



**SH 45**  
GAP STUDY

# OPEN HOUSE

June 15, 2023 | 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.  
Sunfield Station Event Center



Comment Period: June 15 to June 30, 2023

#### Submit Comments

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

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the first open house for the SH 45 Gap Study. The purpose of this open house is to provide the opportunity for community members to learn about the study and share input.

Comments may be shared at the open house meeting, through the online comment card, the online interactive map, by email, mail, text, or voicemail. To be included in the official summary of this meeting, comments must be received by **Friday, June 30, 2023**.

## HISTORY

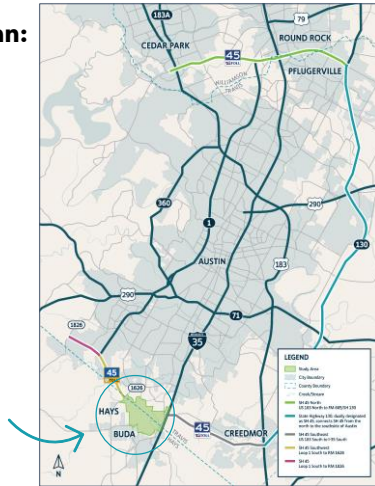
### 1986 Austin Metropolitan Transportation Plan:

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:

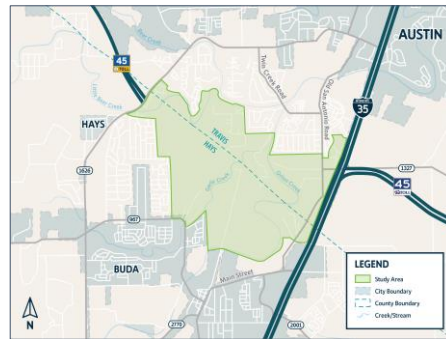
- Hays County 2021 Transportation Plan
- City of Buda 2020 Buda Moves! Transportation Mobility Master Plan

### Gap Study included in:

- CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan
  - *"Design of environmental and preliminary engineering for new freeway" from FM 1626 to I-35.*<sup>1</sup>

### 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.



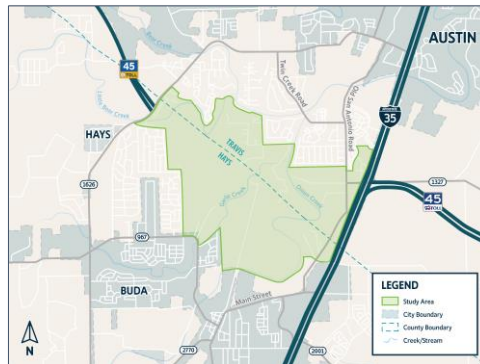
<sup>1</sup> Page 131 in the CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan

The need for the 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



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.

## PURPOSE OF POTENTIAL GAP PROJECT

- Enhance regional mobility
- Facilitate system connectivity



The purpose of the potential Gap Project is to (1) enhance regional mobility and (2) facilitate system connectivity.



## STUDY GOALS

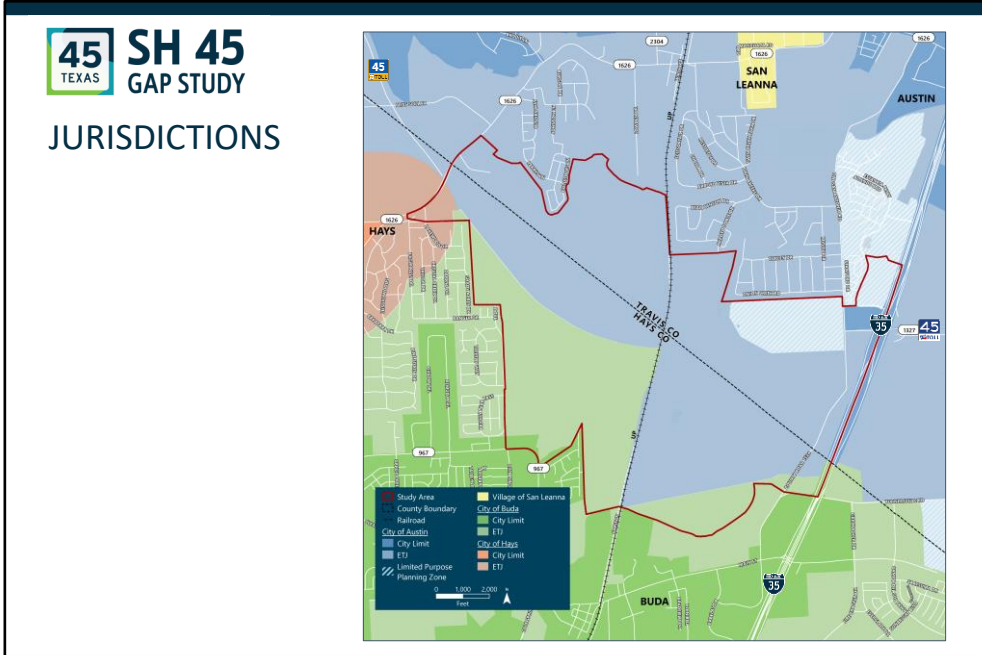
- Conduct the study in a proactive and transparent manner
- Engage and gather input from a broad range of stakeholders, property owners, and local and regional leaders
- Identify conceptual route option(s) for additional and more detailed studies
- Minimize impacts to existing and planned development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

## OPEN HOUSE #1 GOALS

- Gather feedback on the study area, transportation needs, and gather route suggestions from interested stakeholders

The goals of this Study are to do things in a proactive and clear way, get 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.

This first open house aims to collect feedback on the potential project, the study area, transportation needs, and stakeholder concerns and priorities. In addition, we are seeking suggestions regarding the possible path of the Gap Project. Suggestions from the public will be considered as route options are developed during the coming months.



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** TEXAS **SH 45**  
GAP STUDY  
CONSTRAINTS

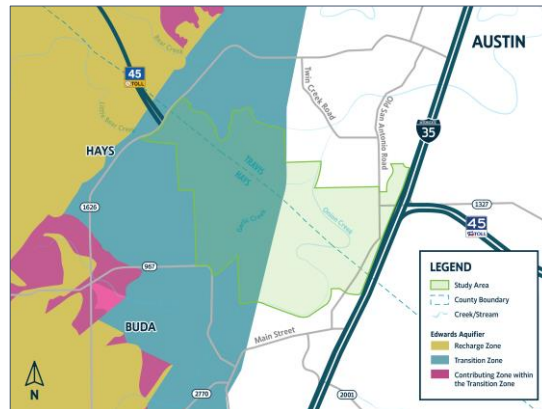


The constraints map displays specific environmental and land use features in and around the study area. The development of this map is an important part of the process as it helps to identify factors or conditions that may affect where the roadway could be located and better understand the potential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



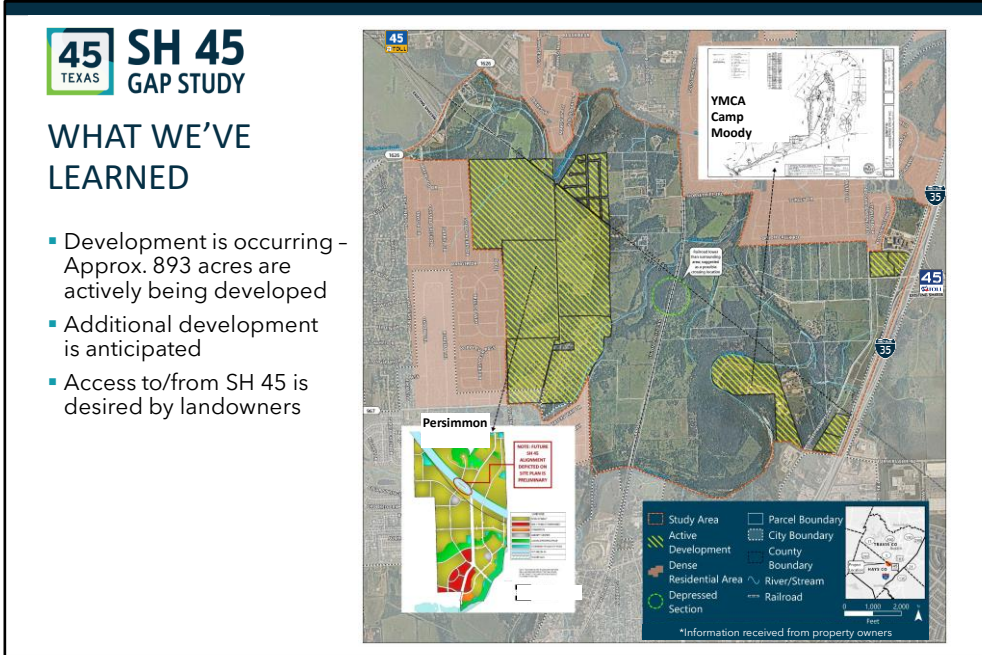
## EDWARDS AQUIFER

- 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.

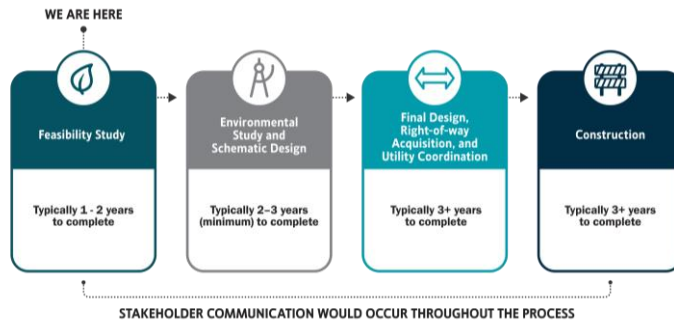


Over the last few months, the study team has met with several property owners in the study area. This map shows information provided by those property owners.

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 nearly 894 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.

## 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.



As shown here, 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

### Fall 2022

- Hays County approved funding for this feasibility study

### Late 2022 to Mid 2023

- Collected and evaluated constraints and traffic data
- Identified preliminary study area
- Held meetings with property owners and stakeholders
- Study Open House Meeting #1

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

### Mid to Late 2023

- Continue meetings with stakeholders and property owners
- Analyze feedback from open house
- Identify conceptual route options
- Hold Open House #2 - Present conceptual route options
  - Tentatively planned for late summer 2023

To date, the study team has worked to collect and evaluate constraints and traffic data, identified the preliminary study area, initiated coordination with study area property owners and local stakeholders, and is now conducting the first community open house meeting.

As the study moves forward, all feedback from the community meeting will be evaluated, additional property owner and stakeholder meetings will be held, along with additional public open houses. Input and suggestions received in response to this open house will be used to develop conceptual route options. Those route options will be presented, for public review and comment, at the next community open house. The next open house is tentatively planned for late summer of 2023.

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.