



NOTICE OF 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. A public hearing for the proposed project will be held on Thursday, May 7, 2015, at Willowridge High School, Cafeteria, located at 16301 Chimney Rock, Houston, Texas 77053. The public hearing will begin with an open house at 5:30 p.m. followed by a formal presentation at 6:30 p.m.

The purpose of the hearing is to discuss the proposed improvements to FM 521. This hearing will be conducted in accordance with Chapter 26 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code to allow the public the opportunity to review the Draft Section 4(f) *de minimis* impact determination and project details specifically as they relate to the Almeda Road Nature Preserve and provide comments.

The proposed project consists of reconstructing and widening the existing two-lane rural undivided facility 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. Approximately 13.2 acres of additional right-of-way (ROW) would be required for the proposed project.

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 (3.65%) is within the proposed ROW of the project. Proposed work within the nature preserve/park boundary would include roadway improvements to the intersection at FM 521 and FM 2234 to provide for two offset "T" intersections. These "T" intersections would allow for railroad overpasses on FM 521 and FM 2234 to reduce vehicular delays.

A schematic plan showing the location of the project and geometric design, the environmental document prepared for the project, and other information pertinent to the project are on file and available for inspection at the TxDOT Houston District Office, located at 7600 Washington Avenue, Houston, TX 77007. For specific information regarding the design, construction, or schedule of this project, please contact Mr. Pat Nwachukwu, P.E., at 713-802-5961.

The public hearing will provide an opportunity to submit written comments, and a court reporter will be present to record oral comments. Both written and oral comments will be considered equally. Written comments may be submitted in person at the public hearing, or by mail to TxDOT Houston District, Attn: Director of Project Development, P.O. Box 1386, Houston, Texas 77251-1386, or by email to hou-piowebmail@txdot.gov. All comments must be submitted within ten (10) working days after the public hearing (**postmarked on or before May 21, 2015**).

All interested persons are invited to attend this public hearing. Materials will be presented in English and Spanish, and Spanish language interpreters will be present. Persons interested in attending the public hearing who have special communication or accommodation needs are encouraged to contact TxDOT's Public Information Office at 713-802-5072 at least two (2) working days prior to the public hearing. TxDOT will make every reasonable effort to accommodate these needs. The TxDOT offices are open Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., excluding national holidays.

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.