

# Rural Texas highways in critical need of repairs

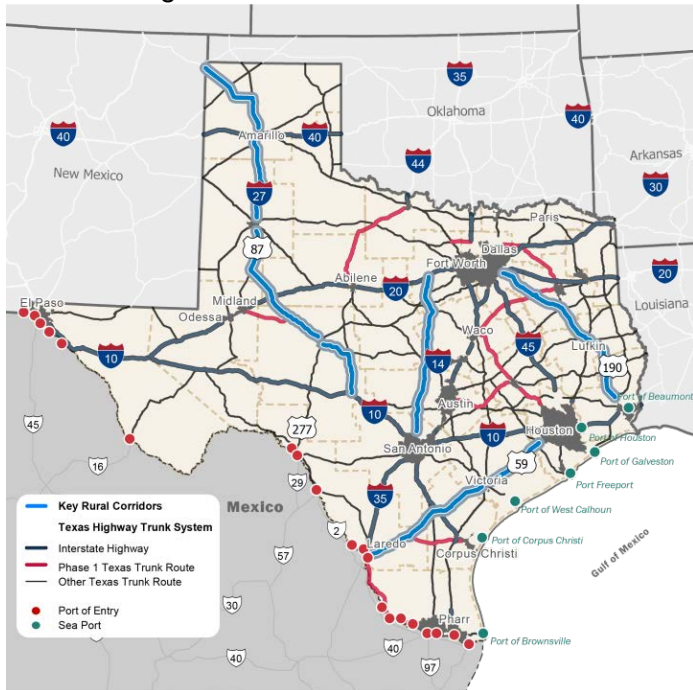
by: [Erica Brennes](#) | September 22, 2022

BLANCO COUNTY, Texas (KXAN) — A stretch of road in rural Central Texas is in “desperate” need of improvements. That’s according to a national transportation research group. The Texas Department of Transportation wants your feedback on a plan to improve that road.

On Thursday, Sept. 29, TxDOT is hosting a meeting [about improving 19 miles of U.S. Highway 281](#) in Blanco County, from U.S. Highway 290 to the Comal County line.

We’ve got a lot of highways that need work around Texas, [but according to a new report from TRIP](#), a national transportation research nonprofit, four are in desperate need of improvements because of the role they play in getting people across the state. First up is Highway 59 from Laredo, through Victoria and into Houston.

Then up north in the panhandle, from the Texas-New Mexico border, Highway 87 and Highway 81 heading south through Lubbock, Midland and San Angelo to Interstate 10.

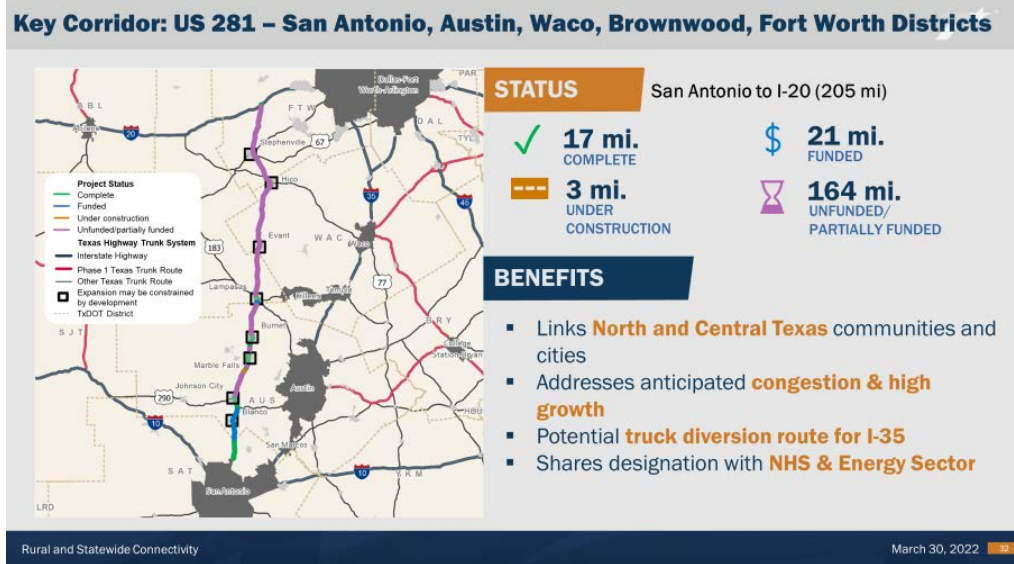


Key rural Texas highways (TxDOT Photo)

Then headed east you’ve got Highway 175 and Highway 69 from Dallas, through Lufkin on down to Beaumont.

And then there’s our neck of the woods — Highway 281 from San Antonio up to Fort Worth, through Blanco, Johnson City and Marble Falls and up to Stephenville. So let’s focus on 281.

TxDOT is considering widening the road to four divided lanes separated by a grassy median, adding right-turn



U.S. 281 Corridor Project highlights (TxDOT Photo)

lanes and making improvements to intersections and upgrading the 281/290 interchange.

Texas Transportation Commissioner Alvin New said, “We have been making an effort for around four years now to be sure that we are trying to work on expanding highways. U.S. Highway 281 that runs from San Antonio to Interstate 20, just west of Weatherford, Texas. So it allows an alternate path for freight and for people to go from the valley.”

Beyond improving traffic along the 281 corridor, on the horizon is the possibility of a complete overhaul of Interstate 35 through downtown Austin, something that would inadvertently impact 281.

“Having more viable alternatives for people to make choices when they’re coming up from the south, and they get to the San Antonio area to decide how to go north and then still get to those inland ports. So 281 is being developed, so that we can move freight and people on an alternate path that’s reasonably close to Interstate 35. With north-south orientation,” said New.

Texans that live in these rural communities [aren’t necessarily happy about this expansion](#), and with the cost of construction continuing to rise, funding remains a huge challenge.

Head to [TxDOT’s website](#) to learn more about the meeting and to weigh in virtually.