

What process did the City use to reach the decision to move forward with sidewalk option 2?

The [Safe Routes to School](#) program began a public process to determine safe route infrastructure needs for Hill Elementary School in 2017. In addition to a walk audit, members of the public were invited to provide input on infrastructure needs surrounding Hill Elementary school via an online map and an in-person public open house at Murchison Middle School on December 6, 2017.

Comments received at the Open House were added to the online map and incorporated into the infrastructure recommendations. An [Infrastructure Report for Hill Elementary](#) was published in 2020, in which a sidewalk on Austin Woods Drive was ranked as a very high priority project. The infrastructure plan is based on data analysis, on-site safety assessments, and community input.

Finally, Austin Public Works and Austin Transportation held a [virtual open house](#) from April 21 – May 14 2021, which asked the community to provide feedback on four sidewalk options along Austin Woods Drive. Sidewalk Option 2 was ranked as the most preferred option in the online survey, which received [213 submissions](#).

Based on community feedback, along with a constructability assessment and safety analysis, sidewalk option 2 was selected. This sidewalk will be built on the north side of the street and within the existing street space.

Do the new sidewalks on Hyridge Drive and Cima Serena Drive provide sufficient safe routes to Hill Elementary?

Missing sidewalks on Hyridge Drive, Cima Serena Drive, and Austin Woods Drive were all identified as needed infrastructure in the [Hill Elementary Infrastructure Report](#). Building a sidewalk on Austin Woods Drive was rated as a very high benefit. Learn more about how Safe Route projects are prioritized in the [Safe Routes to School Citywide Summary Report](#).

According to Austin Independent School District (AISD), during the 2019-2020 school year, 42 students lived within ½ mile of Hill Elementary and their shortest or equally shortest walking route is along Austin Woods Drive. The new sidewalk is anticipated to last 50 years and it will provide a safer, dedicated space for everyone walking in the area for years to come.

How will street parking be impacted by this project?

Option 2 will remove parking on the south side of the street to provide street space for general travel lanes and the sidewalk on the north side of the street. No additional markings or devices will be used to define parking lanes. Parking restriction signage may be installed where needed. While parking is anticipated to increase on the north side during certain times of the day, no overall displacement of parking is anticipated, based on existing utilization.

Will heritage trees along Austin Woods Drive be harmed by this project?

No. Sidewalk Option 2 on the north side of the street will be primarily constructed within the existing street space and is the least impactful option to trees on Austin Woods Drive. Caution will be taken when building around existing heritage trees. All [General Permit requirements](#) related to work around trees will be followed. The field engineer for the project will proactively consult with the Environmental Specialists from Development Services Department prior to working near protected heritage trees. To preserve trees, mitigation techniques that could be used include: hand excavation around roots, sand bridging, bridging with piers, and street geometry changes - including parking space alterations to limit construction in critical root zones.

Will oversized vehicles and emergency vehicles still be able to safely navigate Austin Woods Drive?

Yes. Austin Transportation and Austin Fire departments routinely coordinate street improvements in service of public safety, both to ensure safer design for daily users of the street as well as adequate provisions for emergency response needs. Coordination is currently underway regarding the planned geometric changes to the roadway for this project.

How quickly could construction begin?

Construction is expected to begin by early 2022 and will take approximately three months to complete - barring weather delays or other unforeseen circumstances. Construction notices will be mailed to residents 30 days before the start date.

How is this project funded?

With funds from the [2016 Bond](#) and through the [District 10](#) quarter-cent fund to support the Safe Routes to School Program.