



125 EAST 11<sup>TH</sup> STREET | AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-2483 | (512) 463-8588 | WWW.TXDOT.GOV

## Notice Affording an Opportunity for Public Hearing

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is proposing improvements to FM 521 (Almeda Road) from Beltway 8 to FM 2234 (McHard Road) in Harris and Fort Bend Counties, Texas.

FM 521 is a two-lane undivided roadway with an existing right-of-way (ROW) width of 100 feet. The existing intersection of FM 521 and FM 2234 is an at-grade crossing. FM 2234 is a four-lane roadway with raised medians and a ROW width of approximately 170 feet. FM 2234 currently has an at-grade crossing with the Union Pacific Railroad.

The proposed project consists of reconstructing and widening existing FM 521 to a four-lane divided urban arterial from Beltway 8 to 0.3 miles south of FM 2234. The project also includes improvements on FM 2234 from 0.3 miles west of FM 521 to 0.2 miles east of FM 521 and proposed grade separations at the Union Pacific Railroad crossings on FM 2234 and FM 521. The purpose of this proposed action is to expand capacity to enhance mobility, improve safety, improve railroad/local traffic crossings, and accommodate population and economic growth, while minimizing impacts to the natural and social environment. Approximately 13.2 acres of additional ROW would be required for the proposed project, resulting in 1 potential commercial displacement.

The proposed project would require acquisition of public land designated and used as a nature preserve/park. A total of 1.67 acres out of 45.75 acres of Almeda Road Nature Preserve would be acquired. On March 13, 2015, Harris County Precinct 1, owner of the nature preserve, concurred with TxDOT's 4(f) De Minimis finding regarding impacts to property.

This project was initially evaluated with a State Environmental Assessment and a public hearing was conducted; however, based on the recent inclusion of federal funding, this document has been prepared in accordance with the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act. No design modifications have occurred since the previous public hearing held on May 7, 2015.

Exhibits showing aerial photography and schematic plans for the proposed project corridor, environmental document, tentative construction schedule, and other information relative to the project are on file and available by appointment for review Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. excluding city, and state holidays at the TxDOT Houston District Office, 7600 Washington Avenue, Houston, Texas 77007. To schedule an appointment at the Houston District please contact Pat Nwachukwu, P.E. at (713) 802-5961.

Any interested citizen may request a public hearing covering the social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed location and design for this project. Requests for a public hearing must be submitted in writing on or before March 22, 2016 to the TxDOT Houston District Office, Director of Project Development, P.O. Box 1386, Houston, Texas 77251-1386.

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.

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The Environmental Assessment document for this project has been approved for further processing by the TxDOT Environmental Affairs Division.

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