

Slide 1



# WELCOME

VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING: SOUTH LAMAR BOULEVARD CORRIDOR  
MOBILITY & SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS  
CSJ: 0113-09-072, 0113-10-001 AND 0113-12-002  
JULY 15, 2020



Welcome, my name is Fernando Cantero, and I am a Project Manager for the South Lamar Boulevard Corridor with the City of Austin's Corridor Construction Program. 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 South Lamar Boulevard project. Thank you all for your attendance, and we look forward to receiving your comments.



**AGENDA**

- Project Overview
- Environmental Overview
- Project Schedule
- Public Comments
- Adjourn

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The virtual public hearing for the proposed South Lamar project launched on Wednesday, July 15, 2020, at 9 a.m. and will extend through 5 p.m. on Thursday, July 30, 2020. 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 South Lamar Boulevard project. Following the launch of the presentation, members of the public may submit comments.

**PUBLIC HEARING QUESTIONS/CONCERNS** 

Call 512-974-7904 if you have:

- Problems accessing public hearing information online
- Requests for special accommodations
- Language or interpretation needs (other than English or Spanish)

Discussion with project staff will not be included in the official record of the public hearing.

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If you experience technical difficulties with the virtual public hearing, please contact the South Lamar Boulevard Communications Liaison in the City of Austin Corridor Program Office at 512-974-7904.

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.

## HOW CAN I MAKE COMMENTS?



All verbal and written comments must be received or postmarked by 5 p.m. on Thursday July 30, 2020.

Submit comments:

- Verbally by calling 512-974-9444 and leaving a voicemail
- In writing online by using the web comment form linked in the "Public Comments" section of [AustinTexas.gov/SouthLamarENV](https://AustinTexas.gov/SouthLamarENV)
- By email to: [SouthLamar@AustinTexas.gov](mailto:SouthLamar@AustinTexas.gov)
- By mail to: City of Austin, Corridor Program Office  
PO Box 1088, Austin, TX 78767

Responses to verbal and written comments received will be available online at [AustinTexas.gov/SouthLamarENV](https://AustinTexas.gov/SouthLamarENV) once the final report has been approved. 4 

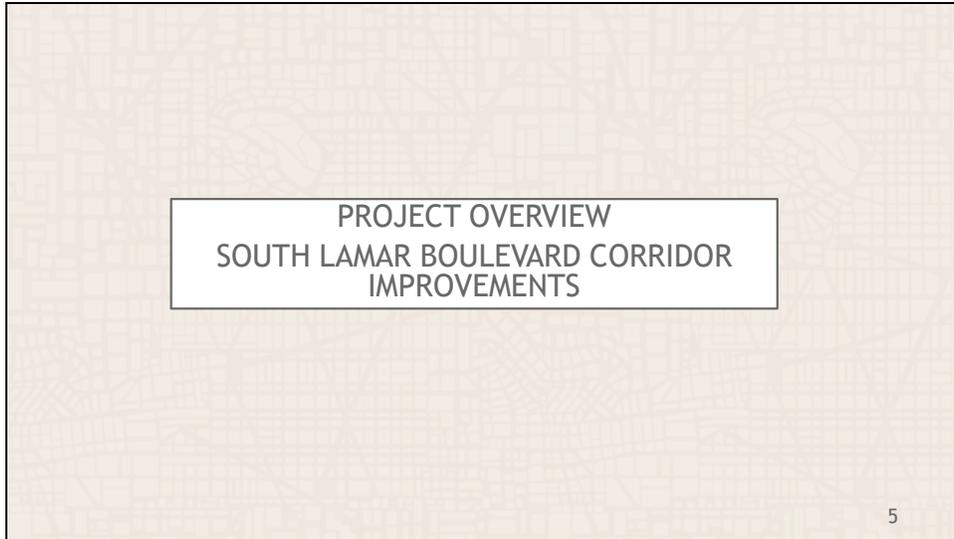
All verbal and written comments must be received or postmarked before the end of the comment period on Thursday July 30, 2020, at 5 p.m.

Comments can be submitted in several ways, including:

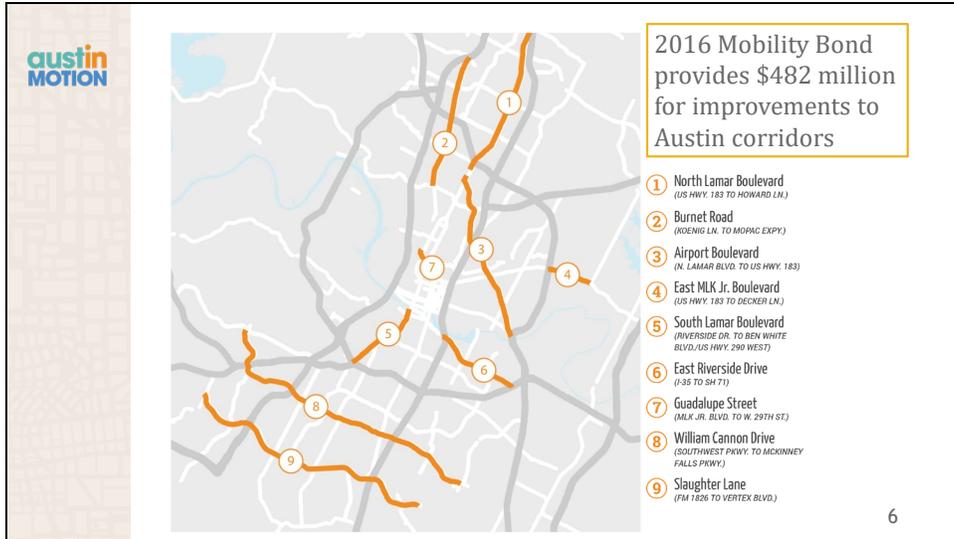
- Verbally by calling 512-974-9444 and leaving a voicemail.
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Slide 5



Now I will provide a presentation regarding the South Lamar Boulevard corridor improvement projects.



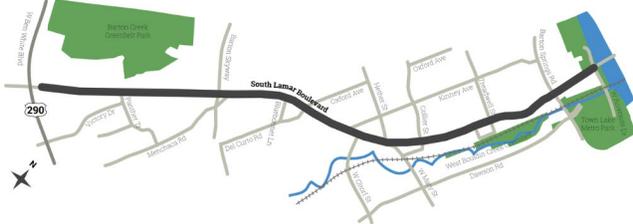
To provide some background, in 2016, Austin voters passed the 2016 Mobility Bond, which provides \$720 million for transportation improvements throughout the City of Austin. As part of the Corridor Mobility Program, \$482 million of the bond funds are being used to design and construct multi-modal improvements on nine major roadways.

## SOUTH LAMAR BOULEVARD



**Corridor Limits:** Riverside Drive to US 290  
**Total Length:** Approximately 3.3 miles  
**Corridor Mobility Plan:** completed in April 2016  
**Capital Metro Project Connect:** Locally Preferred Alternative  
**Environmental Study Evaluating:**

- Unfunded Improvements
- Funded Improvements



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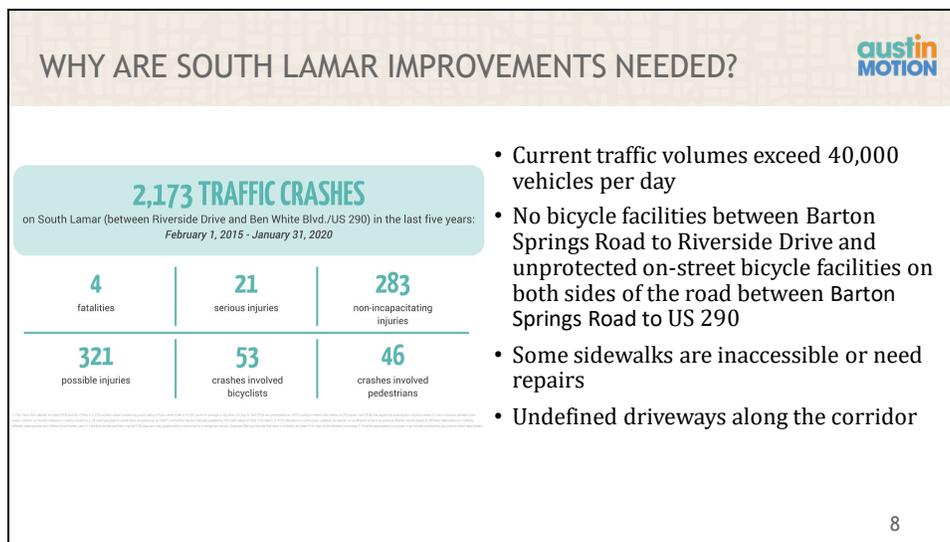
South Lamar Boulevard between Riverside Drive and US 290 is one of the nine major roadways identified in the Corridor Construction Program, which is funded through the 2016 Mobility Bond and is part of the Corridor Mobility Program.

The City of Austin completed a Corridor Mobility Plan for South Lamar Boulevard in April 2016. The plan outlines the recommendations for improving mobility and safety along the corridor. In addition, South Lamar Boulevard is a part of the recently approved Capital Metro Project Connect System Plan and the Locally Preferred Alternative.

The City of Austin conducted environmental studies to understand the potential impacts of the proposed improvements for the South Lamar Boulevard corridor. These studies were conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, as well as per state requirements, outlined in Title 43 Part 1 of the Texas Administrative Code, or TAC. The South Lamar Boulevard corridor is owned by TxDOT.

The City of Austin is pursuing environmental clearance for all South Lamar Boulevard improvements between Riverside Drive and US 290 that are recommended in the Corridor Mobility Plan that was completed in April 2016.

This includes improvements that are not yet funded for construction as well as those that have been funded by the 2016 Mobility Bond. Achieving environmental clearance for all improvements will enable the City of Austin to construct them when future funding sources are secured.

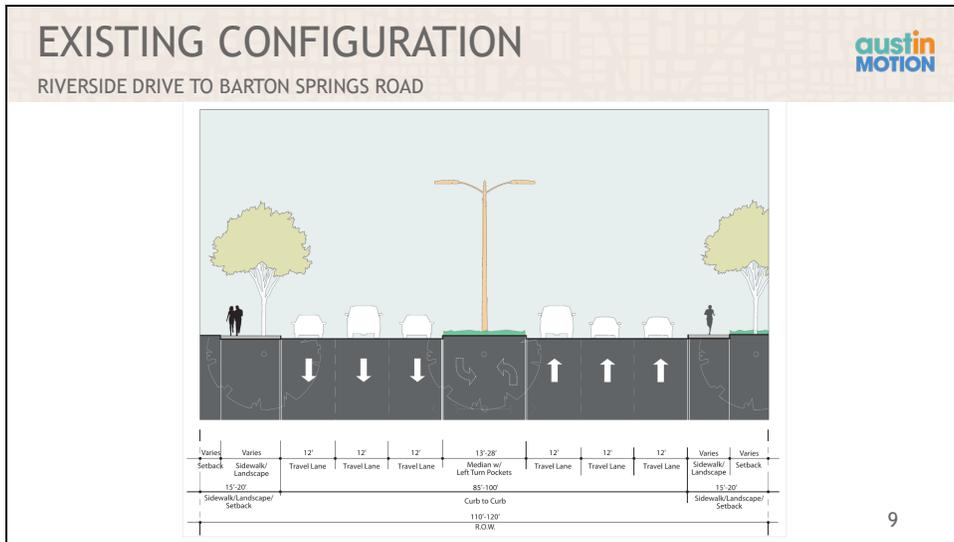


The goal of this project is to address safety and mobility concerns along the South Lamar Boulevard corridor. Over 40,000 vehicles travel this corridor each day.

According to crash data collected by Austin Transportation, 2,173 crashes occurred on the South Lamar Boulevard corridor between 2015 and 2020. Those crashes resulted in 21 serious injuries, 283 non-incapacitating injuries, and 321 possible injuries. 53 of those crashes involved bicyclists and 46 involved pedestrians.

- There are currently no bicycle facilities between Barton Springs Road and Riverside Drive. Bicycle facilities are on-street and unprotected on both sides of South Lamar from Barton Springs Road to US 290.
- The pedestrian facilities need reconstruction in several locations. Sidewalks either need repairs, are not connected, or do not meet ADA-guidelines. In certain locations, sidewalks are inaccessible due to missing ramps; and in other locations, utility poles conflict with the sidewalk path.
- In many areas throughout the corridor, driveways are undefined or very wide, contributing to numerous points of potential conflict between vehicles and cyclists and pedestrians.

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This is the typical section for the existing configuration of South Lamar between Riverside Drive and Barton Springs Road.

This segment currently consists of six travel lanes, three in the northbound and three in the southbound directions, separated by a raised median with openings for left turn movements. There are existing sidewalks but no bicycle lanes. Other infrastructure includes an underground stormwater drainage system.

## PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

RIVERSIDE DRIVE TO BARTON SPRINGS ROAD



**Funded for construction:**

- Upgraded traffic signals at Riverside Drive, Toomey Road and Barton Springs Road
- Pavement rehabilitation and relocation of the existing curb closer to the centerline of the roadway by removing the right turn lanes on both sides
- Two-way bicycle lanes and a continuous ADA-compliant sidewalks behind the curb on both sides of South Lamar Boulevard
- Access management improvements such as driveway modifications and reconstruction of center medians
- Drainage Improvements
- Bus stop improvements in partnership with Capital Metro
- Enhanced landscaping with a variety of plantings and tree species, street lighting, and streetscape improvements

**Right-of-Way:**

- Existing right-of-way width between Riverside Drive to Barton Springs Road is approximately 120 feet
- Proposed enhancements will be constructed within existing right-of-way and will not require acquisitions

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The funded improvements between Riverside Drive and Barton Springs Road represent the City of Austin’s ultimate vision for urban corridors. Improvements include:

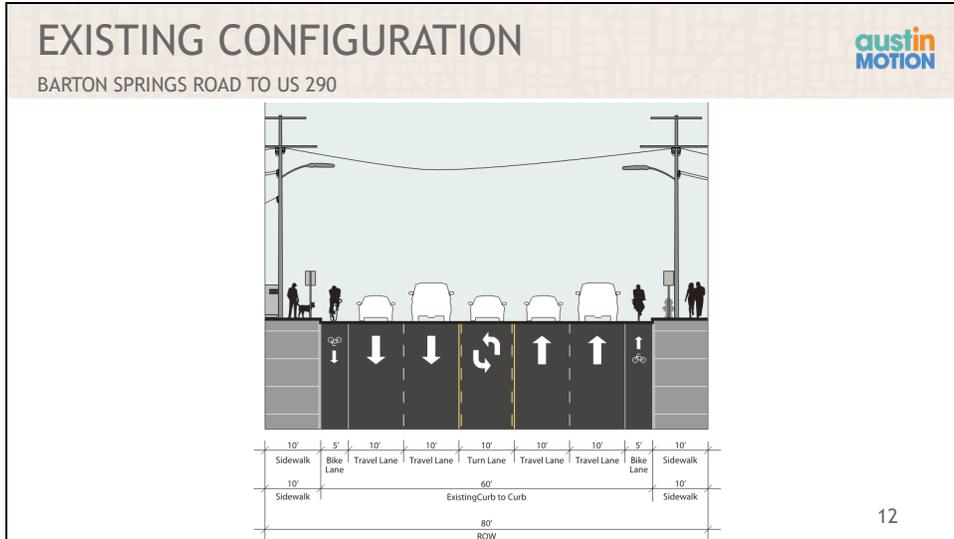
- Upgraded traffic signals at Riverside Drive, Toomey Road and Barton Springs Road
- Pavement rehabilitation and relocation of the existing curbs towards the center of the road by removing the existing right-turn lanes
- Two-way bicycle lanes and continuous ADA-compliant sidewalks behind the curb on both sides of South Lamar Boulevard
- Access management improvements such as driveway modifications and reconstruction of the center medians
- Drainage improvements
- Bus stops improvements in partnership with Capital Metro; and
- Enhanced landscaping with a variety of plantings and tree species; street lighting; and streetscape improvements such as benches, bike racks, scooter parking, and waste receptacles.

Though it varies by section, the existing right-of-way width from Riverside Drive to Barton Springs Road is generally 120 feet and will not require additional right-of-way.



This slide shows the proposed typical cross-section for South Lamar Boulevard between Riverside Drive and Barton Springs Road. These improvements reflect the ultimate vision for the South Lamar corridor, and are funded for construction.

The project will be constructed within the existing right-of-way. Starting from the outside moving in, there will be 7-foot sidewalks where possible, 10-foot two-way bicycle lanes, and 7-foot landscape areas on both sides of the road. The landscape areas will separate cyclists and pedestrians from the travel lanes. These elements will be accommodated within the existing right-of-way by repurposing the existing right-turn lanes on both sides of South Lamar Boulevard.



Next is the typical section for the existing configuration between Barton Springs Road to US 290.

This segment of South Lamar currently consists of 4 travel lanes, two in the northbound and two in the southbound directions, separated by a two-way center running left turn lane. Existing on-street bicycle lanes are on both sides of the road, as well as sidewalks. The existing drainage is generally an open ditch system south of Barton Skyway and a closed stormwater drainage system north of Barton Skyway. There are also overhead utilities and poles that run along both sides of the road.

## PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

BARTON SPRINGS ROAD TO US 290



- **Funded for construction between Barton Springs Road and US 290:**
- 13 existing traffic signals would be enhanced with upgraded technology
- Two new traffic signals at Del Curto Road and Evergreen Avenue
- Four new pedestrian hybrid beacons (mid-block signalized cross-walks) located at the following locations: West Oak Drive, Dickson Drive, Oxford Avenue, and near the Post Apartments
- Intersection improvements at Barton Skyway, Menchaca Road, Bluebonnet Lane, Olto Street, and Evergreen Avenue will include improved crossing conditions and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, including enhanced and separated facilities
- Pavement rehabilitation and relocation of the existing curb closer to the centerline of the roadway
- New shared-use paths for pedestrians and cyclists on both sides of South Lamar Boulevard that will comply with ADA guidelines
- Access management improvements such as intermittent-raised medians in some locations and driveway modifications
- Drainage improvements
- Bus stop improvements in partnership with Capital Metro, including a new dedicated transit priority lane northbound through the intersections at Barton Skyway and Menchaca Road

- **Right-of-Way:**
- The existing right-of-way width from Barton Springs Road to US 290 is generally 80-100 feet
- The majority of the proposed improvements are within the right-of-way
- The proposed funded improvements will require right-of-way acquisition of less than ½ an acre

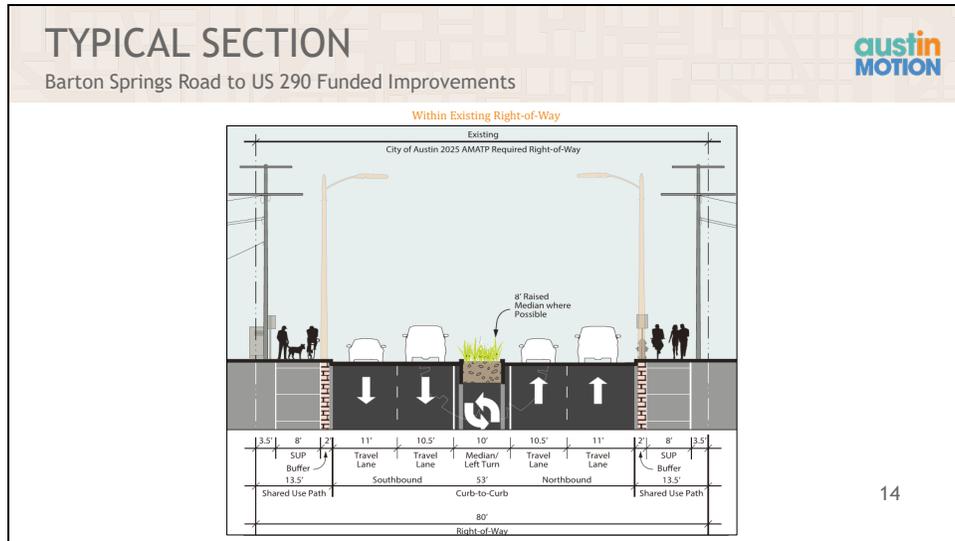
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The funded South Lamar Boulevard improvements between Barton Springs Road and US 290 include:

- Improved traffic signals at existing signalized intersections with enhanced technology
- Two new traffic signals at Del Curto Road and Evergreen Avenue
- Four new pedestrian hybrid beacons which are mid-block signalized cross-walks for pedestrians
- Safety and multi-modal connectivity improvements at certain intersections
- Pavement rehabilitation and the relocation of existing curbs towards the center of the road
- New shared-use paths for pedestrians and cyclists on both sides of South Lamar Boulevard. Shared-use paths will comply with ADA guidelines
- Access management improvements such as intermittent raised medians along the corridor and driveway modifications
- Drainage improvements, and
- Bus stop improvements in partnership with Capital Metro, including a new dedicated transit priority lane northbound through the intersection at Barton Skyway and Menchaca Road

The right-of-way width between Barton Springs Road and US 290 along South Lamar Boulevard varies by section but is generally between 80 - 100 feet.

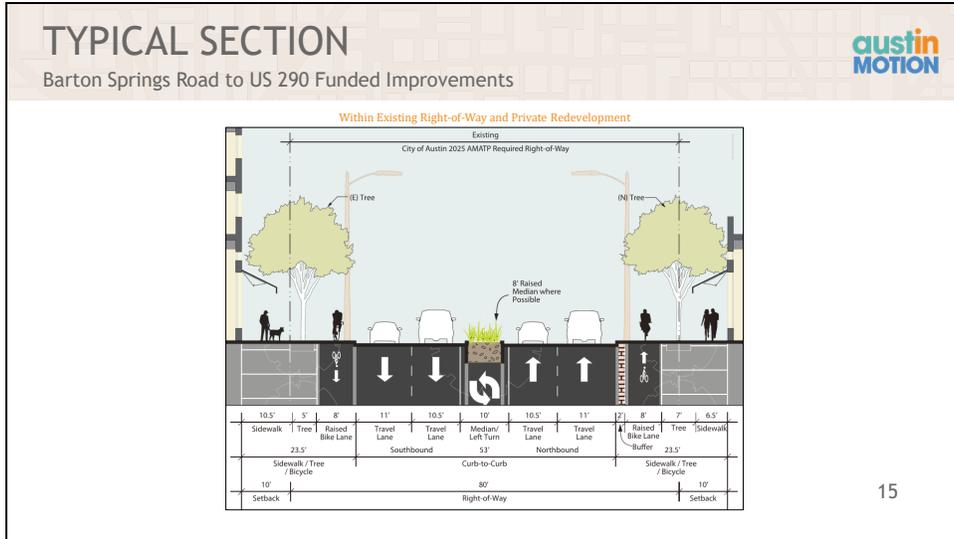
The majority of the proposed improvements will be constructed within the existing right-of-way. The proposed funded improvements will require additional right-of-way of less than half an acre. These acquisitions are being analyzed during the design phase of the project.



This slide shows the proposed typical cross-section for South Lamar Boulevard between Barton Springs Road and US 290. These improvements are funded for construction.

The project would largely be constructed within the existing right of way. Starting from the outside moving in, 8-foot shared-use paths with two to four-foot landscape buffer zones separating cyclists and pedestrians from the travel lanes would be on both sides of the road. It should be noted that the near-term funded improvements would require limited right-of-way, with needs generally restricted to areas at major intersections where turn lane modifications are proposed. Relocation of the existing curbs closer to the centerline of the road will accommodate the shared-use paths and landscape buffers. The north and southbound travel lanes would remain, with intermittent median islands added along the corridor to define where left turns should occur. Landscaping or streetscape will be added to the median islands.

In some places, elements from the unfunded vision are being implemented through private redevelopments. These include things like separate bike and pedestrian facilities and landscaping.



This slide shows the proposed typical cross-section for South Lamar Boulevard between Barton Springs Road and US 290 where elements from the unfunded vision are being implemented in some areas. Generally, this is possible in areas where sufficient right of way is available, at some intersections, or through private redevelopments. Where possible, the City of Austin will construct improvements such as separate bike and pedestrian facilities and landscaping.

The project would largely be constructed within the existing right of way. Starting from the outside moving in, on both sides of the road there will be 6.5 to 10.5-foot sidewalks, 5 to 7-foot landscape areas, 8-foot bicycle paths and up to 2-foot buffer zones separating cyclists and pedestrians from the travel lanes.

Relocation of the existing curbs closer to the centerline of the road will accommodate the pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The north and southbound travel lanes would remain, with intermittent median islands added along the corridor to define where left turns should occur. Whether landscaping will be added to the medians will be determined prior to construction.

## PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

BARTON SPRINGS ROAD TO US 290



**Unfunded improvements:**

- Separate pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Streetscape and landscaping with trees
- Enhanced street lighting

**Right-of-Way:**

- The existing right-of-way width from Barton Springs Road to US 290 is generally 80-100 feet
- The right-of-way width needed to implement the unfunded improvements would be approximately 100-120 feet and would require the acquisition of approximately 5 acres

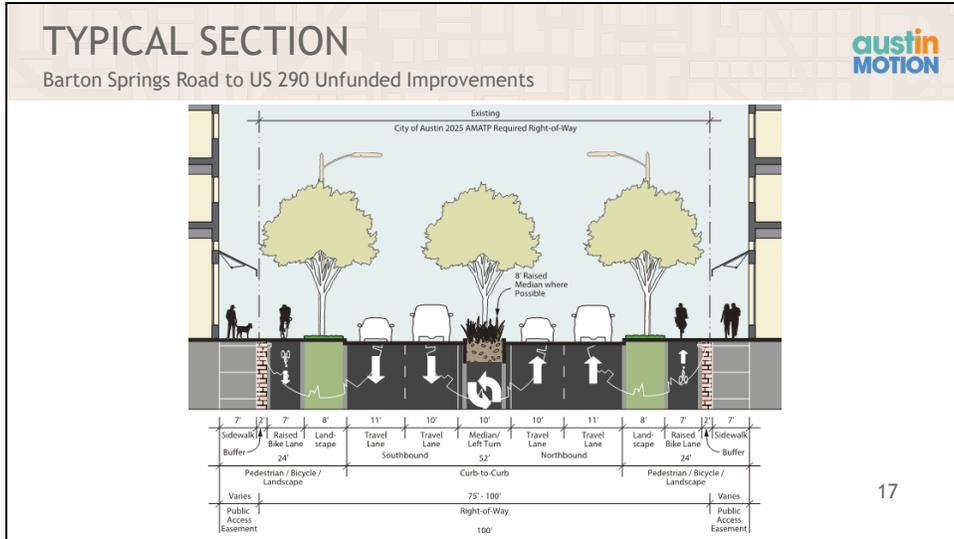
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The City of Austin evaluated the environmental impacts of improvements to South Lamar Boulevard between Barton Springs and US 290 that are recommended in the Corridor Mobility Plan that was completed in April 2016. These improvements would reflect the City's ultimate vision for urban corridors.

If funding were to become available, the City of Austin would make efforts to leverage the improvements that are currently funded for construction in the near term. The shared-use path will be repurposed as a dedicated bicycle path and separate sidewalks will be constructed. Additional improvement such as streetscape, landscape with trees, and street lighting are also part of the unfunded improvements.

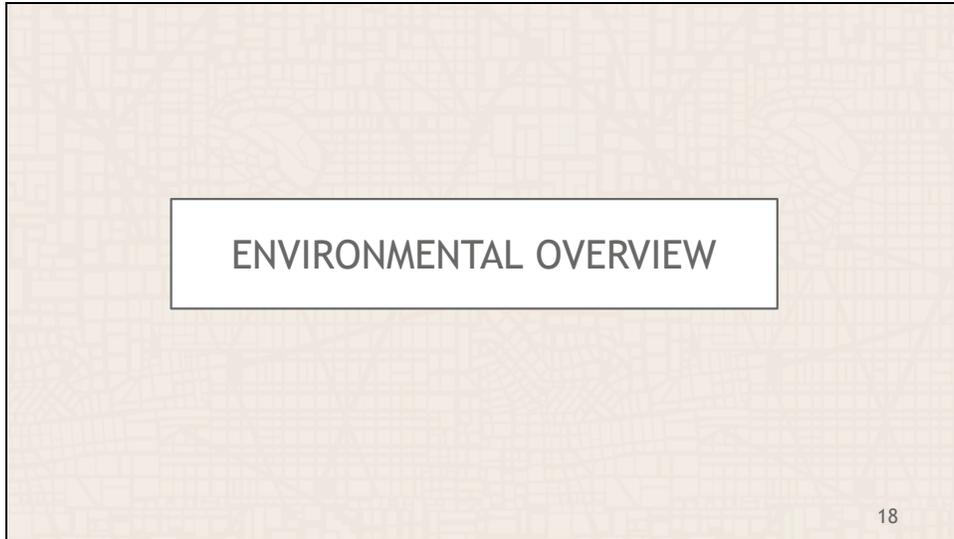
The existing ROW width between Barton Springs Road and US 290 varies by section and is generally between 80 - 100 feet. To achieve the ultimate corridor vision, the unfunded improvements will require approximately 100 - 120 feet, and acquisition of approximately 5 acres.

As mentioned in the previous slide, these elements are currently being implemented in some areas where sufficient right of way is available, at some intersections, or through private redevelopments.



Finally, we show the proposed typical section for the unfunded improvements to South Lamar Boulevard between Barton Springs Road and US 290. The project would require right-of-way acquisition to construct the unfunded improvements. Starting from the outside moving in, on both sides of the road there will be a 7-foot sidewalk, 2-foot buffer, 7-foot bicycle lane and up to an 8-foot landscape area separating cyclists and pedestrians from the travel lanes. Additional enhancements include streetscape, landscaping with trees, and street lighting.

If funding were to become available, the City of Austin would make efforts to leverage the improvements that are funded for construction in the near term. For example, the shared-use path will be repurposed as a dedicated bicycle path and separate sidewalks will be constructed.



I will now discuss the environmental studies completed for the proposed project. These studies considered the potential impacts of the unfunded improvements.



Technical reports for each of these studies are available online for public review.

As part of the project's compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the City of Austin considered biological resources, community impacts, water resources, as well as archeological and historical resources. Overall, impacts to environmental resources as a result of the South Lamar corridor improvements would be minimal.

Air quality and hazardous material studies were also conducted but were not found to have impacts within the corridor and will not be addressed in this presentation.

The City of Austin worked to minimize environmental impacts based on the findings of these studies.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES 

 Biological Resources

- No suitable habitat for state- or federal-listed threatened or endangered species exists within or adjacent to the project area
- Suitable habitat for six (6) Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) exists within the project area. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented for these six (6) species as such:
  - Amphibian and Water Quality BMPs for Woodhouse's toad
  - Terrestrial Reptile BMPs for the common garter snake and Texas garter snake
  - Vegetation BMPs for the tree dodder, low spurge, and Correll's false dragon-head
- The corridor project has been approved by Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan (BCCP) and will be incorporated into its existing Section 10 Permit with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Coordination with Texas Parks and Wildlife has been conducted and suggested BMPs have been incorporated into construction plans

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First, I will discuss the Biological Resources Study. There is no suitable habitat for state- or federal-listed threatened or endangered species within or adjacent to the project area.

Suitable habitat for six (6) Species of Greatest Conservation Need exist within the project area. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented for these six (6) species to minimize biological impacts: amphibian and water quality BMPs for Woodhouse's toad, terrestrial reptile BMPs for the common garter snake and Texas garter snake, and vegetation BMPs for the tree dodder, low spurge, and Correll's false dragon-head.

The corridor project has been approved by Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan and will be incorporated into its existing Section 10 Permit with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Early coordination with Texas Parks and Wildlife has been conducted and suggested BMPs have been incorporated into the construction plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES 



Community Impacts

- Minor access changes
  - Raised medians and modified driveway access
- Displacements are not anticipated
- Disproportionately high and adverse impacts to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and minority populations are not anticipated
- Increased safety and mobility

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Next, I will discuss Community Impacts.

Minor access changes would result from the addition of raised medians and modified driveway access.

No displacements are anticipated as a result of the proposed project.

Limited English Proficiency populations were identified within the project area. Limited English Proficiency persons were given and will continue to be given the opportunity for meaningful involvement in the NEPA process for the proposed project.

Although minority populations are present throughout the project area, the proposed project would not have a disproportionately high and adverse impact on minority populations because the proposed raised medians would not further divide or separate any communities.

The design elements in the proposed improvements include pedestrian hybrid beacons and curb ramps. Other proposed design elements integrated into the raised medians are pedestrian refuges and curb ramps along the corridor and upgraded signalization at intersections with accessible push buttons.

Overall, the proposed design features will enhance mobility, access, and would reduce congestion and improve safety for both minority and non-minority census geographies.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES 

 Water Resources

- The project area does not cross any major Austin creeks or tributaries
- One waterway leading to West Bouldin Creek is a potentially jurisdictional Water of the U.S. (WOTUS) and could be affected by the project
  - Eligible for Nationwide Permit (NWP) 14
  - Impacts anticipated to be 0.0009 acres (approximately 40 square feet)
  - No Preconstruction Notification (PCN) is anticipated
- Approximately 3.55 acres of 100-year flood zones within the project area would require coordination with the local Floodplain Administrator
- The project area is located within the Edwards Aquifer Recharge and Transition Zones as defined by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
  - Water Pollution Abatement Plan (WPAP) and associated documents must be created and approved prior to construction

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Next, I will discuss Water Resources.

The project area does not cross any major Austin creeks or tributaries.

There is one potential Water of the U.S. located within the project limits. It is anticipated that any impacts to Waters of the U.S. would be authorized through Nationwide Permit 14 for Linear Transportation Projects. Impacts will be approximately 40 square feet. No isolated wetlands were identified within this corridor. The potential impacts are below the threshold to notify the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with a Preconstruction Notification.

Approximately 3.55 acres of 100-year flood zones are located within the project area. It is anticipated that the proposed project would not increase water surface elevations during a Base Flood Event. Coordination with the local Floodplain Administrator would be required.

The project area is located within the Edwards Aquifer Recharge and Transition Zones. A Water Pollution Abatement Plan and associated documents will be submitted and approved by TCEQ prior to construction.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES 



### Archeological Resources

- Coordination with the Archeology Division at the Texas Historical Commission
  - Two known archeological sites identified adjacent to the roadway in the segment of the corridor from Riverside Drive to Barton Springs Road
  - A professional archeologist will monitor construction activities in this area
  - Any archeological deposits discovered will be documented, evaluated, and impacts mitigated

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Next, I will address Archaeological Resources.

Coordination with the Archeology Division at the Texas Historical Commission has been conducted. There are two (2) known archeological sites identified adjacent to South Lamar between Riverside Drive and Barton Springs Road. A professional archeologist will monitor construction activities in this area and any archeological deposits discovered will be documented, evaluated, and impacts will be mitigated.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES 

 Historical Resources

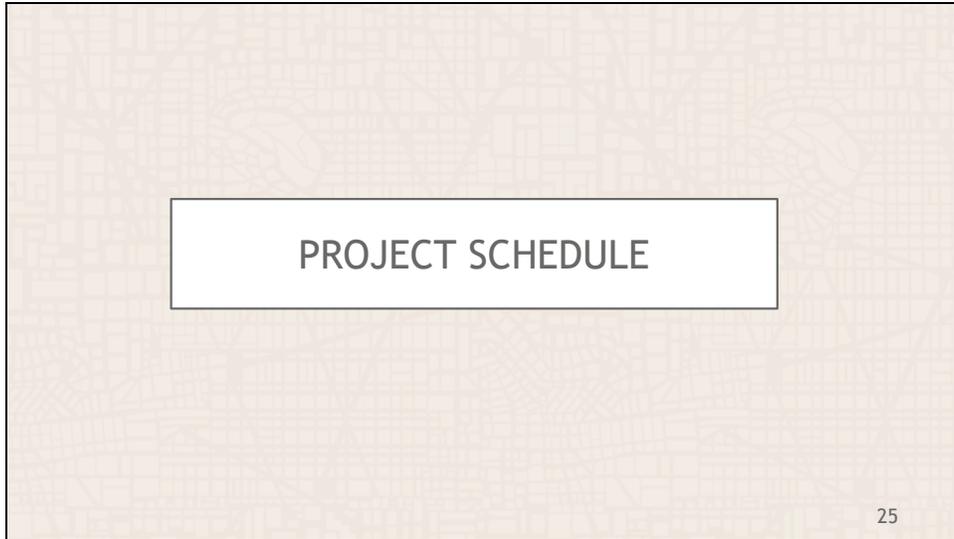
- A review of existing historical records was conducted and five historic structures were identified along the corridor:
  - Three structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They are located outside of the right-of-way, and it is not anticipated that they would be directly impacted
  - Two structures are designated as Registered Texas Historical Landmarks and would not be directly impacted by the project
  - If the project receives federal funds, or if a federal permit is required, then the Texas Historical Commission will be consulted to evaluate impacts to these structures in accordance with federal law

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And finally, I will discuss Historical Resources.

A review of existing historical records was conducted and five (5) historic structures were identified along the corridor. Three (3) structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They are located outside of the right-of-way, and it is not anticipated that they would be directly impacted. Two (2) structures are designated as Registered Texas Historical Landmarks and would not be directly impacted by the project. If the project receives federal funds, or if a federal permit is required, then the Texas Historical Commission will be consulted to evaluate impacts to these structures in accordance with federal law.

Slide 25



And now I will discuss the project Schedule for the South Lamar Boulevard Corridor.

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**  
RIVERSIDE DRIVE TO BARTON SPRINGS ROAD



**Environmental Clearance:** Expected Fall 2020

**Final Design Plans:**  
Funded improvements: Completed Summer 2020

**Construction:**  
Utility adjustments: Start Winter 2020 through Construction  
Funded improvements: Start Winter 2020

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We anticipate the entire South Lamar Corridor project will receive environmental clearance by Fall 2020.

For the South Lamar Boulevard segment between Riverside Drive to Barton Springs Road, final design is underway on the funded improvements and is expected to be completed by Summer 2020. The project is expected to start construction beginning Winter 2020.

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

BARTON SPRINGS ROAD TO US 290



**Environmental Clearance:** Fall 2020

**Final Design Plans:**

- Funded improvements: Complete Fall 2021
- Unfunded improvements: TBD (dependent upon funding availability)

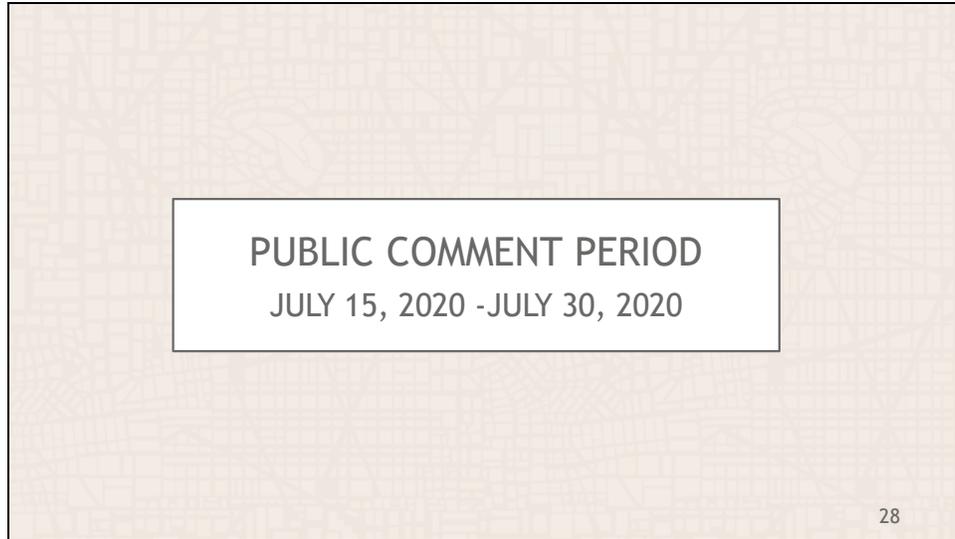
**Construction:**

- Utility Adjustments: Start Winter 2020 through Construction
- Funded improvements: Start Fall 2022
- Unfunded improvements: TBD (dependent upon funding availability)

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For the South Lamar Boulevard segment between Barton Springs Road to US 290, final design is underway on the funded improvements and is expected to be completed by Fall 2021. The project is expected to start construction beginning Fall 2022.

The final design plans and construction start dates for the unfunded improvements are to be determined and are dependent upon funding availability.



This concludes the presentation for the South Lamar Boulevard Virtual Public Hearing. We want to hear from you, so please take the time to provide your input during the public comment period.

## HOW CAN I MAKE COMMENTS?



All verbal and written comments must be received or postmarked by 5 p.m. on Thursday July 30, 2020.

Submit comments:

- Verbally by calling 512-974-9444 and leaving a voicemail.
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- Email comments to: [SouthLamar@AustinTexas.gov](mailto:SouthLamar@AustinTexas.gov)
- Mail written comments to: City of Austin, Corridor Program Office  
PO Box 1088, Austin, TX 78767

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As stated at the beginning of the presentation, all verbal and written comments must be received or postmarked before the end of the comment period on Thursday July 30, 2020, at 5 p.m.

Comments can be submitted:

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This concludes the virtual public hearing presentation. Thank you for your attendance.