



Revised Notice

**Draft Environmental Assessment Available for Public Review
and
Public Hearing**

NECHES RIVER BRIDGE STUDY

**From East of Archie Street and the Kansas City Southern (KCS) Railway Line in the
City of Beaumont to Old US-90 West of Rose City**

CSJ: 7220-01-001

Jefferson and Orange Counties, Texas

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), in conjunction with the Federal Railroad Administration, is proposing to add track capacity to the rail corridor crossing of the Neches River from east of Archie Street and the Kansas City Southern (KCS) Railway line in the City of Beaumont to Old US-90 just west of Rose City in Jefferson and Orange counties, Texas. As the lead state agency, TxDOT is leading the development of the environmental assessment (EA) on behalf of the FRA, the federal lead agency. The U.S. Coast Guard is a cooperating agency. 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 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 Thursday, August 25, 2016, at the Beaumont Civic Center, 701 Main Street, Beaumont, Texas 77701. Displays will be available for viewing at 5:30 PM with the formal hearing starting at 6:30 PM. The purpose of the hearing is to present the planned improvements and to receive public comment on the proposed project.

The existing facility is the primary east-west rail corridor through the City of Beaumont and includes the only river crossing in the region, the Neches River rail bridge, a single-track vertical lift span bridge owned and operated by KCS. The project would add an additional track over the Neches River, which requires construction and operation of an additional lift bridge north of the existing rail bridge. The western terminus begins about 170 feet east of the intersection of Archie Street and the KCS Railway line in the City of Beaumont, Jefferson County, Texas. The eastern terminus is located near the Old US-90 alignment just west of Rose City in Orange County, Texas. The project length is 1.68 miles.

The existing and proposed railroad right-of-way width is between 60 to 225 feet. Approximately 2.0 acres of additional right-of-way would be acquired, as well as a temporary easement for 21.5 acres for a construction laydown/staging area and a land use agreement from the TGLO for the crossing of the Neches River.

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Although additional right-of-way is required, no residential structures or businesses would be displaced. Information concerning services and benefits available to affected property owners and information about the tentative schedule for right-of-way acquisition may be obtained from the TxDOT Beaumont District Office at the address listed below.

The project would occur within regulated floodplains; however, the project would not increase water surface elevations during a Base Flood Event. An individual Section 404 Permit would be obtained for impacts to wetlands. The project would have no adverse effect to properties protected under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The project would be subject to Chapter 26 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code for the taking of land associated with the Riverfront Park. Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Act would also apply. It is anticipated that a de minimis Section 4(f) determination would be pursued for the Riverfront Park and Beaumont Police Department. Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act also applies to Riverfront Park.

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 inspection Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at the TxDOT Beaumont District Office, 8350 Eastex Freeway, Beaumont, Texas 77708, (409) 898-5745, and online at: <http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/beaumont/neches-bridge.html>. This information also will be available for inspection at the hearing. Verbal and written comments from the public regarding the project are requested and may be presented at the hearing, or submitted in person or by mail to Mr. Gil Wilson, Rail Programs Section Director, TxDOT Rail Division, 125 East 11th Street, Austin, Texas 78701-2483 or by email to gil.wilson@txdot.gov. Comments must be received on or before Thursday, September 9, 2016, to be part of the official hearing record.

The hearing will be conducted in English. Persons interested in attending the hearing who have special communication or accommodation needs, such as the need for an interpreter, are encouraged to contact TxDOT's Public Information Officer, Sarah Dupre, at (409) 898-5745. Requests should be made at least two 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 Mr. Gil Wilson, Rail Programs Section Director, at gil.wilson@txdot.gov.