

# Roland Avenue bridges finally near completion

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A Southeast Side bridge construction project over Salado Creek that has aggravated neighbors by falling a year behind schedule is heading toward summer completion, officials said last week.

Bexar County's \$5.6 million Roland Avenue bridge work, underway since 2012, is 80 percent complete. But work fell so far behind that county officials considered replacing the beleaguered contractor.

No change was made, but officials said the road will reopen to traffic in early July. Meanwhile, the contractor is accruing financial penalties over the delayed completion.

“The project itself is fine. We are having issues with the contractor — he's way behind, ” said Bexar County engineer [Renee Green](#).

The project, replacing two low-water crossings with bridges, was conceived in 2009 to keep the road open during major storms. The winding road is being straightened, and hike and bike trails are being added to integrate with the South Salado Creek Greenway Project.

When work began in spring 2012, officials called it a one-year project, but delays set in — some due to circumstances beyond the contractor's control. Road excavation revealed a former landfill, which required the county to dispose of the material and submit a closure plan with state environmental regulators.

“We've looked at firing that contractor, bidding out the rest of the work and completing it with another contractor. The problem is, that would take longer than if we let the existing contractor finish it, ” Green said.

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