



NOTICE AFFORDING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A PUBLIC HEARING



Introduction: The TxDOT-Laredo District in cooperation with the Laredo Metropolitan Planning Organization, is proposing to construct a project on a section of US 59 (formerly known as Loop 20 and Bob Bullock Loop) in northern Laredo, Webb County. This section of US 59 is also part of the western leg of the Future I-69 system (I-69W) in south Texas. This roadway is referenced in this notice as the “Loop”.

TxDOT is offering the opportunity to request a public hearing covering the social, economic and other environmental effects of the proposed construction of the Loop mainlanes over IH 35. This approximately 1.25-mile long project would extend the Loop mainlanes over the IH 35 mainlanes and the Union-Pacific Railroad line. It would be an additional phase of the ongoing Loop/IH 35 Interchange project (a.k.a. the Milo Interchange) which continues to be constructed in phases since the late 1990s.

Project Background: In early 2014, the Texas Transportation Commission and FHWA re-designated the portion of the Loop between Saunders Street and the end of the Loop at the entrance of the World Trade International Bridge IV as a part of US 59 and as a part of the western leg of the “Future I-69” system. This project is needed to upgrade this section of the Loop to an urban interstate design standard, as required by federal laws concerning the I-69 system. When completed, this work would provide for an improved facility that can move traffic through this portion of the Loop with no interruptions, unlike the current situation where all east-west traffic on the Loop has to pass through fully signalized intersections on the Loop at the IH 35 frontage roads.

Proposed Work: The proposed US 59/Loop project limits are from 0.33-mile west of IH 35 (at the eastern end of the existing I-69W mainlanes) to 0.160-mile west of McPherson Road (at the western side of that overpass bridge structure). The proposed Loop mainlanes would consist of three 12-ft. travel lanes in each direction, a center concrete traffic barrier, inside and outside shoulders and appropriately placed on-off ramps. The mainlanes would be constructed between the existing Loop frontage roads within the existing, approximately 300-ft. wide right-of-way. Traffic impacts will be minimal as all substantial work with this project will be on the undeveloped area between the existing frontage roads. This project does not include the construction of any additional direct connectors between the Loop and IH 35.

This project would fully integrate with the existing I-69W mainlanes west of IH 35 as well as the McPherson Road interchange that opened to traffic in 2014. It will also integrate with the International Boulevard interchange project that is currently under a construction contract; construction work there is scheduled to start in the near future. Upon completion of these projects, through traffic will have uninterrupted service from International Blvd. to the entrance to the World Trade International Bridge IV. All of these inter-related projects are to be constructed to urban interstate (I-69W) design standards.

Environmental Impacts: There would be no changes to access to adjacent properties or side streets from the existing situation and there would be no business or residential

displacements or relocations. Based on all technical reports conducted for this project, this proposed project will not directly or indirectly affect negatively any floodplains, wetlands, streams, aquifers, other natural resources, noise quality or air quality. This work would not negatively impact persons in the Laredo community or neighborhoods in the project area. Due to these factors, TxDOT has determined that there would be no measurable negative impacts to the human or natural environment but would provide a much improved travel corridor in northern Laredo.

Availability of Project Information: Project maps, drawings, schedules and environmental studies and technical reports regarding this project that are recorded in the official project file are available for public inspection and review at the TxDOT-Laredo District Office at 1817 Bob Bullock Loop, Laredo during normal business days and hours of operation (Monday-Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM). For answers to any environmental questions, please contact Mike Graham at (956) 712-7742/e-mail: Mike.Graham@TxDOT.gov. For answers to questions on engineering issues, please contact Ana Duncan, P.E. our project manager at (956) 712-7446/e-mail: Ana.Duncan@txdot.gov. For answers to questions on the construction of the project, please contact Carlos G. Rodriguez, P.E., the Laredo Area Engineer at (956) 712-7701/e-mail: Carlos.G.Rodriguez@txdot.gov. Project maps and drawings are also available at the TxDOT website (<http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/get-involved.html>). The TxDOT-Laredo District and Area Office staff will be glad to discuss this project with any interested person(s).

This project is listed on the Laredo Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and is currently scheduled to go out for construction bids in August 2016 using a combination of state and federal funds. Actual construction work on this type and scale of project typically start approximately three to four months after bidding with the actual construction work anticipated to then take approximately 24-months.

Any citizen may request a public hearing by submitting a written request to the address provided below in this notice. The deadline for submitting a request for a public hearing is 5:00 PM on February 24, 2016.

**Texas Department of Transportation – Laredo District
Attn: Mike Graham – Laredo District Environmental Coordinator
1817 Bob Bullock Loop
Laredo, Texas 78043**

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.