

Notes from Oak Hill Parkway Design Concept Preview Meeting
Thursday, May 16, 2013
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Oak Hill United Methodist Church

A design concept preview meeting was held to allow the community to preview general mobility concepts that the project team developed for the project based on open house and workshop feedback to gather their initial reactions. All stakeholders that have indicated an interest in or were identified by the project team as having a potential interest in, or who have participated in previous workgroup meetings were invited to attend.

The project team and workgroup attendees introduced themselves.

The project team provided a brief overview of the project, the schedule and environmental process.

The goal of the Oak Hill Parkway Study is to determine a solution to the mobility problems on US 290 from Joe Tanner through 1826 and SH 71 from Silvermine through the Y in Oak Hill. Project partners include FHWA, TxDOT, The Mobility Authority, The City of Austin, Capital Metro and other agencies.

The proposed purpose of the project is to:

- Improve safety and emergency response;
- Improve mobility and operational efficiency; and
- Facilitate long-term congestion management in the corridor by accommodating the movement of people and goods for multiple modes of travel.

The need for improvements are based on five fundamental criteria:

- Improvement of safety within the Oak Hill Parkway corridor;
- Congestion within the corridor, which has been brought on by steady population growth in the Austin metropolitan area;
- Improvement of mobility and system connectivity in a corridor that has a substantial level of roadway congestion;
- Reduction of traffic and congestion; and
- Reduction in time delay and improvement of level of service (LOS)

There have been several opportunities for public participation since the project kicked off in November 2012, including a project scoping Open House and several workgroup meetings on topics including environmental constraints, bike/ped improvements and design concepts. Workgroup meeting invitees included anyone who indicated an interest in staying involved by signing up at the November Open House, as well as organizations that were identified by respondents to the survey that was distributed at the Open House. The project team also expanded on that list to include other organizations it felt would have an interest in the project. Input gathered through these efforts has been used to update our environmental constraints map, develop preliminary design concepts, including a “no build” alternative, and gain further insight into the bike/ped possibilities that will be further explored once the design concepts are more developed.

Some of the concepts that were shared included a very preliminary shared use path concept alongside the frontage roads and portions of Williamson Creek, but much more work is needed to determine actual alignments and how it might tie into other existing and planned trails.

The feedback gathered at this meeting, as well as feedback we receive at our next Open House on May 23rd and an online virtual Open House, will be used to further develop and refine our range of concepts.

Attendees were asked to complete a survey sheet that included three questions about each concept they will see tonight. *What do you like about each concept? What don't you like about each concept? And What*

suggestions do you have for improving each concept? Attendees were also told that if they want their comments to be submitted as part of the official environmental document, they would also need to complete a public comment form. However, the project team would be using comments provided on either form as input for their work going forward.

The project team then walked through each of the preliminary concepts, answering questions as they were raised. Attendees were encouraged to write down any comments that they wanted to be sure would be reviewed by the project team.

After reviewing all the concepts, attendees participated in a “live poll” exercise, where they were asked to rate each concept on a 1-5 scale. Attendees were also asked if they felt the Oak Hill Parkway project team was headed in the right direction. 87% of respondents answered that they strongly agreed or agreed with that statement. See document titled Design Workshop Live Poll Results.pdf for the responses to all poll questions.

Attendees were reminded that an Open House would be held on May 23rd at Small Middle School from 6-8 pm. The project team will be showing the updated environmental constraint maps, the bike/ped materials we have reviewed and the preliminary design concepts shared tonight.

We will also conduct a Virtual Open House that will include the same materials and information that will be available at our Open House on the 23rd. It will include live-chat discussions with Oak Hill Parkway project representatives on: Friday, May 24, from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. and on Tuesday, May 28, from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m.

Attendees were asked to please turn in their surveys before they leave. Official comment forms can be turned in tonight or at the Open House next week. Or they can be e-mailed or mailed in.

Large print outs of each of the concepts were available for viewing around the perimeter of the room, and project team members stayed after the meeting to answer questions.