



Bandera Road Study

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who is conducting this study?

Early in 2006, the Alamo Regional Mobility Authority (Alamo RMA) was granted development authority over 28 miles of state system including SH 16 – more commonly known as Bandera Road – between Loop 1604 and Loop 410.

What is the study area?

The study includes a ¼ mile buffer on either side of Bandera Road from Loop 410 to Loop 1604. It is located within Bexar County in the cities of San Antonio and Leon Valley and near the City of Helotes.

Who is funding this study?

The Alamo RMA received a loan from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to complete a series of studies including the Bandera Road Study. This loan is not a grant and will have to be paid back, with accrued interest, by the Alamo RMA.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to evaluate transportation improvements that will provide congestion relief to drivers utilizing Bandera Road. This study will consider a variety of alternatives including operational improvements, multimodal strategies, and added capacity in addition to the No Build, or do nothing option.

Did the Alamo RMA already decide to build an elevated structure?

No. The Alamo RMA is committed to exploring every viable solution for the Bandera Road corridor. All options are on equal footing and none will be given preference over another. While the Texas Department of Transportation did conduct a preliminary feasibility study, the outcomes of that previous study will not determine the outcomes of the current study. As with all Alamo RMA studies, the public will play a vital role in every step of the planning process and will be kept informed of all study findings.

Will the improvements made to Bandera Road be tolled?

Before considering the issue of how to finance the improvements, the Alamo RMA must first understand the unique transportation challenges of the Bandera Road corridor and all of the options available for overcoming those challenges. Each option considered will carry their own unique price tag and could possibly be eligible for a variety of funding sources.

Once a recommendation is made, the Alamo RMA will work with community leaders to identify the best possible funding mechanism for the recommended solution. Since the Alamo RMA has the authority to collect tolls, toll financing will remain a funding option.

Currently, improvements for Bandera Road have not been identified for funding by the San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) that identifies transportation spending needs for the next 25 years.

Why are tolls being considered for Bandera Road? Why not use gasoline tax dollars or other taxes to build the necessary improvements?

In order to build more roads to help alleviate the mounting congestion problems in the Bexar County area, we need to consider all of the funding options available. TxDOT simply does not

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS Continued

have enough funding available to meet Bexar County's identified transportation needs, and with oil and gasoline prices at an all-time high, there's little chance the Texas Legislature or Congress will increase the current tax rate of 38.4 cents per gallon (of which 20 cents per gallon is a state tax).

In Texas, the Federal/State Gasoline Tax funds highway construction and maintenance costs. Federal tax dollars paid by Texans are not coming back to Texas—we receive back 87% of the gas taxes we pay. In addition, during the recession in the late 1980's, the State Legislature began transferring dedicated state fuel tax dollars out of the state highway fund to other needed programs. Those diversions of highway funds continue today. Maintenance costs alone are more than the funds brought in by the state fuel tax.

Toll financing can accelerate the needed construction of additional lanes for the most congested highways in Bexar County **without increasing the tax burden** on residents. Tolloed lanes do not require state or local tax increases; only tolloed lane users pay. Most importantly, toll financing can provide congestion relief decades earlier than traditional financing.

How will the solution be selected?

The Alamo RMA is implementing a pro-active, public involvement effort to involve citizens and the many diverse stakeholders in the decisions that will impact their driving future. Ultimately, a recommendation will be made to the Alamo RMA by the study team. This recommendation will be the result of a screening process conducted with the involvement of the impacted communities (San Antonio/Leon Valley/Helotes), local leaders, local/state/federal agencies, the Alamo RMA, and TxDOT.

How will this impact residences and businesses?

During the course of this study, a variety of options will be discussed. The impact to residences and businesses are two of many criteria that will need to be considered as the study progresses. Other likely constraints include impacts to faith-based organizations, historic structures, the environment, utilities, and emergency response times. These impacts will be evaluated as part of this study. A major goal of the study is to minimize displacements.

With regard to impacts to specific properties, if this study results in a "build" recommendation, the project will proceed to the next phase in the project development process. At this point, specific right-of-way needs will be refined, specific parcels of land will be identified, and affected property owners will be notified.

What can I do to help?

People wishing to participate in the Bandera Road Study can help by participating in the public outreach effort which will consist of stakeholder workshops and public meetings. All meetings will be developed to allow opportunities for public comment. In addition, comment cards will be distributed, and the feedback gathered from them will also be used to help determine the placement of the build options.

For additional information or comments, please contact the Alamo RMA at (210) 495-5256 or by e-mail at BanderaRd@AlamoRMA.org.