



BARTON SPRINGS ROAD BRIDGE PROJECT [PROJECT ID: 5873.031]

The City of Austin is planning for improvements to Barton Springs Road Bridge to provide safety and mobility enhancements for all users. Many of its features are functionally obsolete and require rehabilitation or replacement to ensure safety and longevity.

The Barton Springs Bridge is almost 100 years old (built in 1926). It was expanded to its current width in 1946 and carries up to 20,000 vehicles per day. The bridge provides a major entrance into Zilker Park, servicing not only the park but also major City events. Due to its age and configuration, the bridge has various challenges and constraints, which include the fact that it is set on the edge of Zilker Park (a registered historic place), has some roadway misalignment, and is experiencing deterioration and degradation of the bridge structure itself.

The Barton Springs Road Project is needed to ensure bridge safety and address the structural deterioration of the bridge as well as the roadway misalignment and intersection with Azie Morton Road. In addition, any improvement must provide improved pathways for bicyclists and pedestrians and connectivity with Zilker Park.

After a detailed bridge inspection, the City evaluated various rehabilitation and replacement options. On the basis of this engineering evaluation and coordination with other City departments, state and federal resource agencies, the City has developed a recommended replacement option.

PROJECT TIME FRAME (Dates are projected as accurately as possible but are subject to change.)

Preliminary Phase: 2023

Design Phase: 2023 – 2025

Construction Bid and Award: 2025; Construction: 3+ years

FUNDING

The preliminary funding estimate for the project is \$36 million. The project is currently funded for completion of engineering and design; future funding for construction will be obtained as the project continues into construction.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How did the City determine the needed bridge improvements?

The City and its consultant conducted an extensive engineering assessment and evaluation to determine the condition of the bridge. Major areas of degradation were identified, and options considered for either rehabilitating or replacing the bridge. Doing nothing with the bridge is not an option nor is a “light touch” feasible for rehabilitating the bridge due to the nature of the structural degradation. As a result of this study, the City is recommending a bridge replacement that is more cost effective and will provide a longer bridge service life than rehabilitating the existing bridge.

How will construction affect my ability to drive along Barton Springs Rd?

Because Barton Springs Rd provides important access to neighborhoods, businesses, and Zilker Park every day, the City will maintain all four lanes of traffic during construction on the bridge. The intersection at Barton Springs Road and Azie Morton Road will also be maintained.



Are bicycle and pedestrian improvements part of any bridge improvement option?

Yes, new accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians are part of any improvement. Those include new bike lanes with accommodations for off-road bike trail users; sidewalk and path improvements that include wider pedestrian pathways; accommodations for pedestrians during special events; and connections with hike and bike trails. Other common elements are shared use path improvements including multi-modal areas to accommodate off-road hike and bike trail users, as well as improvements to the current bridge, including a wider deck, better alignment through the intersection for safety, and dedicated bike lanes.

Would the rehabilitation option restore the bridge to its original design?

The general overall appearance of the existing bridge would be maintained. However, because of the bridge support and deck degradation, construction of the rehabilitation option would first involve removing the existing bridge deck and much of its support structure. All of the existing/remaining elements would be reinforced and strengthened, and then the new components, including new piers, arch ribs, spandrel columns, and deck, would be added. As a result, less than half of the original historical structure would remain in place and most of the historical structure would be obscured from view by the new structural components required to rehabilitate the bridge or the repairs and resurfacing of existing structures.

What is the City's recommended option for improving the Barton Springs Rd bridge?

The recommended alternative is a three-span replacement option that includes transverse Y-piers that create arched forms flanking either side of the creek below. This option has a variety of benefits and meets design objectives, including providing much larger spaces underneath the bridge on the west bank to accommodate trails and the Zilker Eagle. The clean lines of the Y-piers allow viewsheds to be open underneath the bridge, creating less visual clutter and greater access to the surrounding landscape. The wider bridge deck will provide much greater separation between the different users on this structure. Dedicated bike lanes and generous multi-use paths on either side of the bridge will accommodate bicyclists, pedestrians, and the special event goers throughout the year.

Will the public be involved in the design process?

Yes. We want all residents to continue to be heard throughout this project. The Barton Springs Road Bridge Project is an important component of Austin's infrastructure, and we recognize that it is important to citizens throughout Austin. Our goal is to encourage as many people as possible to participate in the process so we can receive and consider valuable feedback from the local community.

CONTACTS



bit.ly/BartonSpringsBridge