots of orders. And then I just went for a Kyle fair, I think it was Pie in the Sky," Otolara said. "It was actually my second time having a pop-up and it was sold out after three or four hours of being there. People were asking me, 'Do you have a license?' or something like that! It was a really good opportunity to see how well it was going to be."

Road to 'The Greatest Baker'

Otolara is competing to become "The Greatest Baker" in a national competition hosted by Buddy Valastro, known as the "Cake Boss," a pastry chef and TV personality. The winner of the competition will receive \$10,000 and be featured in a global artisan food and cooking magazine, "Bake From Scratch." They will also be able to meet and attend an exclusive workshop with Valastro.

The competition is all about recognizing home-based bakers and small businesses. For Otolara, winning could mean being able to purchase a mobile cake/food truck to have her desserts be more accessible to the public.

"I never expected this business to be this successful, so in my mind, it was just baking out of my home. But my own customers are just asking me to have something more open to the public ... This is a big opportunity because the money is going to go directly to open something," she explained. "And being in the magazine, wow, that's unbelievable. Being there, making my business just to be more recognizable for everyone around the country, Texas and



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Susana Otolara whips up her latest creation.

obviously in the county, is huge for me."

As of Monday, Dec. 4, Otolara is currently placed third in her group. Voting for the first round — the group stage — is active until 9 p.m. CST on Thursday, Dec. 7. Following the other rounds, the grand prize winner is expected to be announced in early 2024.

The competition is also supporting The Andrew McDonough, Be Positive Foundation, which helps provide for families dealing with pediatric cancer across the country.

Those who vote for bakers in the competition receive one free vote per day, but they can also receive more votes by donating a specific amount. For example, if someone donates \$10, then they get 10 votes for their chosen baker.

To vote for Otolara to become 'The Greatest Baker,' visit www.greatestbaker.com/2023/susana-otolara.

DIRECTOR From Page 2

band uniforms as we're walking from warm up over to the stadium in the snow, it was really just a cool experience."

Lucia has taught at Hays, Lehman and Johnson high schools and loved each, as they all brought him unique experiences. Although he doesn't have a favorite, there were different outstanding qualities for each group he directed.

"I don't really have a favorite school because the kids at each school were all different and all awesome in their own way. I've had different experiences as far as our success level and things like that, but not really a favorite school because they were all three special in their own way," he said.

When he directs, Lucia's emotions are on par with the music. He feels in sync with what his band will try to portray through its song and it's a powerful emotion for him.

"I tend to feel whatever the music is, just that mood," he said. "And then when we're done, it's just happiness, especially when we play for an audience and they enjoy the performance."

He has high hopes for where he will take the band next and where it will take him. He hopes to bring Johnson to the state marching contest, which is the highest contest in the state.

"I think we'll get there in the future, but it will just take some time. It doesn't just happen overnight," he said. "I don't have anything else to add, other than that I think I have the best job in the world."

HOLIDAY DEADLINES

Due to Christmas and New Years,

Hays Free Press News-Dispatch

Advertising Deadlines

Have been adjusted.

Our office will be closed

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday

(Dec. 25, 26 & 27) AND Monday,

Jan. 2 to allow our staff time

with their families.

ALL ADS

(RETAIL AND CLASSIFIED)

TO BE PUBLISHED:

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27

DATE:

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21 AT 5 P.M.

TO BE PUBLISHED:

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2024

DATE:

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29 AT 5 P.M.

For questions or to place your ad, call 512-268-7860

Hays County, in partnership with the City of Buda, is conducting a study to explore the feasibility of constructing SH 45 between I-35 and RM 1625. A second open house meeting for the study is being held.

Background data, input from the first open house, and preliminary route concepts will be shared for public comment and feedback.

OPEN HOUSE
Thursday, December 7, 2023
4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Sunlife Station Event Center
2610 Main St., Buda, TX 78610

SHARE COMMENTS

The information shared at the meeting will also be available online and the comment period is from Dec. 7 to Dec. 22, 2023. Comments may be submitted at the in-person open house, through the website, or by email, mail, text, or phone. We encourage all those that are interested in the Study to participate and share their thoughts.

The open house will be conducted in English. Project materials will be available in English for both meeting formats (online and in-person). If you need an interpreter or document translator because English is not your primary language or have difficulty communicating in English, one will be provided to you. If you have a disability and need assistance, special arrangements can be made to accommodate most needs. If you need interpretation or translation services or you are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation to attend and participate in the in-person or virtual open house, please contact the Project Team at 512-400-6107 no later than 4 p.m. CT, Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2023. Please be aware that advance notice is required as some services and accommodations may require time to arrange.

CONTACT

sh45gap.com | info@sh45gap.com | 512-400-6107

THE CITY OF BUDA PRESENTS

BUDA TRAIL OF LIGHTS

DECEMBER 6-9 & 13-16, 2023
6 PM - 9 PM • STAGECOACH PARK

WWW.BUDATX.GOV/TRAILOFLIGHTS

Website Advertisement

Posted on Community Impact - Dripping Springs and San Marcos - Buda - Kyle Pages from December 1-7, 2023.

45 TEXAS SH 45 GAP STUDY **OPEN HOUSE MEETING**

Thursday, Dec. 7, 2023
Drop in anytime from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Sunfield Station Event Center
2610 Main St., Buda, TX 78610

Visit sh45gap.com to learn more.

If you need interpretation, translation services, or require accommodation due to a disability to attend and participate in the open house, please reach out to the project team at 512-400-6107.

Morning Impact

45 TEXAS SH 45 GAP STUDY **OPEN HOUSE MEETING**

Thursday, Dec. 7, 2023
Drop in anytime from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Sunfield Station Event Center
2610 Main St., Buda, TX 78610

Visit sh45gap.com to learn more.

If you need interpretation, translation services, or require accommodation due to a disability to attend and participate in the open house, please reach out to the Project Team at 512-400-6107.

News Release

Distributed on November 29, 2023.

News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alyssa DeRosa
Public Involvement Consultant
info@sh45gap.com | 512-400-6107

SH 45 GAP STUDY – Open House Meeting #2

HAYS COUNTY, Texas (November 29, 2023)– Hays County, in partnership with the City of Buda, is conducting a study to explore the feasibility of constructing SH 45 between I-35 and RM 1626. The first open house was held on Thursday, June 15, 2023, during which the study was introduced to the public. The study team received valuable public input and has used that input to develop preliminary route concepts.

A second open house meeting for the study is being held. Background data, input from the first open house, and the preliminary route concepts will be shared for public comment and feedback. The open house will be held on Thursday, Dec 7, 2023, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Sunfield Station Event Center in Buda.

Open House

Thursday, Dec 7, 2023
4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Sunfield Station Event Center
2610 Main St., Buda TX 78610

Comment Period

Thursday, Dec 7, 2023 – Friday, Dec 22, 2023
All meeting materials will be available online

The open house meeting materials and comment opportunities will be available online at sh45gap.com from Thursday, Dec 7 to Friday, Dec 22, 2023.

We encourage the public to participate and share feedback by Friday, Dec 22, 2023. Comments may be submitted through the website, at the open house meeting, by email at info@sh45gap.com, by mail (PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763), or by text/voicemail at 512-400-6107.

For more information, visit sh45gap.com

###

Social Media

Facebook

Facebook post published on December 4, 2023.

Hays County Texas - Official · Follow
December 4 at 11:30 AM · 🌐

Hays County, in partnership with the [City of Buda, TX - City Government](#), is hosting the second open house of the SH 45 Gap Study to explore the feasibility of constructing SH 45 between I-35 and RM 1626 on Dec. 7. Join us anytime from 4:30-7:30 p.m. at Sunfield Station to learn more and share feedback! All materials shared will be available online. Visit sh45gap.com.

SH 45 GAP STUDY

OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, Dec. 7, 2023
Drop in anytime from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

📍 Sunfield Station Event Center
2610 Main St., Buda, TX 78610

🖱️ **Visit sh45gap.com to participate online**

If you need interpretation, translation services, or require accommodation due to a disability to attend and participate in the open house, please reach out to the project team at 512-400-6107.

👍 4 1 comment 5 shares

🔗 Share

X (Twitter)

X (Twitter) post published on December 4, 2023.

Hays County Texas @hayscountygov · Dec 4

Hays County, in partnership with the [@CityofBudaTX](#), is hosting the second open house of the SH 45 Gap Study on Dec. 7. Join us anytime from 4:30-7:30 p.m. at Sunfield Station to learn more and share feedback! Visit sh45gap.com.

SH 45 GAP STUDY

OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, Dec. 7, 2023
Drop in anytime from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

📍 Sunfield Station Event Center
2610 Main St., Buda, TX 78610

🖱️ **Visit sh45gap.com to participate online**

quire accommodation
en house, please reach

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Project Website

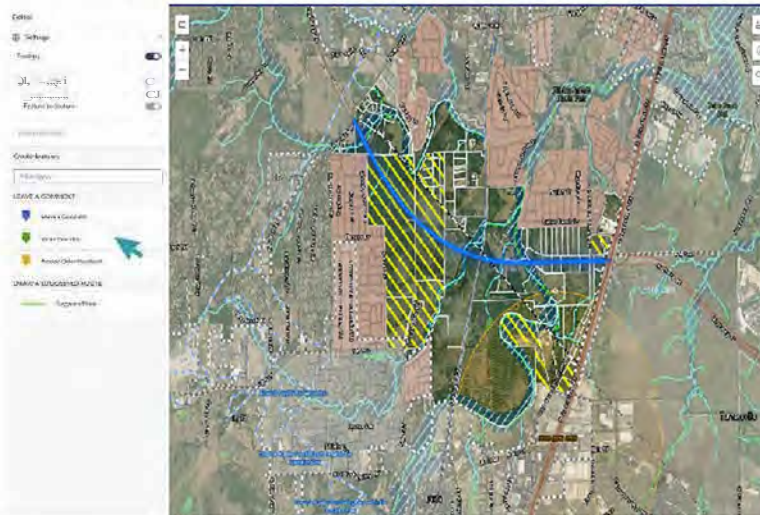
The screenshot shows the top portion of a website. At the top left is the logo for '45 TEXAS SH 45 Gap Study'. To its right are navigation links: 'HOME', 'PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT', 'RESOURCES', and 'CONTACT'. Below this is a teal banner with the text 'SH 45 GAP STUDY VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE' and 'Comment Period has closed'. Underneath is a section titled 'SH 45 Study Open House' with a paragraph of text. Below that is a section for 'Open House Meeting' with the date 'December 7, 2023 | 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.' and the location 'Sunfield Station Event Center, 2610 Main St., Buda, TX'.

The flyer features the '45 TEXAS SH 45 GAP STUDY' logo at the top. Below it is the title 'OPEN HOUSE' in large teal letters, followed by the date and time 'Dec. 7, 2023 | 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.' and the location 'Sunfield Station Event Center'. A QR code is positioned on the left side. A dark blue box contains the text 'Comment Period: Dec. 7 - Dec. 22, 2023' and 'Submit Comments' with three bullet points: 'At the open house', 'Email: info@sh45gap.com', and 'Mail: PO Box 5469, Austin, TX 78763'. To the right of this box is a right-pointing arrow. Below the dark blue box is a paragraph of text: 'Welcome and thank you for your interest in the SH 45 Gap Study. The purpose of this second open house is to share information about the study, share the ideas and suggestions received through the first open house, and to share the route concepts developed from those suggestions. And, most importantly, to receive your feedback and input.' Below this is another paragraph: 'Comments may be shared at the open house meeting, through the online comment card, interactive map, by email, mail, text, or voicemail. To be included in the official summary of this meeting, comments must be received by December 22, 2023.' At the bottom are two links: 'View and download SH 45 Gap Study exhibits and script (PDF)' and 'View and download SH 45 Gap Study Preliminary Alignment Scenarios (PDF)'.

Share Your Feedback

Please share your comments online through the "Yilline.com" or the online interactive map, by email, mail, text, or voicemail. View and download SHS Gap Study exhibits and script (PDF)

Leave Comments on the Map



To leave a comment in the map, follow the steps below:

Step 1 Navigate around the map by holding down your mouse and panning until you are at the location where you would like to leave a comment. You may use the + and - button on the top left corner of the map to zoom in and out.

Step 2 Click on the Editor (Pencil icon) button on the left sidebar and choose the type of comment you would like to leave from one of the colored pins.

Step 3 Click the map where you would like to place the pin and type in your comment.

Step 4 When you're finished typing the comment click the blue CREATE button to save your comment. Note that comments left blank will not be saved on the map.

To draw a route on the map, follow the below steps.

Step 1 Click on the Editor (Pencil icon) button on the left sidebar and choose the green "Suggest a Route" pin.

Step 2 Navigate around the map by holding down your mouse and panning until you are at the location where you would like to leave a comment. You may use the + and - button on the top left corner of the map to zoom in and out.

Step 3 Click once to start your route and continue to click along the route that you would like to suggest.

Step 4 Once you have reached the end, double-click to finish your route. Click the blue CREATE button to save.

TIPS:

- Once you create a point with a comment or draw a line on the map, you won't be able to delete it. If you choose the wrong location by mistake, simply leave the comment blank and try again. Once a feature is created, it cannot be edited or deleted.
- Comments within the map are limited to 254 characters, so if you have a lot to say you can add multiple points to the map, or submit a formal comment.

LAYERS

You can toggle map layers on/off under this menu.

LEGEND

The legend displays symbols of active layers on the map. If you turn off a layer, it will not be displayed.

Leave Comments on the Comment Form

45
TEXAS **SH 45**
GAP STUDY

SH 45 Gap Study Open House Comment Card

The form SH 45 Gap Study Open House Comment Card is no longer accepting responses. Try contacting the owner of the form if you think this is a mistake.

[The form was created inside of CD&P Report Abuse](#)

Google Forms

Open House Sign-in Sheets



Name	Address	Email
Michelle Small	P.O.B 140384, Austin, TX 78714	
CARL SORRELLS	MANCHACA 78756 AUSTIN 506 HORSE THEIF TRAIL	
MICHAEL LITTELL	12706 SHAW ACRES DR. BUDA, TX 78610	
Bobby LeDoux	13548A SECTION HOUSE DR MANCHACA TX 78652 P.O. BOX 176 MANCHACA TX 78652	
JOHN ELWELL	357 BETONY LOOP BUDA TX 78610	
Sherree Lantz	11508 Arbroath LN AUSTIN TX 78754	
WALTER DALE DAVIS	420 SUMMER POINTE DR, BUDA, TX 78610	

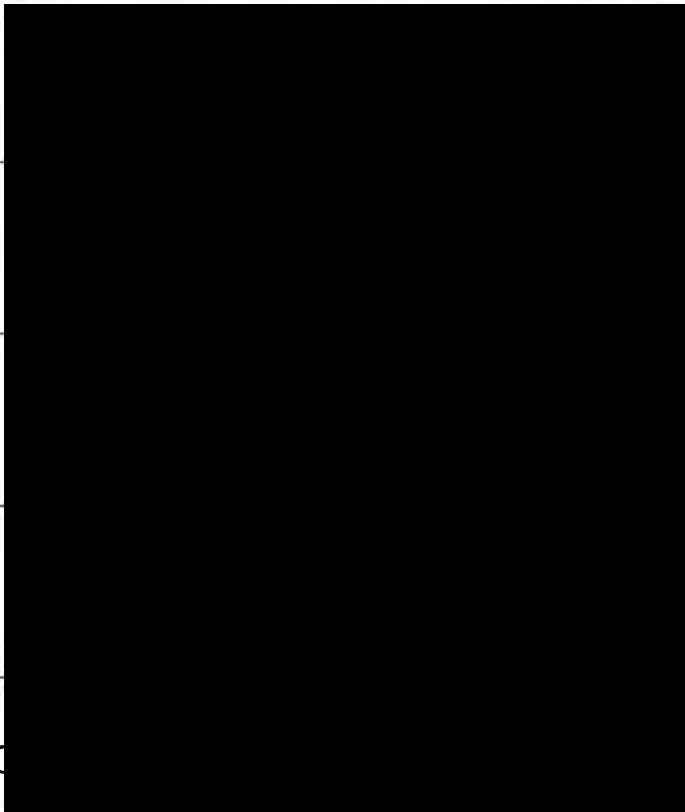
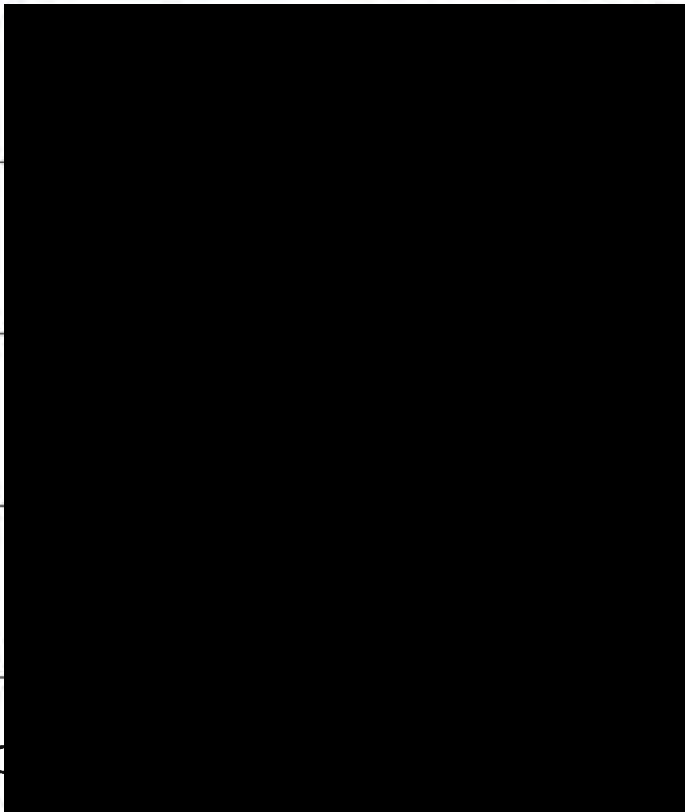
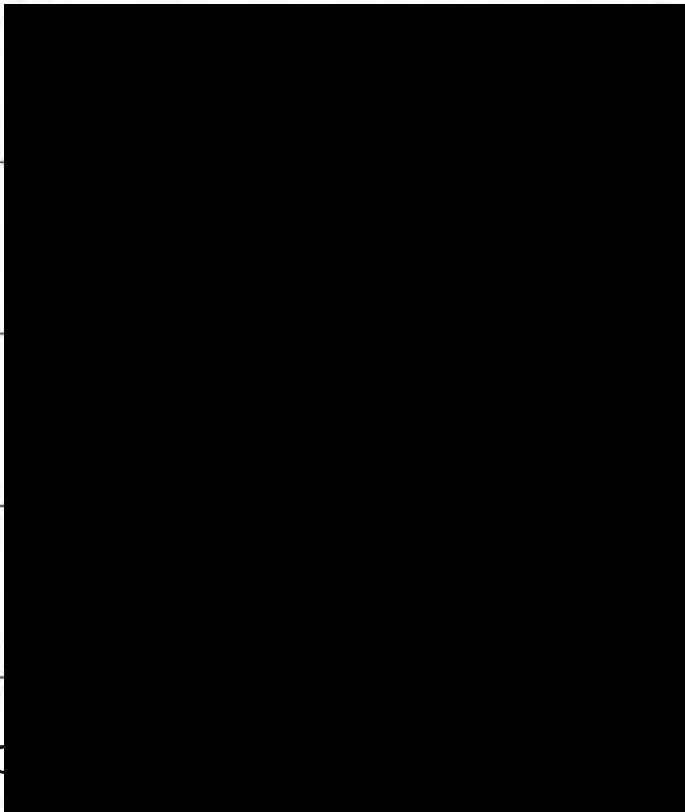
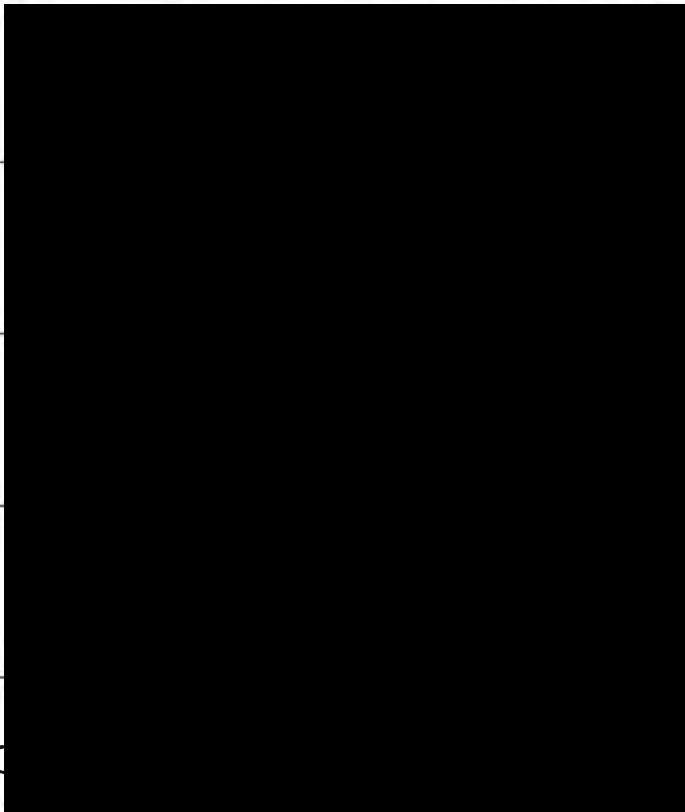
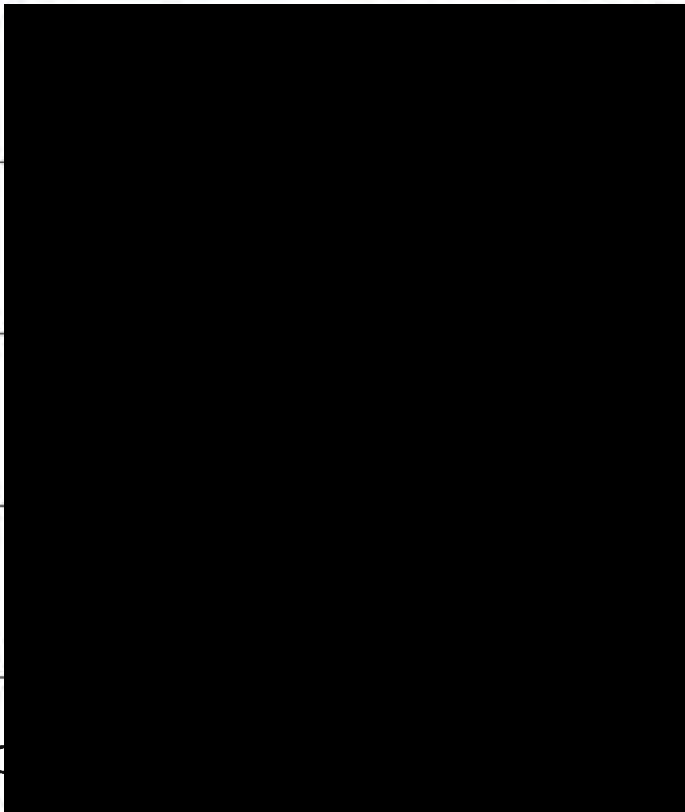
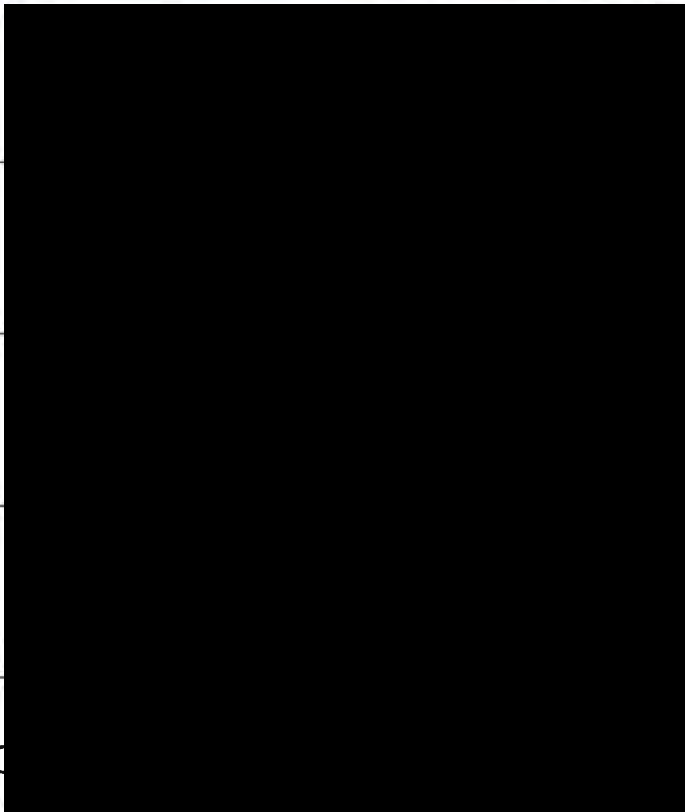
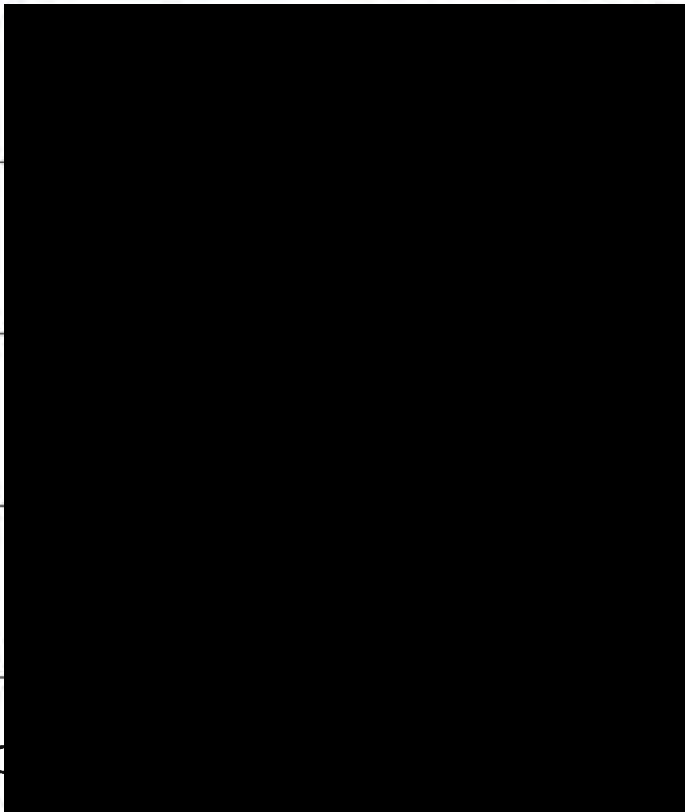


Name	Address	Email						
Martha McKee	246 Tanzanite Circle Buda TX 78610							
Jim Olander	" "							
ED PENSUCK	239 Carousel Ln. Driftwood TX 78619							
* Marti Reich	Hays Co.							
Will Parrish	Buda							
Jimi Camp	3803 Cattlemen Dr. Manhaca							
Chris Barron	665 W. FM 1626 Austin, TX 78748							



Name	Address	Email
Jennifer Moczygemba	190 Spang Hollow NB	
ROBERT HESSELBROCK	158 KATES COVE Buda TX 78610	
Lise + Kevin McAdams	237 Firethorn Buda, TX 78610	
MARK DRISCOLL	14605 OLD San Antonio Buda, TX 78610	
Rick Perkins	8503 El Rey Blvd AUSTIN 78737	
Sara Shannon	307 Raccoon Run Buda TX 78610	
Udwin + Jerry Sherman	14505 Old San Antonio Rd Buda, 78610	



Name	Address	Email
Matt H/m	506 Horse Thief	
DANE MOKETON	802 Vineyard Falls Rd.	
Ed ERDMANN	875 VISTA GARDENS BUDA	
Bill Cash	1254 Taylor Dr Buda, Tx 78610	
Allen Crozier	1450 Rich Lane Buda, TX 78610	
Dawn KIRCHNER	413 WETZEL KYCE TX 78640	
Jeff Schubert	P.O. Box 587 Munckaw	



Name	Address	Email
Bobby Lewinski	248 Comaro Way San Marcos, TX 78066	
David Parsons	1255 Firecracker Dr Apt. 232 Buda, TX 78610	
Bobby Lerman	1572 Main St Buda, TX 78610	
Carl Lerman	1572 Main St Buda, TX 78610	
Jim LARNER	524 CLARENCE CT Buda TX 78610	



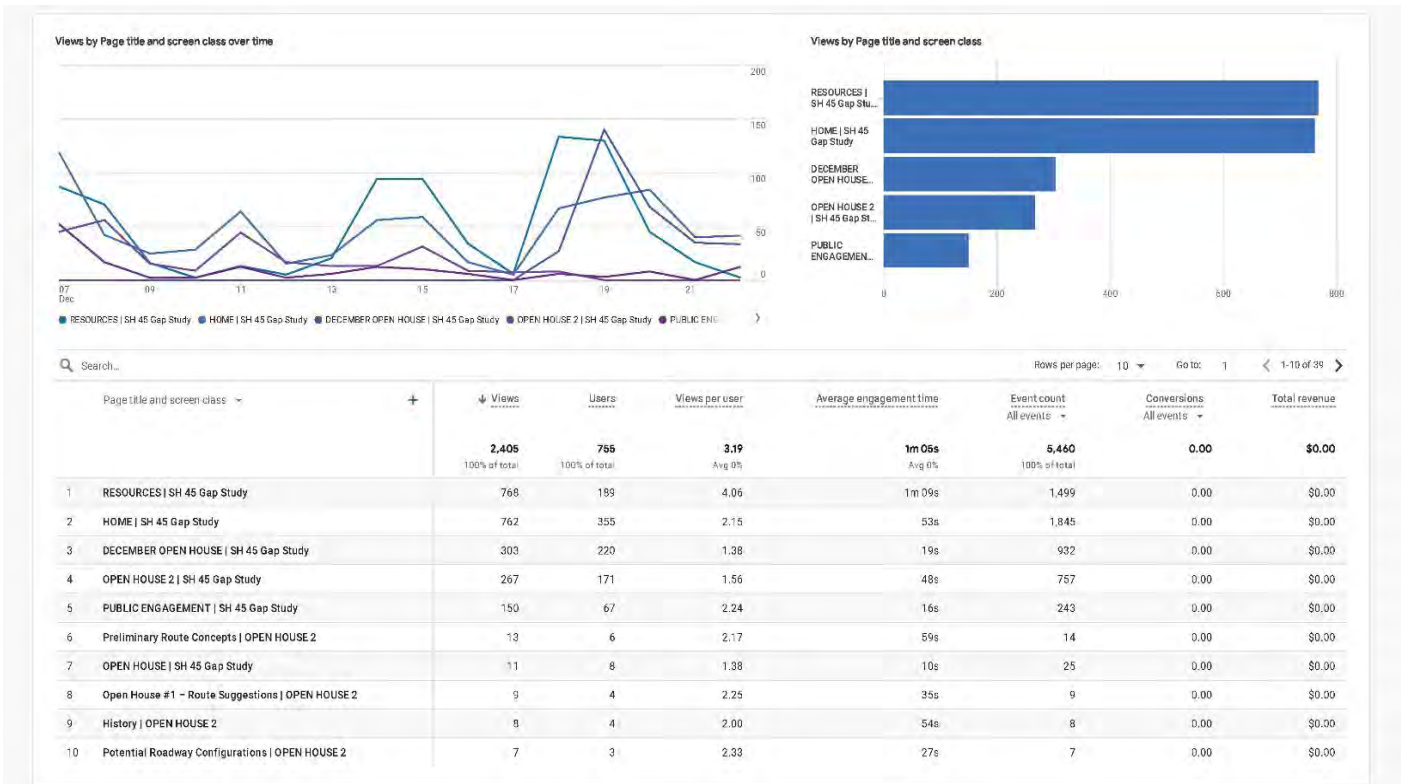
SH 45 GAP STUDY

Open House Sign-in Sheet Thursday, Dec. 7, 2023

Name	Address	Email
SANJAY NEGI	13125 DITKA LN, MANCHACA, TX	[REDACTED]

Website Analytics

User Website Analytics



New vs returning visitors



Meeting Materials

In-Person and Online Meeting Boards Pg. 72

Interactive Maps Pg. 90

In Person Comment Card Pg. 92

Online Comment Card Pg. 94

In-Person and Online Meeting Boards with Script



The poster features the SH 45 Texas logo at the top left, with '45' in a green square and 'TEXAS' below it, followed by 'SH 45' in large bold letters and 'GAP STUDY' below. The main title 'OPEN HOUSE' is in large teal letters. Below that, the date and time 'Dec. 7, 2023 | 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.' and the location 'Sunfield Station Event Center' are listed. A QR code is on the left side. The bottom section is a dark blue bar with white text for 'Comment Period: Dec. 7 - Dec. 22, 2023', 'Submit Comments', and a list of contact methods: 'At the open house', 'Email: info@sh45gap.com', 'Mail: PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763', 'Online: sh45gap.com', and 'Text/Voicemail: 512-400-6107'.

45 SH 45
TEXAS GAP STUDY

OPEN HOUSE

Dec. 7, 2023 | 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Sunfield Station Event Center

Comment Period: Dec. 7 - Dec. 22, 2023

Submit Comments

- At the open house
- Email: info@sh45gap.com
- Mail: PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763
- Online: sh45gap.com
- Text/Voicemail: 512-400-6107

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the SH 45 Gap Study. The purpose of this second open house is to share information about the study, share the ideas and suggestions received through the first open house, and to share the route concepts developed from those suggestions. And, most importantly, to receive your feedback and input.

Comments may be shared at the open house meeting, through the online comment card, interactive map, by email, mail, text, or voicemail. To be included in the official summary of this meeting, comments must be received by December 22, 2023.

HISTORY

1986 Austin Metropolitan Transportation Plan:

Envisioned SH 45 as the Austin Outer Parkway, a loop encircling the City of Austin

Completed Sections:

- SH 45 - Loop 1 South to RM 1826
- SH 45 North - US 183 North to FM 685/SH 130
- SH 45 Southeast - US 183 South to I-35 South
- SH 45 Southwest - Loop 1 South to RM 1626
- State Highway 130, dually designated as SH 45, connects SH 45 from the north to the south side of Austin

Leaving the "Gap" between I-35 South and RM 1626



SH 45 was originally envisioned as a loop, called the Austin Outer Parkway, encircling the City of Austin. The Austin Outer Parkway concept was included in the [Austin Metropolitan Transportation Plan](#), adopted in 1986.

As shown on this map, major portions of SH 45 have been constructed. The original concepts for the westernmost segments of SH 45 are no longer planned, which leaves the "Gap" between I-35 and RM 1626.

HISTORY

Gap Study and Project included in:

- Hays County 2021 Transportation Plan
- City of Buda 2020 Buda Moves! Transportation Mobility Master Plan

Gap Study included in:

- CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan
 - "Design of environmental and preliminary engineering for new freeway" from FM 1626 to I-35.¹

SH 45 Gap Study

Hays County, in partnership with the City of Buda, is exploring the feasibility of the Gap Project before the area is substantially developed.



¹ Page 133 in the CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan

The need for the Gap Project has been identified in both the Hays County and City of Buda transportation plans. Additionally, CAMPO identified the need for this Gap Study in the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.

Hays County, in partnership with the City of Buda, is exploring the feasibility of the Gap Project before the area is substantially developed.

PURPOSE OF GAP STUDY

- Explore the feasibility of constructing SH 45 between I-35 and RM 1626
- Facilitate coordination between property owners, local partners, regional stakeholders, and the surrounding community in planning for transportation needs

PURPOSE OF POTENTIAL GAP PROJECT

- Enhance regional mobility
- Facilitate system connectivity



The purpose of the Study is to examine the feasibility of building the segment of SH 45 between I-35 and RM 1626.

This study will look into factors such as engineering challenges, environmental impacts, and cost considerations. Additionally, the study aims to bring together property owners, local partners, regional stakeholders, and the community to plan for transportation needs and ensure that everyone's input is considered. This collaboration is important to develop a transportation solution that works well for the area and considers the interests and concerns of all involved.

The purpose of the potential Gap Project is to enhance regional mobility and facilitate system connectivity.

STUDY GOALS

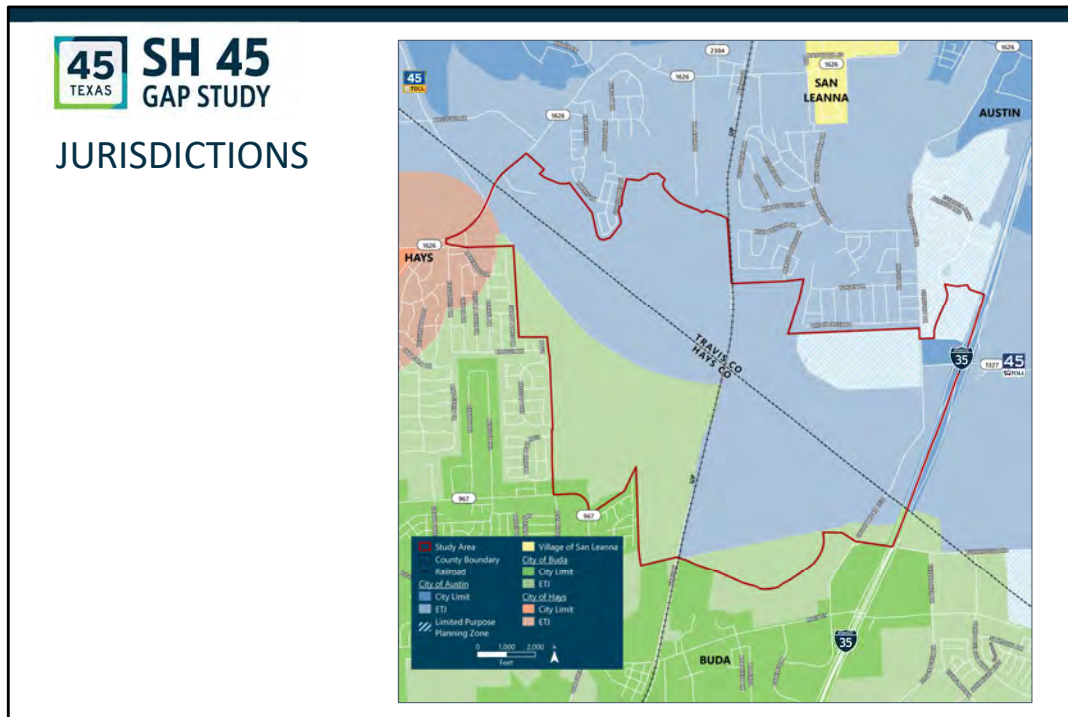
- Conduct the study in a proactive and transparent manner
- Engage and gather input from a broad range of stakeholders, property owners, and local and regional leaders
- Identify conceptual route option(s) for additional and more detailed studies
- Minimize impacts to existing and planned development
- Identify strategies for environmental protection and associated best practices

OPEN HOUSE #2 GOALS

- Gather comments on the study, and feedback on the route concepts and roadway configurations

The goals of this Study are to do things in a proactive and clear way, collect input from a wide range of people including community members, property owners, and local leaders, identify conceptual route options to study in more detail, and work to minimize impacts on current and future development. We also want to identify strategies to protect the environment and follow the best practices for doing so.

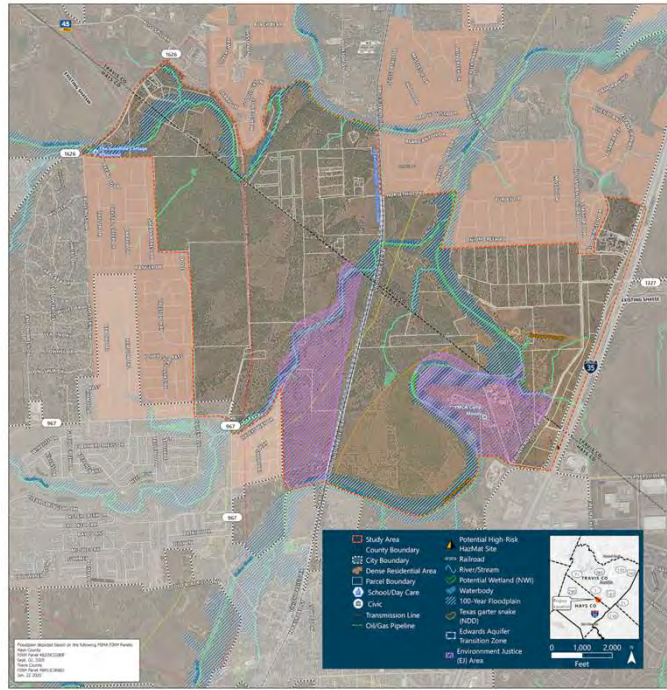
The goals for this second open house are to gather comments on the study and feedback on the preliminary route concepts and roadway configurations.



This map identifies the boundaries of Travis County and Hays County, as well as the specific cities within and surrounding the study area.

As shown here, in addition to the two counties, portions of the study area fall within the jurisdictions of the Cities of Austin and Buda. The SH 45 Gap Study will include coordination with these entities.

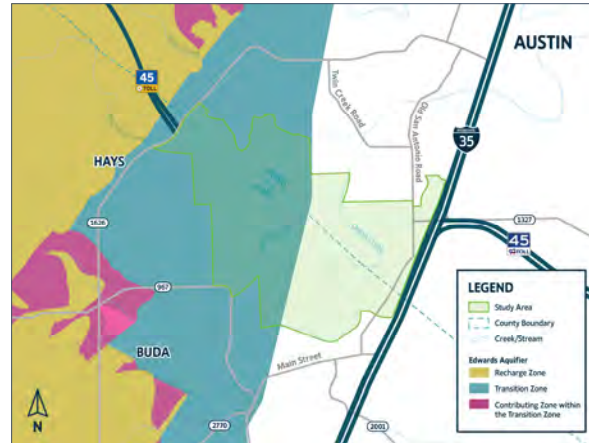
45 **SH 45**
TEXAS GAP STUDY
CONSTRAINTS



The constraints map displays specific environmental and land use features in and around the study area. The development of this map is an important part of the process as it helps to identify factors or conditions that may affect where the roadway could be located and better understand the potential effects of doing so.

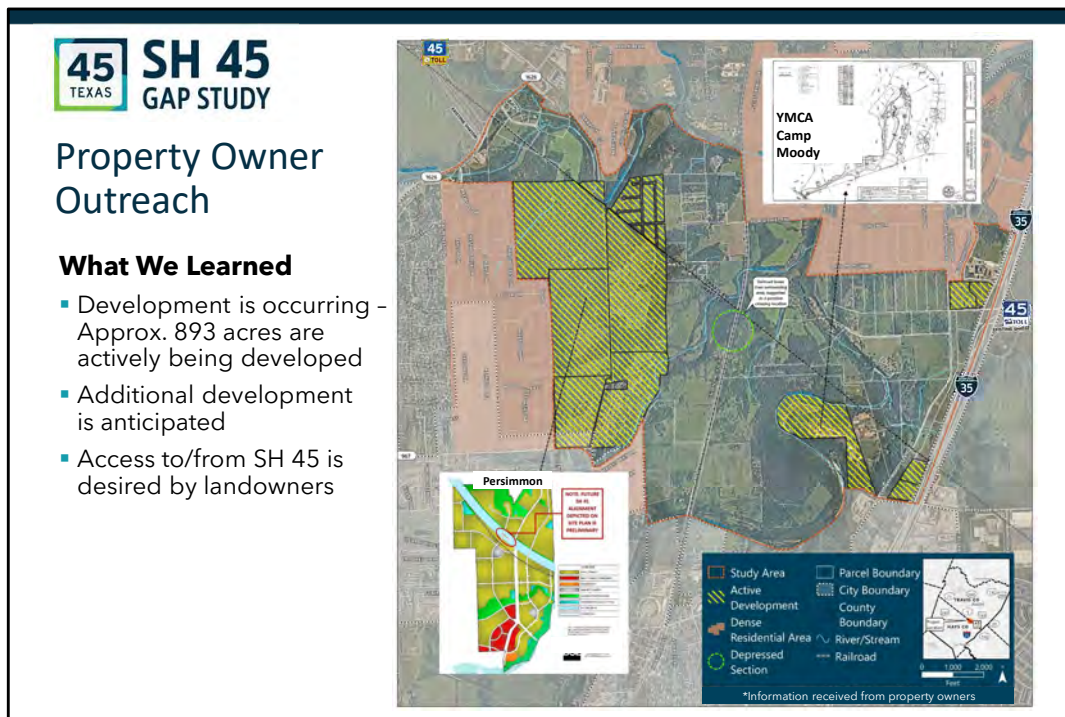
EDWARDS AQUIFER

- A portion of the study area is located in the Edwards Aquifer Transition Zone
- This study includes the identification of potential best practices for environmental protection



The Edwards Aquifer is an important source of groundwater for Central Texas. Development over the aquifer is regulated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The aquifer is made up of three primary zones: contributing zone, recharge zone and transition zone. The contributing and recharge zones are considered to be the most environmentally sensitive. As shown here, the study area is wholly outside the limits of contributing and recharge zones. A portion of the study area is located within the transition zone.

If the SH 45 Gap Project is constructed in the future, water quality protection would be a priority and the design would incorporate water quality protection measures.




In early 2023, the study team met with several property owners in the study area. This map shows information provided by those property owners.

The yellow hatched areas on the map identify properties which, according to the owners, are now being actively developed. These areas of future development encompass more than 800 acres (roughly 27% of the study area). Several property owners also noted a location where the roadway could potentially cross over the Union Pacific rail line. This information will be part of what is considered as the study moves forward.

45
TEXAS

SH 45

GAP STUDY




OPEN HOUSE #1 – JUNE 15, 2023




615

Virtual Open House
Unique Views



66

Open House
Attendees

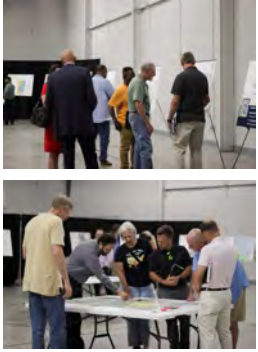


252

Total Comments
Collected

WHAT WE HEARD

- Details about the Study Area
 - Suggestions for potential alignments and areas to avoid
- Concerns and opposition for the Gap Project
 - Concerns that it would impact the Edwards Aquifer and environment
 - Concerns that it would add more traffic to MoPac and other area roadways
- Support for the Gap Project
- Suggestions related to access, ramps, and frontage roads

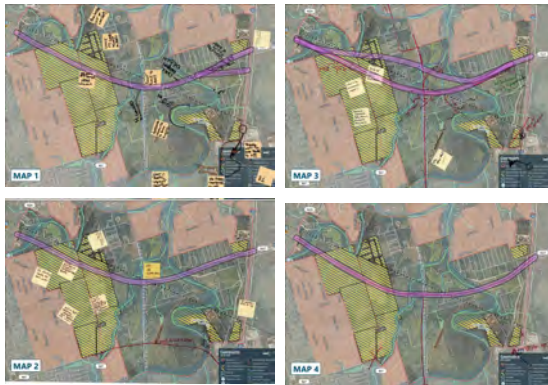


The first public open house was held on June 15, 2023 and there were over 60 attendees. In addition, a virtual open house was available online and it received 615 unique views during the open comment period. In total, 252 comments were received. Common themes from the comments include:

- Suggestions for potential alignments and areas to avoid
- Opposition to the Gap Project due to environmental concerns (particularly the Edwards Aquifer)
- Concern the project would increase traffic on MoPac and other area roadways
- Support for the Gap Project
- Suggestions related to access, ramps, and frontage roads

For more information, please review the meeting report available on the project website.

OPEN HOUSE #1 – JUNE 15, 2023 ROUTE SUGGESTIONS



Route suggestions submitted from the public at the in-person meeting



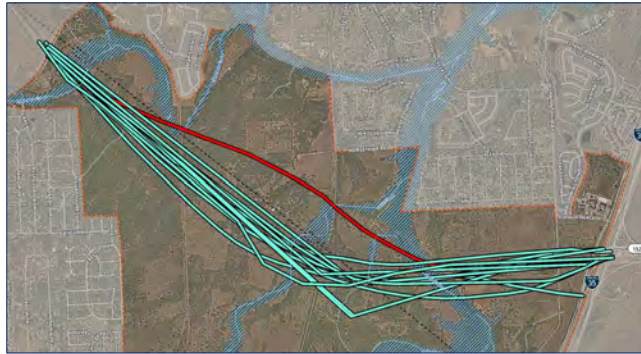
Route suggestions submitted by visitors online

At the first open house we asked for comments, ideas, and possible route suggestions. The four maps on the left show public input received at the in-person meeting with route suggestions highlighted in purple. The map on the right shows suggestions received through the virtual open house online map.

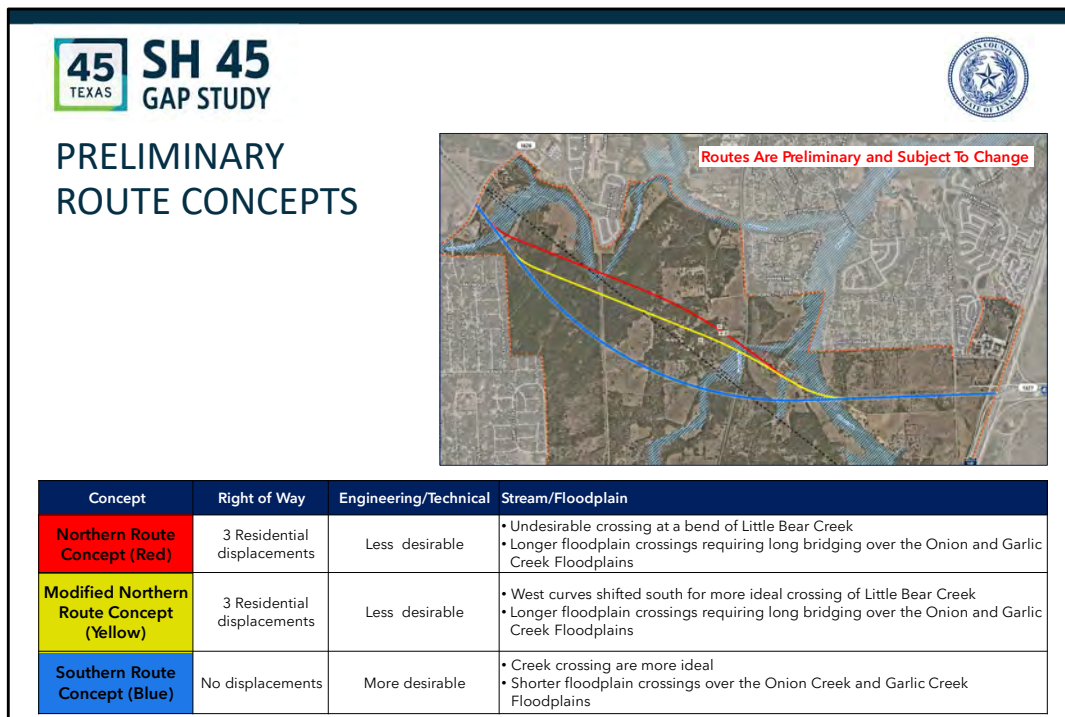
OPEN HOUSE #1 – JUNE 15, 2023 ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

Compilation of All Route Suggestions Submitted by the Public

- All but one route submitted, the northern most route, reflect the same basic concept with slight variations



This map represents the compilation of all route suggestions – those made in-person at the June 15 open house and those made on-line. As you can see, with the exception of the northernmost route, all of the routes represent slight variations of the same basic concept. The next step was to apply engineering criteria to the route suggestions.



Shown here, in red, is the northern route concept after applicable engineering criteria was applied. This alignment would result in three residential displacements. Geometrically, it is less technically desirable. It crosses Little Bear Creek directly over a bend in the creek and would require long bridges over the floodplains of Onion and Garlic Creeks.

In an effort to minimize the impacts of the northern route concept, the Study Team developed a modified northern concept – shown here in yellow. With the modified north concept, the west end curves are shifted south to avoid the route crossing directly over the bend of Little Bear Creek; however, it still requires long bridges over the floodplains of Onion and Garlic Creeks. The modified north concept results in the same number of residential displacements as the north option.

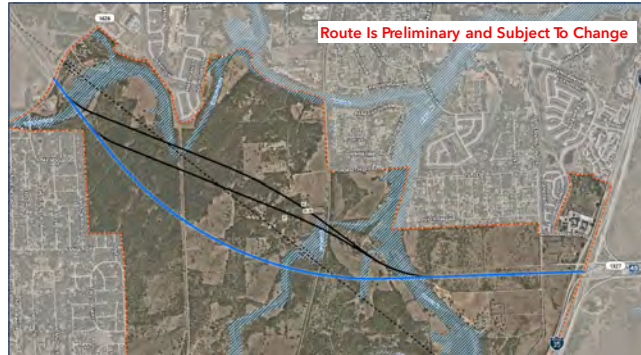
The southern option, shown in blue, is representative of all other route suggestions received from the public. Geometrically, the southern concept is more technically desirable than the northern concepts. Creek crossing locations are more desirable and there would be zero residential or commercial displacements.

PRELIMINARY ROUTE CONCEPTS

Southern Concept - Recommended Preliminary Alignment for Further Study

- Fewer impacts
 - No displacements
 - Shorter floodplain crossings
- More technically desirable alignment

Northern Concepts - Eliminated From Further Study

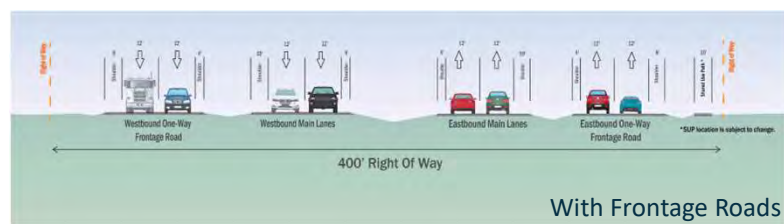
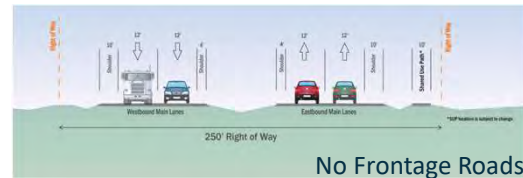


For the reasons mentioned previously (no residential displacements, more desirable geometry, and stream and floodplain considerations), and since all other route suggestions reflected a southern route, the southern concept is the recommended “Preliminary Alignment”. The northern concepts, shown here in black, were eliminated from further consideration.

It is important to understand that the Preliminary Alignment is not final. It is subject to change and refinement through the course of the feasibility study and, assuming the project advances beyond the current feasibility study, during future phases of project development.

POTENTIAL ROADWAY CONFIGURATIONS

- Frontage roads may be included along all or part of the route



Illustrations Not to Scale

Consistent with existing State Highway 45 west of RM 1626 and east of I-35, it is assumed that the Gap Project would be controlled access. Here you see anticipated cross sections of the facility one that does not include frontage roads and one that includes frontage roads. It is possible that, if constructed, the facility would be a combination of the two – with frontage roads provided where necessary to provide access to adjacent properties and where desired for consistency with local planning. Also notable is the shared-use path that would run parallel to the roadway within the right of way. Consistent with the shared use path along existing SH 45 Southwest, this “trail” would accommodate bicycles and pedestrians.

To accommodate these cross sections, two right of way “footprints” have been developed. The roadway without frontage roads would typically require 250 feet of right of way and with frontage roads the roadway would typically require 400 feet of right of way.

Alignments Are Preliminary and Subject To Change

PRELIMINARY ALIGNMENT ASSESSMENT

- The study team is beginning to look at impacts of the preliminary alignment
- As a first step, the right of way footprints were identified considering a 250' ROW and a 400' ROW
- The anticipated impacts in the table below may be adjusted as the preliminary alignment is refined



	Length (miles)	ROW Required (acres)	Parcels Impacted	Parcels Bisected	Displacements	Residences/Community Facilities within 250' of ROW	Length within EJ area (miles)	River, stream, or creek crossings	Acres in 100-year floodplain	Acres in NWI wetlands
400' ROW Width	3.6	190.4	20	7	0	1	0.12	5	14.6	1.58
250' ROW Width	3.6	145.7	20	7	0	0	0.12	5	10.5	1.07

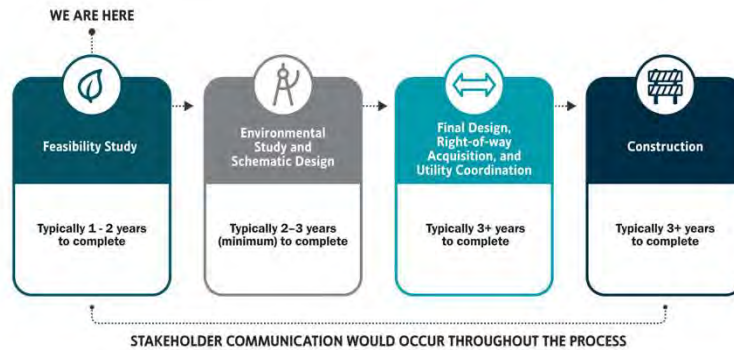
Impacts are not anticipated to community facilities (such as schools, hospitals and emergency services), dedicated parkland, cemeteries, historic properties*, oil/gas wells, or known hazardous materials sites. *For purposes of this evaluation, properties that are listed on or known to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places are considered historic.

This table shows the anticipated impacts resulting from the two right of way scenarios (with and without frontage roads) for the Preliminary Alignment. As indicated here, the Preliminary Alignment would result in zero residential or commercial displacements. Additionally, no impacts are anticipated to community facilities such as schools, hospitals and emergency services, dedicated parkland, cemeteries, historic properties*, oil/gas wells, or known hazardous materials sites.

* For purposes of this evaluation, properties that are listed on or known to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places are considered historic.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This study is the first step of many in project development and is a pre-National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning-level study. Only the feasibility study has been funded. Advancement from phase to phase is contingent upon funding.



It typically takes many years to develop a project such as the SH 45 Gap Project and funding is required for each phase of the process. To date, only the feasibility study funding has been allocated to the SH 45 Gap project.

If through the feasibility study it is determined that the project should be developed further and necessary funding is secured, the next step would be to complete the schematic design and conduct a comprehensive environmental review. The environmental review process, anticipated to take a minimum of 2-3 years to complete, would include detailed investigations of potential impacts resulting from the Gap Project. It would also include additional opportunities for interested stakeholders to engage in the planning process and provide input/feedback.

It should be noted that construction cannot be authorized until detailed environmental investigations are complete, and an environmental document is prepared.



ACTIVITIES TO DATE

2022 - 2023

- Hays County approved funding for this feasibility study, Fall 2022
- Collected and evaluated constraints and traffic data
- Identified preliminary study area
- Held meetings with property owners and stakeholders
- Study Open House Meeting #1, June 15, 2023
- Study Open House Meeting #2, Dec. 7, 2023

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

2024

- Analyze feedback from Open House #2
- Continue meeting with stakeholders and property owners
- Complete traffic study including traffic modeling, origin/destination study, and operational analysis
 - Includes assessment of potential impacts on local roads and MoPac
- Refine the evaluation and preliminary alignment
- Hold Open House #3 - Present results of the traffic study, route concept, and potential access points
 - Tentatively planned for summer 2024

The SH 45 Gap Study was approved for funding by Hays County in fall of 2022. The study team has collected and evaluated constraints and traffic data, identified the preliminary study area, initiated coordination with study area property owners and local stakeholders, hosted the first open house on June 15, 2023 and is now hosting the second open house meeting.

Looking ahead to 2024, all feedback from the community meeting will be evaluated, additional property owner and stakeholder meetings will be held. The traffic studies and operational analysis will be completed, and the Preliminary Alignment will be refined.

A third open house, anticipated for summer 2024, will be held to present the results of the traffic study, route concept, and potential access points.

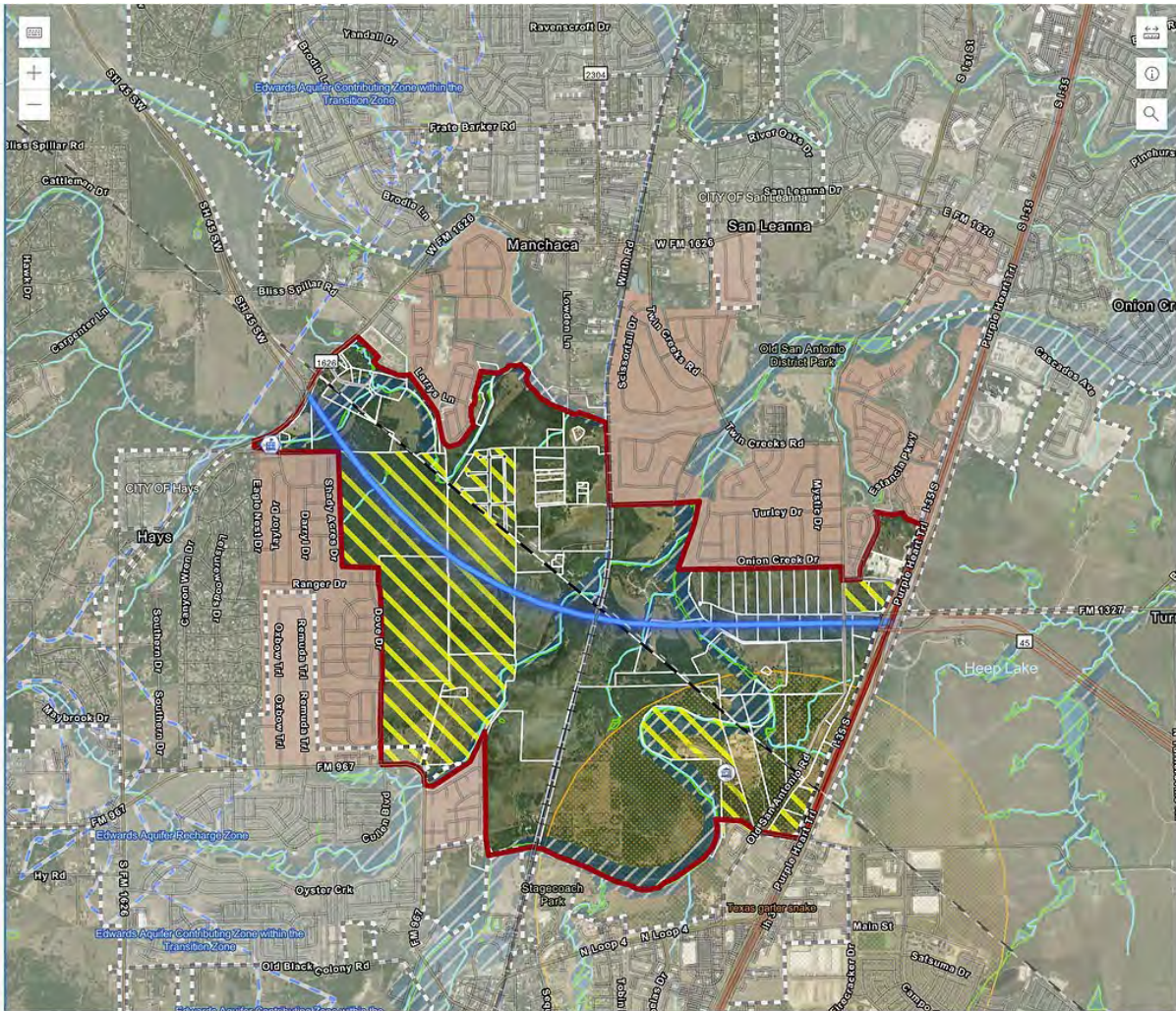
Information will continue to be available on the website and shared through email updates. Thank you for your participation and we look forward to hearing from you.

Maps

In-Person Map



Online Map





SH 45 GAP STUDY

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

cdandpinfo@gmail.com [Switch account](#)



Not shared

Name

Your answer

Phone Number

Your answer

Address

Your answer

Email

Your answer

Home Zip Code

Your answer

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

Your answer

Comments:

Your answer

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

Submit

Clear form



Comments Received

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

caitlin admire

Phone Number



Address

12710 Burson Dr, Manchaca, TX

Email



Home Zip Code

78652

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

78666

Comments:

The routes and concepts are so high level at this point, I don't have a major preference. My priorities include noise mitigation and environmental impacts (our neighborhood is very close to the proposed routes). If you can address the train horn in the area as part of this project and get us some quiet zones (Horsethief, 1626) that would be a nice positive thing to do for the neighborhoods nearby that will be impacted by the project.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.



From: Wayne Allen [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, Dec 14, 2015
To: info@sh45gap.com
Subject: 45 Gap project

I am against the 45 Gap project ENTIRELY. We are past the point of solving “problems” with more roads, as we MUST begin *reducing* road use, not increasing it. And believe me, if you open Mopac to I35 traffic, it will clog Mopac to a crawl, using *more* fuel, creating *more* development sprawl with land and resource degradation. You’ll make some billionaires and developers richer, but no one else will really benefit in the long run.

It’s time to stop the madness.

Sincerely,
Wayne Allen
Austin Tx

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Matt Baker

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Address

7728 Haggans Lane, Austin, TX 78739

Email

[REDACTED]

Home Zip Code

78739

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

78701

Comments:

Without fixing the inefficient 71/290 & MoPac northbound interchange, the increase in traffic from this project will make an already difficult northbound commute nearly impassable.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

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From: Rob Baxter [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 12:45 PM
To: info@sh45gap.com
Subject: Fw: Reminder - SH 45 Gap Study Open House #2

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I have absolutely nothing good to say about this connector project and stand firmly against it. Mopac South is severely congested as it is during rush hours and this will only exacerbate the problem turning it into a veritable parking lot. Not only that, it will guarantee substantially increased truck traffic when in point of fact, MOPAC should ideally be a truck free zone. MOPAC was designed to be a car commuter highway, but it is too narrow now for the cars it now has, let alone additional trucks and more cars.

Prior to this connector going in, which you obviously and cynically intend to do no matter what we say, there needs to be at least double the lanes on Mopac South that there are now. And on top of that, when it happens, the SW 45 connector should be made a truck free tollway. Put the cart behind the horse for once here.

Rob Baxter
Driftwood, TX
[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: SH 45 Gap Study <info@sh45gap.com>
[REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 at 08:44:20 AM CST
Subject: Reminder - SH 45 Gap Study Open House #2

[View this email in your browser](#)



REMINDER: We will be hosting a second open house for the SH 45 Gap Study. At the open house, we will share background data, input from the first open house, and preliminary route concepts will be shared for public comment and feedback.

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Nathaniel Carty

Phone Number

[Redacted]

Address

7300 Red Pebble Rd, Austin, TX 78739

Email

[Redacted]

Home Zip Code

78739

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

.....

Comments:

As someone that drives from my circle c home to all over East Austin, South Austin and down all the way to San Marcos regularly, I absolutely support this extension. This will help relive the existing connection a lot.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

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Oppose SH 45 Extension across Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer recharge zone

Leslie Currens [REDACTED]

Thu 12/7/2023 4:11 PM

To:SH 45 Gap Study <info@sh45gap.com>
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I am writing to express my opposition to any extension of SH45 connecting it to I-35.

The potential extension of SH45 from its current southern terminus at 1626 to a connection point with IH 35 somewhere near Buda would complete a western loop around Austin, and open up SH45 and Mopac — which run right through the heart of the aquifer recharge zone — to interstate traffic.

I live directly West of MoPac in north central Austin, and I am completely opposed to this proposal. This proposal would directly impact my neighborhood and home for the worst. We do not need to draw interstate traffic which should be on the Interstate Highway I-35 into our city and neighborhoods, and particularly not across the Barton Springs recharge area.

If completed, the proposed 45 SW "gap" extension would immediately convert Mopac from a local commuter highway into a western I-35 alternative, diverting interregional and interstate traffic over the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone. Our most vulnerable aquifer and Barton Springs would be polluted: Mopac would be overwhelmed with new "I-35 West" traffic. This is terrible environmental and transportation planning.

These studies are moving forward against the objection of both the Travis County Commissioners Court and the Austin City Council, yet whichever route is chosen would traverse Austin and Travis County jurisdictions. The studies should be immediately halted absent an agreement with Austin and Travis County that the studies consider alternatives to the proposed 45SW extension on equal footing with the proposal to find a "least damaging" route for the extension.

Hays County Commissioners and Buda should instead work together with the City of Austin and Travis County to prioritize transportation investments that support development and intercity travel in the areas east and downstream of the Edwards Aquifer, in the I-35/SH 130 corridor.

Please stop this reckless planning and look at regional solutions that does not dump traffic across inner neighborhoods and sensitive environmental areas of Austin.

Sincerely
Leslie Currens
Austin, TX



Open House Comment Card, Dec. 7, 2023

Name: WALTER DALE DAVIS Phone: 512-517-4924

Address: 470 SUMMER POINTE DR, BUDA, TX 78601

Email: WDDAVIS@AUSTIN.RR.COM

Home Zip Code: 78601

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.): _____

COMMENTS (Please Print):

THE SOUTHERN ROUTE W/ 400' ROW IS THE
CORRECT AND LOGICAL CHOICE. BETTER TO
GET THE R.O.W. NOW THAN PAY 10 TIMES
AS MUCH TO WIDEN THE ROW FROM 250'
TO 400' IN THE FUTURE.

GET THIS PROJECT BUILT!

Comments re: I-35 plans

Donna Egen [REDACTED]

Thu 12/7/2023 1:03 PM

To:SH 45 Gap Study <info@sh45gap.com>

To whom it may concern ... and it concerns everyone!

I am vehemently opposed to the proposed plan to connect I-35 South with Mopac for the following reasons:

- 1) The destructive impact to Barton Springs caused by the pollution that will occur throughout the construction phases and beyond. If we've learned anything from all the conversations of climate change, we know we MUST safeguard our natural environment by saying NO to projects like these. This project will devastate our pristine and sensitive Barton Springs!
- 2) Our neighborhoods along Mopac cannot support -- and will not survive -- the dramatic increase in traffic that "bypassing" I-35 will cause. Our tax dollars went to the construction of 130 for bypass traffic! As someone who has lived less than 100 yards from Mopac for 30 years, I can tell you that the increase in traffic especially since the introduction of the tollroads has absolutely negatively impacted quality of life in our neighborhood, from relentlessly loud noise levels (sound walls were not built in our stretch!!) to road debris and driving hazards, to congestion. Mopac cannot sustain more traffic and our neighborhoods can't either!

Thank you,
Donna Egen
5801 Trailridge Circle

DONNA EGEN
[REDACTED]

WHITEBOX

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whiteboxagency.com



Open House Comment Card, Dec. 7, 2023

Name: JOHN ELWELL

Phone: [REDACTED]

Address: 357 BETONY LOOP

Email: [REDACTED]

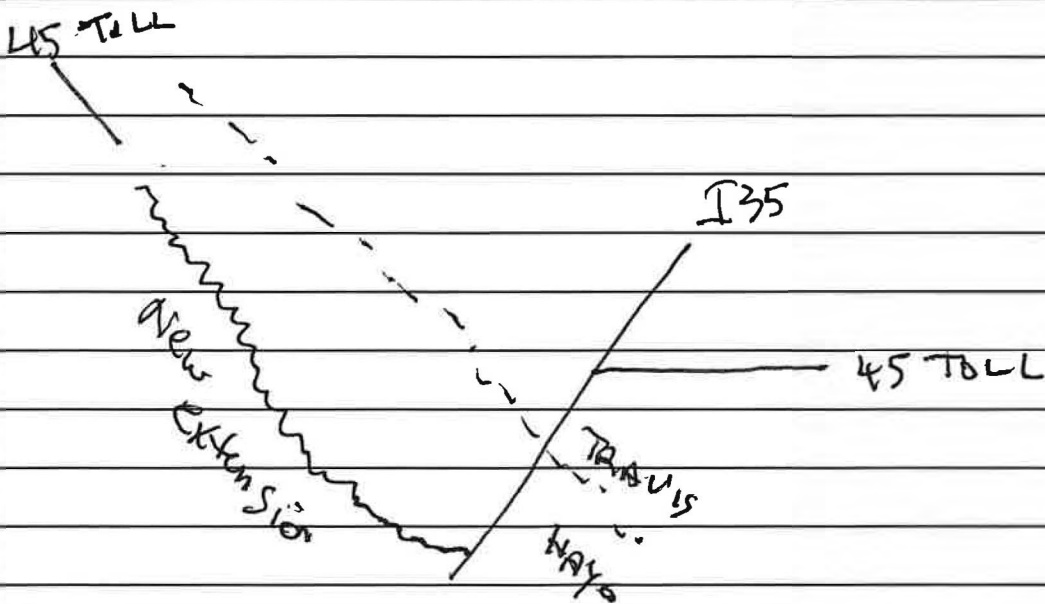
Home Zip Code: 78610

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.):

COMMENTS (Please Print):

LAST OPEN HOUSE Requested route that would only include HAY COUNTY. ALL PUBLIC INFO FROM TRAVIS Co. has been to block the project. SH 45 gap extension should not be delayed because of TRAVIS Co.

HAY Co. should move forward ASAP to build the extent to





Open House Comment Card, Dec. 7, 2023

Name: ED ERDMANN Phone: [REDACTED]

Address: 875 VISTA GARDENS, BUDA 78610

Email: _____

Home Zip Code: 78610

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.): RETIRED

COMMENTS (Please Print):

I have no preferences regarding the specifics of construction. It is time to get this project ~~over~~ (the loop) completed. J. & D. Porter and Horton have completed one loop and started another while Austin has been unable to complete one loop. Let's get this done.

From: Leticia Estavillo [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, December 11, 2023 4:57 PM
To: info@sh45gap.com
Subject: SH45 Gap

I am in favor of building this connective section. It will help improve safety, improve traffic congestion, and reduce stress overall.

Leticia Estavillo
600 Dryden Lane
Buda, Texas

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Aaron Flagg

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Address

5305 Rain Lily Drive Austin, TX 78739

Email

[REDACTED]

Home Zip Code

78739

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

78719

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern: I fully support the connection of the SH45 gap. I frequently travel to the 78719 zip code and this would save time, fuel and headaches navigating the side roads through Manchaca. Additionally, the amount of traffic flow currently using the side roads to navigate back to I-35 is unsustainable especially with new housing developments popping up throughout that specific area. I have witnessed many close calls with people using neighborhood roads as an overflow route. The traffic back ups at stop signs and stop lights is a danger. The city of Austin needs to support the proper infrastructure growth to sustain the needs of commuters. Without the right infrastructure, commuters and everyday citizens will continue to be put in harms way. Austin and the surrounding cities attracted all of the additional people now living in the area, so the cities should work together to do what's best for people now and the future.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

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Comment on 45 Gap study

Richard/Beki HALPIN [REDACTED]

Fri 12/22/2023 7:34 PM

To:SH 45 Gap Study <info@sh45gap.com>

Dear Sir or Madam:

I wish to submit the following comments to be included in the SH 45 Gap Study.

Completing SH-45 would divert major, interstate, I-35 traffic to Mopac, a local commuter highway (which is already overburdened with no room for expansion), and encourage massive development over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, Texas's most vulnerable aquifer. The aquifer and Barton Springs will be polluted. This is truly poor transportation and environmental planning when there is a better alternative.

The Travis County Commissioner's Court and the Austin City Council object to the studies moving forward which don't consider least damaging routes, yet whatever route is chosen will go through Travis County and Austin's jurisdictions. SH 130 already exists as a bypass around the city of Austin for IH-35 traffic. This route should be encouraged, because it'll be cheaper and not environmentally sensitive. Hays County Commissioners and Buda should instead work with the City of Austin and Travis County to find a route that supports development and intercity travel in the areas east and downstream of the Edwards Aquifer, in the I-35/SH 130 corridor.

Sincerely,
Beki Halpin
Pflugerville TX
Travis County Resident

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Rebecca Kennedy

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Address

501 Woodbrook Trail

Email

[REDACTED]

Home Zip Code

78610

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

78704

Comments:

This roadway would be a major improvement for Hays to Travis commuting. It is also needed as the entire corridor between Georgetown to San Marcos expands. I am supportive of completing this section of the roadway.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

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SH 45 Gap Study


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Open House Comment Card, Dec. 7, 2023

Name: Matt Holm Phone: 

Address: 506 Horse Thief

Email: 

Home Zip Code: _____

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.): _____

COMMENTS (Please Print):

Extending Lowden at the south end to connect
horse thief to lowden and 1626 would be
easier than adding an exit. Needs a bridge
over Bear Creek

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Annie Johnson

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Address

5009 Globe Mallow Dr

Email

[REDACTED]

Home Zip Code

78739

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

78739

Comments:

This should not happen with Travis County and Austin against it. The current road structure with 45 and mopac cannot handle an increase of traffic. Until that is resolved putting more traffic on it is a horrible idea.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

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Open House Comment Card, Dec. 7, 2023

Name: Bobby Lewinski Phone:

Address: 248 Camara Way, San Marcos, TX 78666

Email:

Home Zip Code: 78666

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.): 78745

COMMENTS (Please Print):

this land is more valuable as an environmentally protected corridor. work with Travis County & Austin on preservation options.

Please consider alternative projects such as improvements to FM 1626 & 1-35, with a new overpass over the highway.

where is the information on field studies?

where is the information on species & habitat?

this is not an adequate environmental study.

From: Bobby Levinski [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, Decemb
To: info@sh45gap.com
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED]

These comments are submitted on behalf of the Save Our Springs Alliance and on behalf of myself as a resident of Hays County. The comment period is open until December 22, 2023.

Honorable Judge Becerra and Hays County Commissioners,

The focus of the environmental study for the extension of SH45 is too narrow. Hays County residents need immediate traffic relief through improvements to local roadways and intersections, without forcing Hays County residents to pay daily toll fees and with less impact on Hays County tax dollars.

Despite the misleading label of the study, there is no “GAP.” The completion of a loop is not on the CAMPO regional plan, and the current highway ends intentionally to avoid environmentally sensitive lands that should be protected. SH45 will increase harmful highway stormwater runoff in the area, contaminating ground water supplies that Hays County residents rely upon. It will also destroy areas of dense tree canopy and impact high-quality creeks that are extremely vulnerable to erosion, localized flooding, and pollutants that increase in volume even with best available treatment methods.

Building this new segment of SH45 would not bring any longterm traffic relief to the residents of northern Hays County. New traffic from I-35 and S Mopac will spill over onto already congested roadways and increase access and development in an area with limited growth controls. With significant opposition from local residents and nearby jurisdictions, this project will be the source of prolonged debate, as experienced with similar projects. Right now, the study offers no true alternatives—repeating the same basic road configuration with multiple lines on a map. Other alternatives should be considered that can offer Hays County commuters more immediate relief.

Please reset the focus on these efforts towards localized traffic solutions, such as improvements to the intersection of FM 1626 and I-35, with expansion of FM 1626 east/northeast of SH45 to I-35 and either a new overpass bridge over I-35 or a relocation of Onion Creek Parkway overpass. These improvements would likely gain more community support, while providing the necessary east-to-west access that Hays County commuters need. Despite this alternative being raised in Open House #1 by commenters, it is not reflected on any of the materials provided at Open House #2. The FM 1626 overpass could be completed without tolls, with fewer bridges and environmental impacts, and potentially quicker, with collaborative support from other jurisdictions.

We believe there are more environmentally friendly and fiscally responsible solutions than this expensive and controversial path, and we hope to work with Hays County in pursuing such options.

Thank you,
Bobby Levinski

Attorney with Save Our Springs Alliance
4701 West Gate Blvd, D-401
Austin, TX 78745

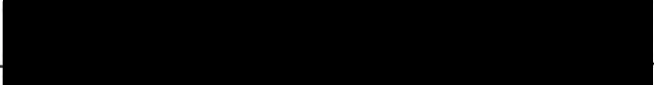
Resident of Hays County
248 Camaro Way
San Marcos, TX 78666



Open House Comment Card, Dec. 7, 2023

Name: Michael Littrell Phone: 

Address: 12706 SHADY ACRES DR., BUDA, TX 78610

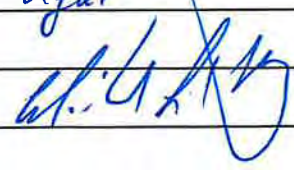
Email: 

Home Zip Code: 78610

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.): _____

COMMENTS (Please Print):

First off, thank you for hosting this meeting. I, and most of my neighbors are in very close proximity to the blue route proposed. I talk to my neighbors regularly and feel I have a good pulse of their views on this. We fully support the blue route as it is now. We have been very involved in the progress of the Persimmon development and strongly feel this extension will minimize the impact of the development adjacent to our neighborhood. I strongly support the 400' wide option. The width allows for future expansion, while providing more options and more accessibility with the service roads. This road system can not be built soon enough! I will gladly assist with any neighborhood meetings, etc. to get this project moving along. Thank you again.



SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

John Lockyer

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Address

541 Summer Pointe, Buda

Email

[REDACTED]

Home Zip Code

78610

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

78610

Comments:

Looks great! Approved and build it!

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

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Transportation and Public Works Department

P.O. Box 1088 Austin, TX 78767
512-974-1150

December 21, 2023

Email to: info@sh45gap.com

Subject: City of Austin Comments on SH 45 Gap Study – December 2023 Open House

On behalf of the City of Austin, the following comments on the SH 45 Gap Study are being submitted during the second round of engagement. City staff would like to thank the project team for their continued commitment to conducting a thorough analysis of the study area and coordinating with all stakeholders involved.

The information presented during this second phase of engagement is as anticipated. The roadway configuration options show a controlled access facility with four main-lanes with and/or without frontage roads. Similarly, the alignment options connect to each segment of SH 45 at FM 1626 and at I-35, in the same general alignment as previously envisioned. Two new route concepts shifted the alignment north between the same two end points but were eliminated from further study due to residential displacements and less desirable geometry. However, there is an active development (SP-2021-0328C) within the approved Estancia Planned Unit Development west of I-35 at SH 45 that wasn't included in the open house materials. This development is anticipated to receive approval in 2024. The recommended preliminary alignment will need to be adjusted to reflect the right of way being dedicated and reserved for the extension of Puryear Road and SH 45. Additionally, it is unclear if a southern route alignment wholly within Hays County was considered and evaluated.

Furthermore, at this stage in the process it is important to not conflate the purpose of the study with the purpose and need of the gap project. The purpose of the study is to examine the feasibility of building the segment of SH 45 between I-35 and FM 1626, but it shouldn't presuppose that it is the only solution. The proposed gap project does not automatically satisfy the purpose and need without evaluating all reasonable project alternatives. We are hopeful that in the next phase of analysis and round of engagement that an objective review of the need can be established and that the purpose does not predetermine a specific solution, such as closing a "gap" in the system. City staff is supportive of enhancing regional mobility but all options will need to remain on the table.

Per Austin City Council direction, City staff will continue to seek cooperative efforts with Hays County, offering support to find ways to improve transportation connections, between the city, Travis County, and Hays County that do not threaten harm to the Edwards Aquifer watershed or to lands overlying the Edwards Aquifer that have been dedicated to permanent watershed and wildlife habitat protection. We look forward to supporting the project team in the development of the traffic study and assessment of potential impacts during the next phase in 2024.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Mendoza". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Richard Mendoza, Director
Transportation and Public Works Department
City of Austin



Open House Comment Card, Dec. 7, 2023

Name: Lisa + Kevin McAdams Phone: 

Address: 237 Firethorn Drive, Buda, TX 78610

Email: 

Home Zip Code: 78610

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.): work in 78731

COMMENTS (Please Print):

Curious about new development just started west of Old San Antonio @ Poryear. That right where I imagine H5 being connected.

We need another way over the railroad tracks other than downtown Buda and 1626 near Manchaca Rd. I avoid I-35 for my commute as much as possible.

This project needs to be completed while it is still possible to do so, given the development happening in the area.



Open House Comment Card, Dec. 7, 2023

Name: Martha McKee Phone: 

Address: 246 Tanzanite Circle Buda

Email: 

Home Zip Code: 78610

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.): n/a

COMMENTS (Please Print):

Support frontage road full length of
road with limited # entrances/exits

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Danielle Morin

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Address

5109 Mandevilla Dr.

Email

[REDACTED]

Home Zip Code

78739

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

.....

Comments:

I am against this expansion and the associated study due to environmental concerns and in accordance with regional long-range transportation goals - this expansion does not comply.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

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info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

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SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Terry Nance

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Address

479 STILL HOLLOW CRK

Email

[REDACTED]

Home Zip Code

78610

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

Comments:

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

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info@sh45gap.com

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SH 45 Gap Study

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SH45 Gap Study Comment

Dr. Craig Morris Nazor [REDACTED]

Sat 12/23/2023 12:10 AM

To:SH 45 Gap Study <info@sh45gap.com>

To Whom it May Concern:

Connecting SH45 to IH35 at the southern end through northern Hays County is not a good idea, for the reasons listed below:

- 1) Doing so would greatly increase traffic on the entire length of MoPac, requiring more expensive enlargements to MoPac that will damage the character of many neighborhoods, Zilker Park (particularly Zilker Botanical Gardens), and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center.
- 2) After years of congestion, MoPac finally works reasonably well due to the addition of the tolled express lane. Adding even more traffic, essentially turning MoPac into an Austin bypass, will completely undo the progress made.
- 3) Building this section of road across a very sensitive part of the Barton Springs recharge zone will continue to reduce the water quality in Barton Springs, which is worth many millions of dollars to the Austin economy.
- 3) Water and noise pollution from this section of road threatens to damage the habitat of at least 4 endangered species, as well as pollute a valuable clean water source.
- 4) The bypass for through traffic around Austin should be Texas 130, not MoPac. Because we haven't done that, IH3 is now almost always congested, and is being enlarged (another boondoggle). Building large highways causes more traffic and does not reduce traffic congestion (a prime example is the Katy Freeway). Not using Texas 130 as an Austin bypass is one of the worst traffic errors ever made in Central Texas, and continuing to avoid that solution continues to damage traffic flow through Austin.

Thanks.

Dr. Craig Nazor
[REDACTED]

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Alexander Novotny

Phone Number

[Redacted]

Address

10729 Steinbeck Dr

Email

[Redacted]

Home Zip Code

78747

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

78747

Comments:

Please build this - and quickly. It's the last piece to the puzzle. When driving to dripping springs from SE Austin I have to take the long way around and this would solve that. Don't listen to the harsh rhetoric from Travis county. If Travis county/COA is worried about Mopac becoming a route alternative to I35 - maybe they should remove the tolls from the 130 bypass or make that road the official I35 corridor. This is the problem right now. Build it today!

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

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SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Carol Pennington

Phone Number



Address

1005 Bluebird Dr. Manchaca 78652

Email



Home Zip Code

78652

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

Comments:

I added this on the interactive map, but the idea is at Bliss Spillar and I did not want it to get overlooked. If this is built, an entrance ramp heading east and an exit ramp heading west should be built at Bliss Spillar. There is an entrance ramp off Bliss Spillar heading west, but not one heading east. There needs to be one heading east so we can get to IH35. There is not an exit ramp coming from east to west at Bliss Spillar. Don't do it half ass like Davis Rd. at MoPac is.

Also, the intersection at 1626 needs to be rebuilt to be a flyover. The traffic signals is what causes the congestion, especially for those entering from Buda.

There should also be a design at IH35 that does not include traffic signals to reduce traffic backup. Y'all need to think about those end points as part of the problem when designing this thing.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

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info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

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Open House Comment Card, Dec. 7, 2023

Name: Ed Pensock Phone: _____

Address: 239 Carousel Ln

Email: 

Home Zip Code: 78619

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.): _____

COMMENTS (Please Print):

The "recommended alignment" is the best solution for the project. If possible 400 ft. of right-of-way should be incorporated into the project.

The region would benefit significantly from the constructed project.

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

julie perkins

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Address

11208 Morningstar Cir

Email

[REDACTED]

Home Zip Code

78737

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

Comments:

Please do not connect I35 to Mopac and thus also FM 1826. Both of those roadways are already overloaded and this would create a bypass for interstate traffic from I35 that is shorter than the 130 bypass. This would also bring I35 traffic not going north on Mopac directly to the intersection of 45 and 1826. That has already been redesigned several times and still has problems. 1826 is a narrow, hilly and winding road with no shoulder on most of it. The potential problems are innumerable with residents unable to leave their neighborhoods to drive to work, school and anything in central Austin. Please note there is no public transportation to this area.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.





Open House Comment Card, Dec. 7, 2023

Name: RICK PERKINS

Phone: [REDACTED]

Address: 8503 El Rey Blvd, Austin 78737

Email: [REDACTED]

Home Zip Code: 78737

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.): 78737

COMMENTS (Please Print):

I SUPPORT THIS PLAN TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT. PREFERABLY
* BUILT WITH 6 LANES and limiting access points to
2 OR 3 along the route. ~~PER~~

* USING THE SAME ENVIRONMENTAL RUN OFF CONTROLS
AS SH45 SW.

* MINIMIZING ILLUMINATION TO PRESERVE ~~THE~~ DARK SKY,
POSSIBLY ONLY AT ACCESS POINTS. UTILIZING
MAXIMUM CUT OFF LIGHTING FIXTURES.

* 12 FOOT WIDE ~~SHARED~~ SHARED - USE SIDEWALKS ON
BOTH SIDES, JUST LIKE SH45 SW.

* SOUND WALLS AS APPROPRIATE FOR "RECEIVERS"
REGARDLESS IF THEY MEET THE TXDOT ~~SEA~~ MINIMUM STD.

* WILDLIFE PASS-UNDER CORRIDORS

THANKS FOR YOUR WORK; ~~PER~~ PLEASE EXPEDITE.

THANKS,

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

William Rodriguez

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Address

1603 Black Bear Dr

Email

[REDACTED]

Home Zip Code

78652

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

.....

Comments:

As a member of the Bear Creek Park neighborhood, we have seen drastic changes to our home and legacy neighborhood as a result of the new development happening here just to date.

I'm genuinely concerned about the county's handling of the toll road 45 extension, particularly regarding the evident gaps in planning that raise critical issues affecting our community. Safety remains a paramount concern as the increased traffic stemming from this extension strains the existing infrastructure. The roads off of 1626 are ill-equipped to handle this growth, lacking essential features such as stop lights, which compromises safety for commuters and residents alike. Moreover, the lack of cohesive development planning for the surrounding areas poses a significant risk, potentially exacerbating the challenges posed by increased traffic flow.

Environmental considerations are equally pressing. The absence of adequate plans to address flooding and fire hazards in the wake of rampant development is deeply troubling. I've personally experienced the consequences of such oversights, having dealt with flooding in my own home due to insufficient planning by developers permitted by the county. This negligence in environmental foresight not only endangers our homes but also jeopardizes the ecological balance of the region.

Equally distressing is the lack of comprehensive city planning to counterbalance the extension's impact on residents. The absence of strategic development planning compounds the challenges faced by our community. The haphazard growth without proper infrastructure or amenities significantly diminishes the quality of life for residents and demonstrates a clear oversight by the city in ensuring sustainable and beneficial development.

As a concerned member of this community, I strongly urge the county and city authorities to reevaluate their planning strategies, prioritize safety and environmental considerations, and engage in more comprehensive and responsible development planning. The well-being and future sustainability of our community depend on proactive and far-sighted measures that address these pressing concerns.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

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Google Forms

From: Kevin Rolfes [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, December 18, 2023 2:31 PM
To: SH45 Open House
Subject: Improve Local Traffic, No SH45 Extension

Dear SH45 Open House,

Honorable Judge Becerra and Hays County Commissioners,

The focus of the current environmental study concerning the SH45 extension is too narrow. Please consider other alternatives to this expensive and environmentally harmful project. Hays County residents need immediate traffic relief, and this can be achieved by improving local roadways, without forcing Hays County residents to pay for an expensive highway expansion project with tax dollars and/or daily toll fees.

The current highway ends intentionally to avoid environmentally sensitive lands that deserve protection. There are dense tree canopies that support migrating birds, and several creeks that are extremely vulnerable to erosion, localized flooding, and pollutants. SH45 will increase harmful highway stormwater runoff in an area of Hays County where many residents rely upon clean groundwater for drinking water.

Building this new segment of SH45 will not bring any longterm traffic relief to the residents of northeastern Hays County, especially if the new extension is accompanied by new developments in an area of the county with few regulations. New traffic from I-35 and S Mopac will spill over onto our already congested roadways.

We need Hays County to work with nearby jurisdictions on alternative routes to refocus efforts on localized traffic solutions, such as consideration of improvements to FM 1626, including a potential new or relocated overpass to improve its intersection with I-35 in South Austin. This would improve relieve immediate traffic problems, while improving east-to-west access for Hays County commuters.

Please put this study on hold until a full range of alternatives are properly developed and considered.

Sincerely,
Kevin Rolfes
14006 N Green Hills Loop
Austin, TX 78737

From: Tim Savoy [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, December 11, 2023 12:11 PM
To: info@sh45gap.com
Subject: Public Comment RE SH 45 GAP

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

To Whom It May Concern,

Speaking as a resident who lives in the Hills at Estancia near SH 45 and IH 35, I am writing to offer my absolute support for creating a connection that bridges SH 45 at 1626 and SH 45 at IH 35. This road is essential. I would support any plan, but specifically, I like the Southern Route Concept noted in the public forum materials in blue.

In sum, not having the road will not reduce the growth and traffic in the area. In fact, not having the road would be worse for the environment because it would lead to greater congestion on existing roads that are not designed to handle the traffic. Congestion requires cars to idle much longer than necessary. Additionally, the connection segment may well lead to more traffic on Mopac, but that is a good thing. Mopac is designed to handle the traffic much better than Old San Antonio Road, Main Street in Buda, and 1626. Austin in a major metropolitan area that will continue to grow and it needs a true loop around the city. All of the benefits we enjoy living in a large city are dependent on our cities ability to move people efficiently to where they need to be.

Please let me know what more I can do to help ensure this roadway is constructed with the least possible delay.

Sincerely,
Tim Savoy
12700 Stanford Drive
Austin, TX 78748

[REDACTED]

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SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

maria schmelter

Phone Number

[Redacted]

Address

11101 Whiskey River Drive

Email

[Redacted]

Home Zip Code

78748

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

78748

Comments:

We have lived in Shady Hollow for more than 30 years, east of Brodie. The traffic has intensified greatly. People just want to get to I35 and MOPAC and they now use Brodie as a short cut. As for as the enviromental issues, they are driving over the Aquifer right now. What does a few miles difference matter? FYI, Years ago I demonstrated in favor of SH45 at Brodie and Slaughter and I still support SH45 to be built!

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

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SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Heidi Simmons

Phone Number

[Redacted]

Address

13217 Cardinal Flower Dr

Email

[Redacted]

Home Zip Code

78739

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

.....

Comments:

Do NOT connect these roads. Mopac needs to remain commuter traffic only. We do NOT want I-35 through traffic nor semi - trucks making it dangerous to live our daily lives. Mopac is already at capacity with residential vehicles.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

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info@sh45gap.com

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SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.



SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Mike Simmons

Phone Number

[Redacted]

Address

13217 Cardinal Flower Dr

Email

[Redacted]

Home Zip Code

78739

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

78701

Comments:

No! We do NOT want these roads to connect. TXDOT needs to come up with better ways to incentivize Hwy 130. Mopac is already packed and cannot handle semi trucks and additional through traffic.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

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SH 45 Gap Study Open house comment

Stahl Urban [REDACTED]

Fri 12/22/2023 7:18 PM

To:SH 45 Gap Study <info@sh45gap.com>
[REDACTED]

 1 attachments (360 KB)

Travis County Commissioners Court comment on 45 extension.pdf;

Greetings,

I am having some trouble through both the website and the download getting enough magnification to look at the comments on exhibit:

OPEN HOUSE #1 – JUNE 15, 2023 ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

If someone could send me a high res of this exhibit for us to properly weigh in, that would be greatly appreciated. I understand this might not be done soon, but I would like to reserve the right for additional input after the deadline due to the lack of clarity on the exhibit.

It appears that the public input that I submitted for the preferred off ramp/on ramp/exit at the intersection of SH45SW and Garrison road has been omitted from the first open house comments. I find this odd since this is the primary location exit from a traffic design point of view, allows for future light rail, and satisfies The City of Buda's desire to keep east-west traffic out of down town. On a side note it appears Persimmon development suggestion for an on/off ramp made the cut to publish from the first open house, as mine did not. Needless to say I find this curious.

I would like to endorse for frontage roads through out the road way, in particular towards the intersection of 35 and SH45SW to facilitate easy traffic movement at The City of Austin's southern regional hub. Recently I read the attached letter from Travis county, Im curious what studies they are basing their objection to SH45SW. If the SH45 gap studies have any knowledge or documented studies that support Travis counties prediction of heavy truck traffic preferring MOPAC over 35 or SH45SE I would like to see them and would be happy to approach the Travis county commissioners court in the event these documents don't exist.

Thank you so much for your efforts and Merry Christmas!

Stahl Urban
HFH Investments



TRAVIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT COMMENTS FOR SUBMISSION TO THE VIRTUAL SH 45 GAP
STUDY OPEN HOUSE DURING THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD OF DECEMBER 7, 2023 THROUGH
DECEMBER 22, 2023

For many years, both the City of Austin and Travis County have opposed the inclusion of the I-35 to FM 1626 connection in the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (CAMPO) regional Transportation plans. This project is also not included in TxDOT's recently updated 10 year funding plan, the 2024 Unified Transportation Program.

Making the connection from I-35 to FM 1626 would effectively make Mopac an I-35 bypass, dramatically increasing vehicular and truck traffic. The traffic impacts of this decision by Hays County would have a profound and detrimental effect almost entirely on Austin and Travis County, as well as the residents and unique environmental and other resources located in Travis County. The fact that there has been virtually no effort to coordinate this action with either Austin or Travis County is unacceptable. We cannot imagine a scenario where a similar action by Austin or Travis County, that would have such an enormous traffic impact on a neighboring County, would be considered acceptable without extensive regional coordination and cooperation. Accordingly, we want to state our concerns on the record about the lack of transparency and input in connection with this proposed project.

Furthermore, currently CAMPO requires any projects that are partially inside another jurisdiction have written concurrence from the jurisdiction in which the project is partially located in order for a project to be included in the CAMPO Regional Transportation Plan. This has not happened.

Additionally, this connection will significantly increase traffic over environmentally sensitive lands that include Balcones Canyonlands Preserve lands, City of Austin Water Quality Protection lands, karst features, Edwards Aquifer, endangered species habitat, and conservation easements. The increased traffic and accompanying growth would put the region's water quality and environment at greater risk. Yet, there has been no comprehensive analysis of the impacts of this project (and less damaging alternatives) in order to inform whether and how this project should proceed.

Both Austin and Travis County have invested heavily, using voter approved bonds, in preserving Barton Springs and its watershed, as well as habitat for numerous endangered species. For more than two decades the City of Austin, with broad community support, has enacted policies and made significant investments in the protection of water quality in the Barton Springs Zone of the Edwards Aquifer. Measures taken include:

- Implementation of the citizen-initiated Save Our Springs ordinance, which
 - limits impervious cover and requires non-degradation levels of stormwater treatment for development of sites in the Barton Springs Zone; and
 - requires mitigation plans/infrastructure for potential hazardous and/or toxic waste spills over the aquifer, which is especially important for any proposed route that would reroute truck traffic from I-35 across the Aquifer;
- Investment of \$143 million in voter-approved bonds (to date) in the acquisition and preservation of 27,000 acres of land in the recharge and contributing zones; and
- Commitment, both legally and financially, to protect rare and endangered species pursuant to two permits issued under the Federal Endangered Species Act.¹²

¹²Transportation and Environmental Challenges Associated with the Proposed State Highway 45 Southwest, City of Austin, August 2011.

We are concerned that this project, as proposed, would substantially undermine Travis County's longstanding efforts to fund and protect these sensitive and unique resources—issues that we urge you to examine in detail (with Travis County's input) before any decision is made.

Status of Project in Local and Regional Transportation Plans

The current adopted transportation plan for Travis County, the *Travis County Transportation Blueprint*, approved unanimously by Commissioners Court in July 2019, does not include this segment in its Roadway Plan.

Also, the current regional transportation plan, the *CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan*, does not include the connection of SH 45 SW from I-35 to FM 1626 in the "Constrained Project List", "Illustrative Project List" (used for ROW reservation) or in any maps of those lists.

- o There is a study identified in the Study List sponsored by Hays County called "New Facility" with limits from FM 1626 – I-35.
- o The study includes the following project description: "Design of environmental and preliminary engineering for new freeway".
- o No associated project is identified in the Constrained Project or Illustrative lists.

In conclusion, we are submitting these comments to express the Travis County Commissioners Court's vigorous opposition to the SH 45 Gap Study **and any proposal to connect IH-35 to SH 45 in southwestern Travis County**. At minimum, we request an in-depth evaluation of these issues, with input from affected jurisdictions (including Travis County), to consider alternatives for avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating harm to people and resources located mostly in our jurisdiction.

Andy Brown
Travis County Judge

Jeffrey W. Travillion, Sr.
Commissioner, Precinct 1

Brigid Shea
Commissioner, Precinct 2

Ann Howard
Commissioner, Precinct 3

Margaret J. Gómez
Commissioner, Precinct 4

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Dan Vavasour

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Address

6401 Tracton Ct

Email

[REDACTED]

Home Zip Code

78739

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

.....

Comments:

I oppose the proposed development. The negative environmental and quality of life impacts are too great to ignore. Maybe consider building effective public transportation options

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

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info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

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Travis County Commissioners Court Official Comments on the SH 45 Gap Study

Charlie Watts [Redacted]

Fri 12/22/2023 2:51 PM

To:SH 45 Gap Study <info@sh45gap.com>

[Redacted] David

📎 1 attachments (384 KB)

TCCC SH 45 Gap Study Complete_with_DocuSign_2023-12-19_Item_48_TC.pdf;

Please find attached, the official SH 45 Gap Study comments from the Travis County Commissioners Court, unanimously approved at its December 19, 2023 Voting Session. If you need any additional information, please contact Cynthia McDonald, County Executive TNR, at [Redacted]

Thank you,

Charlie Watts, AICP
Planning Project Manager
Travis County, Transportation and Natural Resources
P.O. Box 1748
700 Lavaca Street, 7th Floor
Austin, Texas 78767-1748

[Redacted]

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**TRAVIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT COMMENTS FOR SUBMISSION TO THE VIRTUAL SH 45 GAP
STUDY OPEN HOUSE DURING THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD OF DECEMBER 7, 2023 THROUGH
DECEMBER 22, 2023**

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 - limits impervious cover and requires non-degradation levels of stormwater treatment for development of sites in the Barton Springs Zone; and
 - requires mitigation plans/infrastructure for potential hazardous and/or toxic waste spills over the aquifer, which is especially important for any proposed route that would reroute truck traffic from I-35 across the Aquifer;
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¹*Transportation and Environmental Challenges Associated with the Proposed State Highway 45 Southwest*, City of Austin, August 2011.

We are concerned that this project, as proposed, would substantially undermine Travis County's longstanding efforts to fund and protect these sensitive and unique resources—issues that we urge you to examine in detail (with Travis County's input) before any decision is made.

Status of Project in Local and Regional Transportation Plans

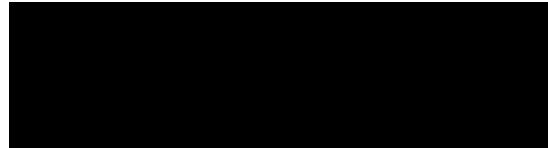
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Also, the current regional transportation plan, the *CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan*, does not include the connection of SH 45 SW from I-35 to FM 1626 in the “Constrained Project List”, “Illustrative Project List” (used for ROW reservation) or in any maps of those lists.

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- The study includes the following project description: “Design of environmental and preliminary engineering for new freeway”.
- No associated project is identified in the Constrained Project or Illustrative lists.

In conclusion, we are submitting these comments to express the Travis County Commissioners Court’s vigorous opposition to the SH 45 Gap Study. At minimum, we request an in-depth evaluation of these issues, with input from affected jurisdictions (including Travis County), to consider alternatives for avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating harm to people and resources located mostly in our jurisdiction.

Please contact Cynthia McDonald, County Executive for Transportation and Natural Resources, [REDACTED] to discuss this Project.



DocuSigned by:
Andy Brown
C21317DB291D47D...

Andy Brown
Travis County Judge

DocuSigned by:
Jeffrey Travillion
38D10DA8088049F...

Jeffrey W. Travillion, Sr.
Commissioner, Precinct 1

DocuSigned by:
Brigid Shea
49E111C68FCC406...

Brigid Shea
Commissioner, Precinct 2

DocuSigned by:
Commissioner Ann Howard
C9FFD0713B4148F...

Ann Howard
Commissioner, Precinct 3

DocuSigned by:
Margaret J. Gomez
C48630EAEF2B43A...

Margaret J. Gómez
Commissioner, Precinct 4

SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Ann

Phone Number

Address

Email

Home Zip Code

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

Comments:

Did y'all ever stop to consider providing an option to 35 and MoPac (aka train) and preventing sprawl in the first place would alleviate the traffic folks bemoan? No new highways until the land use is better!

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

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SH 45 Gap Study Open House 2 Comment Card

Name

Stefan

Phone Number

[Redacted]

Address

13010 Bloomington Drive

Email

[Redacted]

Home Zip Code

78748

If Applicable, Zip Code for Regular Commute (Work, School, etc.)

Comments:

Please move forward with this project and close the gap. This should have been done 30+ years ago.

COMMENT PERIOD: Dec 7 to Dec 22, 2023

Comments may be submitted through a written comment card, online, or by email, mail, text or phone.

sh45gap.com

info@sh45gap.com

(512) 400-6107

SH 45 Gap Study

PO Box 5459, Austin, TX 78763

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In Person Mapped Comment

Build the 400' scenario. More room for future expansion. Same environmental issues as 250'. Build it!

Direct connects please

6 lanes please

Dark sky lighting complete cut off please

Wildlife passage points

Runoff MGMT like 45 SW

Consider alternative improvements to FM 1626 to I-35

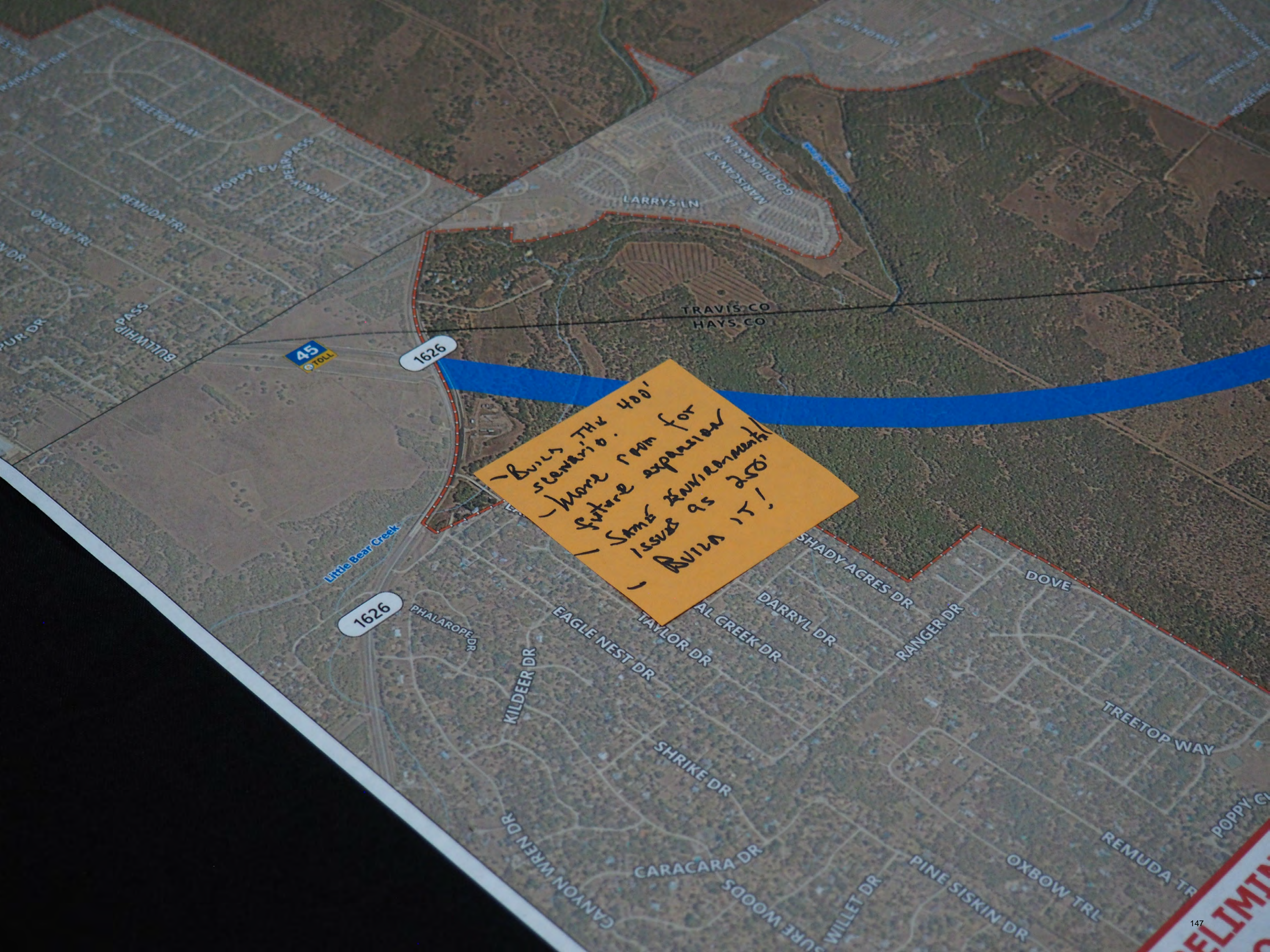
Consider route all in Hays Co.

Too much road noise from 1626 bridge @ Little Bear Crk. Make new sections wider.

1626 145 intersection:

Maintain dark skies. No tall light towers as in I-35 @ 45. Keep light shining down.

What type of pavement? Road noise from bad bridge lanes to main lanes.



Buys the 400'
scenario.
More room for
future expansion
Same environmental
issues as 250'
AVILA IT!

45
TOLL

1626

1626

Little Bear Creek

TRAVIS CO
HAYS CO

LARRYS LN

MARRISAN ST
GOLOSIO TOP

BULENHIP
PASS

POPPY CV
BEAR PASS

REMUDA TRL

OXBOW TRL

DR

DR

PHALAROPE DR

KILDEER DR

EAGLE NEST DR

TAYLOR DR

AL CREEK DR

DARRYL DR

RANGER DR

SHADY ACRES DR

DOVE

TREETOP WAY

POPPY CV

CANYON WREN DR

CARACARA DR

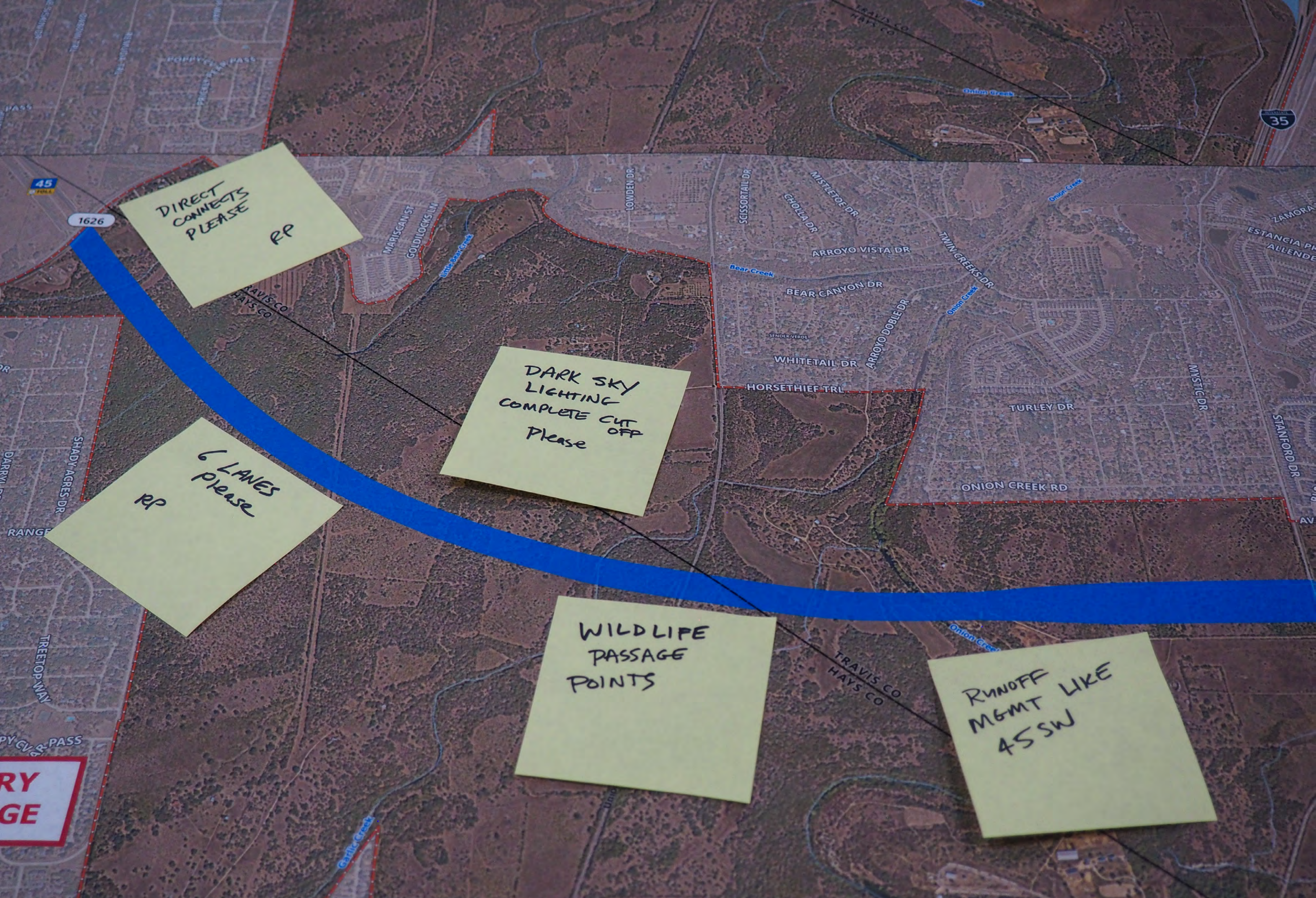
SURE WOODS
WILLET DR

PINE SISKIN DR

OXBOW TRL

REMUDA TR

ELIMINATING



DIRECT
CONNECTS
PLEASE
RP

DARK SKY
LIGHTING
COMPLETE CUT
OFF
Please

6 LANES
Please
RP

WILDLIFE
PASSAGE
POINTS

RUNOFF
MGMT LIKE
45 SW

nt - ROW Width Scenarios

→ Consider alternative improvements to FM 1626 & I-35

45 TOLL

1626

1626

Little Bear Creek

LARRY'S LN
MARRISGAN ST
GOLDLOCKS LN

RAVIS CO
HAYS CO

LAKWOOD DR

SHADY ACRES DR

DOVE

CRYSTAL CREEK DR
DARRYL DR

RANGER DR

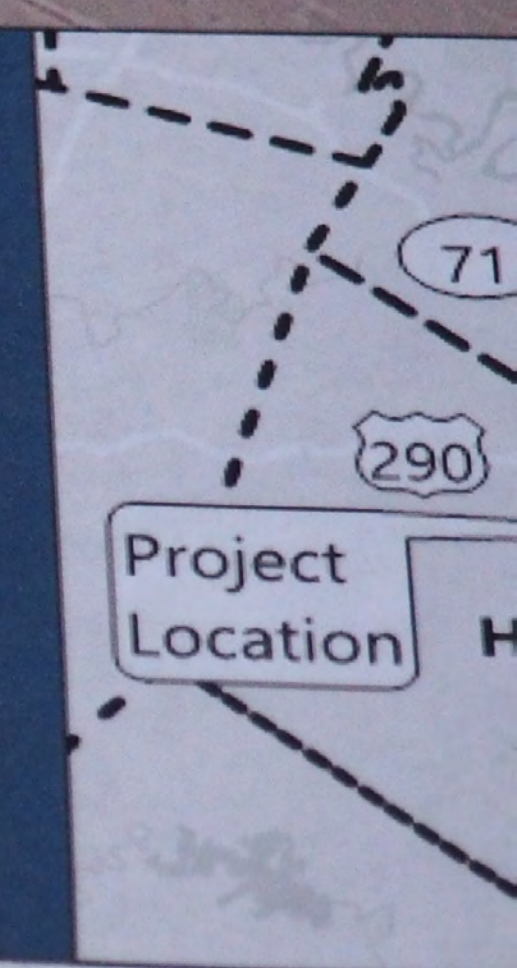
EAGLE NEST DR
TAYLOR DR

PHALAROPI DR



Study Area
100' ROW Width Scenario
200' ROW Width Scenario

Consider
route all
in Hays Co



LEISUR WILLET DR PINE SISKIN DR
VERDIN DR OXBOW TRL
TOWHEE DR REMUDA
LONGSPUR DR BUILDWIP PASS
POPPY CV
LICKLY PEAR PASS

To much Noise
Road 1626
Dean 1626
Bridge @ Little
Bear Ck. Make
New sections for
you

1626 145
Main trunk
Don't Skies
No Tall Light
Towers as far
J-35 @ 45
Keep light shining
down

What type of
Pavement
Road Noise
From BAD
Bridge Links
to main lanes

45 TOLL
1626
1626
LARRYS LN
MARISCAN ST
GOLDLOCKS LN
TRAVIS CO
HAYS CO
SHADY AGRES DR
DARRYL DR
TAYLOR DR
EAGLE NEST DR
KILDEER DR
PHALANOP DR
WREN DR
SHRIMP

Map ID	Online Mapped Comment
1	Looks good. Pretty straightforward alignment.
2	You must ensure that none of the nearby residential neighborhoods are impacted. The creek and wildlife should also be considered and preserved.
3	Increased access means increased traffic utilizing 1626; lack of proper street lights and turn lanes makes accessing legacy neighborhoods risky and difficult
4	Pollution and fencing will destroy wildlife habitats
5	This new thoroughfare will not introduce any additional green space for residents of this area.
6	Increased traffic led to multiple fatalities at these intersections; Increasing traffic flow onto 1626 needs to be studied
7	Noise pollution
8	Access to creeks and trails
9	Access to water ways for recreation
10	Traffic build up is already very much a thing - waiting 10+ minutes with just one part of 45 to deal with - ensuring ease of access on and off the toll road is essential
11	Removal of trees in mass seems is troubling to me; What forestation plans are in place for the replacement from this work
12	light pollution for neighborhoods in the area
13	well water pollution
14	speed limits
15	Displacement of wildlife
16	Disrupting of historic burial sites
17	Increased traffic
18	If this is built, an entrance ramp heading east should be built at Bliss Spillar. There is an entrance ramp off Bliss Spillar heading west, but not one heading east. There needs to be one heading east for this project.
19	This intersection should be a flyover like originally planned for the people getting on from 1626. Traffic signals create the traffic congestion. This intersection needs to be rebuilt without traffic signals.
20	Needs to be sound barriers placed here for the neighborhood for the increased traffic this will create. Its already loud as is.
21	Assist the neighborhoods with getting UPRR quiet zones in the area, as a part of good faith effort to be a good neighbor to those of us who will be impacted by the project.
22	Implement Dark Skies standards for lighting along the roadway.
23	One way to show a good faith effort for the nearby neighborhoods would be to help get UPRR quiet zones nearby.
24	Traffic calming options need to be explored. Turning 1626 into a race track will lead to even more fatalities. What about roundabouts?
25	Is the option of continuing the hike and bike trail down this new section of 45 being explored? Seems like a once in a life-time opportunity to create better recreation and multi-modal transportation options
26	This part of Bear Creek is one of the most beautiful parts of our community. Everything possible to protect this water quality and rock formations should be done
27	Would be good to look at creating wildlife corridors on the non-elevated parts of this road

28	There is an active development (Estancia PUD) going through the site plan approval process that includes a different alignment for SH 45. The preliminary recommended alignment will need to be adjusted.
29	This property was initially platted around 2006-8 with the current 45 dedication required by Travis county. As such the current development in play for the last 4 years knew about the dedication and planned accordingly.
30	TxDot should take advantage of the railroad grade cut of 20+' here to avoid a huge, high overpass blighting the area around it, diminishing the quality of live and devaluing the surrounding land values.
31	This location is the primary exit on/off/ramp for SH45SW, it allows a connection north to Lowden lane, It is centered in between 35 and 1626, it is the only exit that diverts traffic from the downtown Buda/
32	Frontage roads are necessary for safe access particularly around the intersection of 35 and SH 45SW as the southern hub of Austin
33	Preferred exit on SH45 to allow for future light rail commuting and parking
34	wrong location for a primary exit on SH45SW it will not alleviate the congestion in down town Buda, fix the east-west corridor issue, and will not benefit from future light rail
35	Good alignment utilizing the easement previously granted for 45 by the developer



SH 45 GAP Public Feedback Map

State Highway 45, Buda, TX

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Public Comments | SH45 Gap North Alignments |
| Comment | Blue Preliminary Route |
| Concern | Northern Routes (Eliminated) |
| Idea | |

