



**Notice
Draft Environmental Assessment Available for Public Review
and
Public Hearing
Farm-to-Market Road 969
From FM 973 to Hunters Bend Road
CSJ: 1186-01-091
Travis County, Texas**

Travis County, in conjunction with the Texas Department of Transportation, is proposing to widen FM 969 (MLK Blvd.) from FM 973 to Hunters Bend Road in Travis County, Texas. Pursuant to Texas Administrative Code, Title 43, Part 1, Chapter 2, Subchapter E, §2.107 and §2.108 and Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Chapter I, Subchapter H, §771.111 and Title 40, Chapter V, §1506, this notice advises the public that a draft environmental assessment (EA) is available for public review and that TxDOT will be conducting a public hearing on the proposed project. The hearing will be held on December 13, 2016 at the Dailey Middle School, located at 14000 Westall Street. Displays will be available for viewing at 6 p.m., with the formal hearing starting at 6:30 p.m. The purpose of the hearing is to present the planned improvements and to receive public comment on the proposed project.

The proposed project is needed because the existing roadway does not adequately accommodate current traffic demands, nor would it meet expected future demands. There are also safety issues associated with the current configuration. The majority of the existing FM 969 roadway from FM 973 to Hunters Bend Road consists of two 11-foot undivided travel lanes with variable shoulders and intermittent left-turn lanes. The proposed project to widen FM 969 within the project limits, a distance of approximately 2 miles in eastern Travis County just east of the Austin city limits, would upgrade the roadway to four travel lanes (two in each direction), a continuous center-turn lane, outside shoulders, and a continuous sidewalk. Currently, the outside shoulders within the project limits are inconsistent in width. The proposed project includes six-foot outside shoulders that could accommodate bicyclists and allow a safe refuge for vehicles. The sidewalk would be constructed south of, and roughly parallel to, the roadway. The continuous shoulders and sidewalks would provide bicyclists and pedestrians a safe way to move through the project corridor separated from the main traffic lanes.

The typical existing right of way (ROW) is approximately 100 feet, but widens to approximately 350 feet in some areas to accommodate features such as intersections and stormwater drains. The proposed project would generally occur along the existing roadway alignment and within the existing ROW of FM 969; however, the proposed alignment would straighten several existing curves in the roadway in an effort to increase sight distances and safety. The roadway would also be widened. In order to accommodate the expanded lanes and the straightened curves, a total of approximately 6.58 acres of new ROW would be required on both sides of the existing roadway. The proposed ROW acquisitions would potentially result in four displaced structures. The proposed project would displace three residences, which includes at least one



occupied residence, and one commercial structure. Information about relocation assistance, benefits and services for displacees, as well as information about the tentative schedules for ROW acquisition and construction can be obtained from Travis County contact Dee Heap at Dee.Heap@traviscountytexas.gov or 512-854-7647.

The project area is located within the FEMA-designated 100-year floodplains associated with Elm Creek and two of its unnamed tributaries. Coordination with the local Floodplain Administrator would be required. The hydraulic design for the proposed project would be in accordance with current FHWA and TxDOT design policies.

The draft EA, maps showing the project location and design, tentative construction schedules, and other information regarding the project are on file and available for review Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at TxDOT's Austin District Office, located at 7901 N. I-35, Austin, TX 78753, 512-832-7000; Travis County's Transportation and Natural Resources Department offices, located at 700 Lavaca Street, 5th Floor, Austin, TX 78767, 512-854-9383; during library hours at the City of Austin's University Hills Library, 4721 Loyola Lane, Austin, TX 78723, 512-974-9940 and online at <https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/get-involved/about/hearings-meetings.html> and <https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/public-works/roads> This information will also be available for review at the hearing. Verbal and written comments from the public regarding the project are requested and may be presented at the hearing, submitted in-person or submitted by mail to Adisa Communications, 13492 Research Blvd, Suite 120 PMB 631, Austin, TX 78750-2254. Comments must be received on or before Friday, January 6, 2017 to be part of the official hearing record.

The hearing will be conducted in English. Persons interested in attending the hearing that have special communication or accommodation needs, such the need for an interpreter, are encouraged to contact Shuronda Robinson, FM 969 Public Involvement Coordinator, at 512-895-9592 or FM969@makingthingsclear.com. Requests should be made at least 5 days prior to the hearing. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate these needs.

If you have any general questions or concerns regarding the proposed project or the hearing, please contact Scott Williams, P.E., FM 969 Project Manager, at 512-439-4739 or swilliams@ljaengineering.com.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 16, 2014, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.