

# VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING

## East Braker Lane Extension

Hello. My name is Matt Harold with the City of Austin's Capital Project Management group. I am a Project Manager for the East Braker Lane Extension project. On behalf of the City of Austin, in coordination with the Texas Department of Transportation, or TxDOT, I would like to welcome you to the virtual public hearing for the East Braker Lane extension. Thank you all for your attendance, and we look forward to receiving your comments.

The virtual public hearing for the proposed Braker Lane project launched on Thursday, January 5th, at 5 p.m. and will extend through 11:59 p.m. on Friday January 20th. The purpose of this public hearing is to provide an update on the project and to receive public input on the proposed improvements. The format of the hearing will include a project and environmental overview of the Braker Lane project. Following the launch of the presentation, members of the public may submit comments.

This project proposes to extend East Braker Lane from its current endpoint at Dawes Place approximately 0.75 miles to Samsung Boulevard. This new roadway would connect to a future [Travis County project](#) extending East Braker Lane from Samsung Boulevard to Harris Branch Parkway. Once complete, the project is expected to reduce congestion on East Parmer Lane. The project is in alignment with the [Austin Strategic Mobility Plan](#), a comprehensive, citywide transportation plan adopted in 2019.

The purpose of the proposed project is to facilitate congestion management in the corridor, facilitate forecasted traffic, provide a reliable route for transit and expand safe pedestrian and bicycle transit within the area. The project is needed to increase east-to-west road capacity in East Austin. Currently, continuous west-to-east traffic from north Austin is limited to US 290 East and SH 734 (Parmer Lane) and is inadequate to meet current and future traffic volumes and expected increases driven by continued community growth in the area. The project need includes consistency with local plans including the "Safe Routes to School" Infrastructure Plan.

The proposed typical road section includes a four-lane arterial roadway divided by medians with a median break at Taebaek Drive, center-turn lanes for vehicles turning onto Taebaek Drive or Samsung Boulevard from Braker Lane, sidewalks and bicycle lanes on both sides of the street along the project limits, pedestrian crossing at Taebaek Drive to provide space for people walking, biking and rolling to cross safely, curb and gutter drainage improvements, and detention pond for runoff and water quality enhancements.

Project design was completed in December of 2022 with permitting ongoing. This presentation is a part of the TxDOT required Environmental Assessment, which required before the project is approved to go to bid. We anticipate procurement for the project to begin in May of 2023 with a construction start anticipated for late Summer early Fall of 2023.

I will now review the environmental studies completed for the proposed project. Technical reports for each of these studies are available online for public review. As part of the project's compliance with NEPA, air quality, cultural resources, hazardous materials, water resources, biological resources, and social and community impacts within the corridor were assessed. Historical and Cultural Resource

studies determined there to be no previously recorded archaeological or historical sites located within the Area of Potential Effects. Overall, the studies concluded that impacts to environmental resources would be minimal.

During the construction phase of this project, temporary increases in Particulate Matter (PM) and mobile source air toxic (MSAT) emissions may occur from construction activities. The primary construction-related emissions of PM are fugitive dust from site preparation, and the primary construction-related emissions of MSAT are diesel particulate matter from diesel powered construction equipment and vehicles. The potential impacts of PM emissions will be minimized by using fugitive dust control measures. The Contractor will be encouraged to use the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan, which provides financial incentives to reduce emissions from vehicles and equipment.

Construction-related emissions are temporary and transient, and fugitive dust control measures will be in effect. Construction will be conducted in compliance with applicable regulatory requirements. Considering the temporary and transient nature of construction-related emissions, the use of fugitive dust control measures, the encouragement of the use of TERP, and compliance with applicable regulatory requirements, it is not anticipated that emissions from construction of this project will have a significant impact on air quality in the area.

The proposed project area is undeveloped, and historically has been used for agriculture. Adjacent land includes residential development and a Samsung Plant approximately one-half mile from the project area. No unresolved hazardous materials concerns were identified for the proposed site. If contaminated soils are encountered during construction, they will be analyzed to assess the presence or absence of the chemicals of concern and disposed of properly.

Next I will discuss the Biological Resources Study. The study found there is no suitable habitat for state- or federal-listed threatened or endangered species within or adjacent to the project area. The study identified the common urban adapted wildlife includes racoons, opossums, deer, skunks, squirrels, armadillos, hogs and various species of reptiles, amphibians, and birds, all of which could occur within the project area, even though habitat is of marginal quality for most species.

The proposed project would not separate or divide neighborhoods. The property to be acquired is currently undeveloped and no displacements of residences, businesses, or other community facilities would result from acquisition. Newly constructed sidewalks and bike paths would enhance neighborhood connectivity and community cohesion by improving access between the Pioneer Crossing West and Pioneer Crossing East neighborhoods, particularly for families attending the Pioneer Crossing Elementary School. This will increase bicyclist and pedestrian safety consistent with Capital Area Metropolitan 2040 Regional Transportation Plan, the [CAMPO 2040 Plan](#).

The project area does not cross any major Austin creeks or tributaries. Surface water runoff from the project right of way will be collected and directed to a retention pond south of Braker Lane and to the west of the Taebaek extension. The project is not located within the floodplain and is more than three miles east of the Edwards Aquifer transition and recharge zones.

The project area includes publicly owned land that may be used in the future as a public park. The project would require the acquisition of two permanent drainage easements on the Park property south along project roadway and east along Taebaek Drive. These small easements will channel park drainage

towards the stormwater system of the project. Per Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, a Section 4(f) de minimis applicability is being evaluated. Compliance with Chapter 26 regulations is also ongoing, and applicable public notice and hearing requirements will be followed. Chapter 26 public hearing notification will occur independently of this environmental hearing process.

The project would require the acquisition of 16.26 acres of right of way from three parcels, 2.79 acres of permanent easement, and 1.14 acres of temporary construction easements. All right of way acquisition would be completed in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1979, as amended. The right of way to be acquired is currently undeveloped, and the proposed project would not result in the displacement of any residences or businesses.

The project has reached final design, and project engineers are addressing comments from City and TxDOT reviewers in order to finalize permitting. Once permits are received, right of way is acquired, and TxDOT approval is granted the project will be put to bid. Currently, we anticipate bidding in May of 2023, with construction start in late summer 2023 or early fall.

If you experience technical difficulties with the virtual public hearing, please contact the East Braker Lane Communications Liaison in the Austin Transportation Department at 512-974-2300. You may also request special accommodations, assistance accessing public hearing information and materials, and language and interpretation needs other than English or Spanish. Please note, discussion with project staff will not be included in the official record of this public hearing. If members of the public wish to submit a comment to be a part of the official record of this public hearing, they can do so in several ways.

All verbal and written comments must be received or postmarked before the end of the comment period on 11:59 p.m. on Friday, January 20, 2023.

Comments can be submitted in several ways, including:

- Verbally by calling 512-974-2300 and leaving a voicemail.
- In writing online by using the web form linked in the “Public Comments” section of [AustinTexas.gov/EBrakerLane](https://austintexas.gov/EBrakerLane)
- - By email to [AustinMobility@AustinTexas.gov](mailto:AustinMobility@AustinTexas.gov) , or
- By mail to: Austin Transportation Department  
ATTN: Braker Lane  
P.O. Box 1088  
Austin, TX 78767

Responses to verbal and written comments received will be available online at [AustinTexas.gov/EBrakerLane](https://austintexas.gov/EBrakerLane) once the final report has been approved. Please note that per TxDOT requirements, the City of Austin is not permitted to respond to comments or questions before the official meeting summary is complete.

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