

2 Public Involvement

Public involvement and outreach activities were a critical component of the US 190/I-10 Feasibility Study. The primary purpose of the public outreach program was to provide information and solicit comments on the corridor's needs and issues and the study's evaluation process and findings. The three primary activities of the public outreach program included:

- Stakeholder meetings
- Public meetings
- Local Outreach Group meetings

Three newsletters were also distributed during the project. The first newsletter was distributed prior to the first round of Public and Local Outreach Group meetings and included information on the dates, times and locations of the meetings an overview of the project. The second newsletter was distributed prior to the second (final) series of public meetings and included dates, times and locations of the meetings, and a description of the alternative improvements developed and evaluated. The final newsletter provided information on the results of the study and was distributed at the conclusion of the project. Additional communication venues established for citizens to provide their comments and input throughout the study included:

- **Toll Free Telephone Line**
- **Mail:** US 190/I-10 Feasibility Study, P.O. Box 149217, Austin, TX 78714-9217
- **Website:** www.txdot.gov and enter "US 190" in the search field

2.1 Stakeholder Meetings

Stakeholder meetings and discussions were held with the following forts, ports, and railroads along the US 190/I-10 corridor:

- Fort Bliss (El Paso, Texas)
- Fort Hood (Killeen, Texas)
- Fort Polk (Leesville, Louisiana)
- Port of Beaumont
- Port of Corpus Christi
- Union Pacific Railroad (UP)
- Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF)
- Kansas City Southern Railways (KCS)



The results of these meetings are discussed in *Chapter 3 – Existing Conditions* and *Chapter 4 – Future Conditions*. A significant amount of information received from these stakeholders was related to both their traffic and freight movements within the study corridor and throughout the state of Texas. The remainder of this chapter focuses on comments received during the public and Local Outreach Group meetings.

2.2 Public Meetings

Two series of public meetings were conducted during the course of the study. The first series was held in February/March 2011 and the second series was held in September/October 2011. Each series included public meetings held at eight locations throughout the study corridor. **Table 2-1** provides the dates, locations, and attendance for both series of public meetings.

The first series of public meetings consisted of display boards that described the project, schedule, goals and objectives, public involvement process, and evaluation process. Large scale mapping of the corridor was available for attendees to note their concerns for a specific location and/or what type of improvement they would like to be considered in a particular area. Comments were received at the public meetings and subsequently through mail, project hotline, and study website.



Public Meeting Display Boards

As indicated in **Figure 2-1**, 89 percent of the respondents indicated that they believed improvements were needed along the US 190/I-10 corridor. The types of improvements to be considered are summarized in **Figure 2-2**, with a majority preferring to widen US 190 from two-lanes to four-lanes, followed by construction or relief routes, then upgrading US 190 to interstate standards. Other recommended improvements included passing lanes, overpasses/interchanges, and other measures.

Figure 2-1 Improvements Needed?

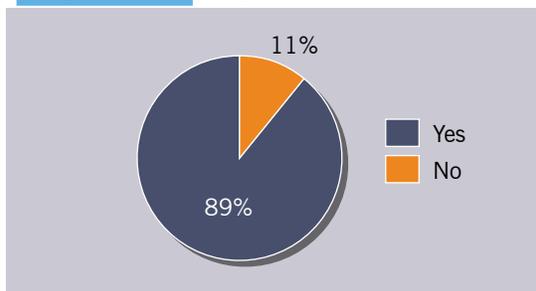


Figure 2-2 Type of Improvements To Consider



Table 2-1 US 190 Public Meetings

	Date	City/Town	Meeting Site Location	Attendance
FIRST SERIES OF PUBLIC MEETINGS	Monday 2-28-2011	Fort Stockton	Pecos County Civic Center 1674 Airport Drive Fort Stockton, TX 79735	2
	Tuesday 3-1-2011	Eldorado	Schleicher County Civic Center 427 S US Hwy 277 Eldorado, TX 76936	35
	Wednesday 3-2-2011	San Saba	San Saba Civic Center Mill Pond Park San Saba, TX 76877	23
	Thursday 3-3-2011	Killeen	Killeen Civic & Conference Center 3601 South W. S. Young Drive Killeen, TX 76541	31
	Monday 3-7-2011	Jasper	First National Bank Community Room 301 E. Houston Street Jasper, TX 75951	26
	Tuesday 3-8-2011	Livingston	Livingston Junior High 1801 US 59 Loop North Livingston, TX 77351	35
	Wednesday 3-9-2011	Huntsville	Sam Houston Museum 1432 19th Street Huntsville, TX 77341	13
	Thursday 3-10-2011	Bryan	The Brazos Center 3232 Briarcrest Drive Bryan, TX 77802	6
SECOND SERIES OF PUBLIC MEETINGS	Monday 9-26-2011	Jasper	First National Bank Community Room 301 E. Houston Street Jasper, TX 75951	8
	Tuesday 9-27-2011	Livingston	First Baptist Church of Livingston 106 Colt Road Livingston, TX 77351	19
	Wednesday 9-28-2011	Huntsville	Sam Houston Museum 1432 19th Street Huntsville, TX 77341	9
	Thursday 9-29-2011	Bryan	The Brazos Center 3232 Briarcrest Drive Bryan, TX 77802	11
	Monday 10-3-2011	Eldorado	Schleicher County Civic Center 427 S US Hwy 277 Eldorado, TX 76936	16
	Tuesday 10-4-2011	Brady	Ed Davenport Civic Center 200 Brady Country Club Road Brady, TX 76825	25
	Wednesday 10-5-2011	Lampasas	Holiday House 908 East 4th Street Lampasas, TX 76550	12
	Thursday 10-6-2011	Killeen	Killeen Civic & Conference Center 3601 South W. S. Young Drive Killeen, TX 76541	13



At the second series of public meetings, display boards were provided that described the comments received at the first series of public meetings, the ten Conceptual Alternatives that were selected for detailed evaluation, potential localized improvements, and overall evaluation results for alternative improvements. Large scale mapping was also available at these meetings for attendees to note their concerns for a specific location and/or what type of improvement they would like to be considered in a particular area.

All 16 public meetings included presentations and were conducted in an open-house format with study team members available to answer questions and receive comments. The meetings were held from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM with a presentation from 6:30 PM to 7:00 PM. Attendees were encouraged to complete and turn in comment forms that were provided at the meeting, or to submit their comments by mail, email, project hotline, or via the project study website.

The first series of public meetings resulted in a total of 65 comments from comment forms, email, project hotline, and website. The second series of public meetings resulted in 40 comments from the comment form, with an additional 14 comments from email and the project hotline. The comments received from the first series of public meetings are discussed in *Chapter 5 – Preliminary Alternatives*, and the comments received from the second series of public meetings are discussed in *Chapter 6 – Conceptual Alternatives*.

2.3 Local Outreach Group Meetings

This section describes the Local Outreach Group meetings conducted during the course of the study. Local Outreach Group members included:

- City Engineers
- MPO Personnel
- City Managers
- Mayors
- County Judges
- County Commissioners
- Chambers of Commerce Representatives
- Transportation Officials

Local Outreach Group meetings were held from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM on the same day as the public meetings. The Local Outreach Group viewed the same presentation, display boards, and mapping as the public meeting attendees. Members were encouraged to complete comment forms and either turn them in at the meeting or submit them later via one of the previously mentioned methods. Study team members were available to answer questions and receive comments from the Local Outreach Group members.



A total of 56 persons attended the first series of Local Outreach Group meetings and 24 attended the second series.

2.3.1 First Series of Local Outreach Group Meetings

The following summarizes comments and responses to questions received at the first series of Local Outreach Group meetings.

Fort Stockton – February 28, 2011

- There are environmental advantages for upgrading US 190 as a freeway east of I-35. Truck traffic would be encouraged to travel from Laredo to San Antonio via I-35 and then continue along US 190 to Louisiana, avoiding Houston/Galveston or Dallas/Fort Worth air sheds.
- Forty percent of military equipment dispatched for both the Iraq and Afghanistan wars was sent through either the Port of Beaumont or the Port of Corpus Christi.
- Fort Bliss is projected to double from 37,000 troops in the next four or five years.



Public Meeting in Fort Stockton

Eldorado – March 1, 2011

- Not all of the proposed improvements along the Ports to Plains corridor were considered in the traffic projections as it is not a committed project.
- Tolling and other options will be identified as a potential funding source.
- The US 190/I-10 corridor is not considered a High Priority Corridor by the Federal Highway Administration.



Public Meeting in Eldorado

San Saba – March 2, 2011

- US 190 through Brady is congested and goes around the Courthouse.
- This study will be assuming a 70 mph posted speed.
- The initial two lanes of the Copperas Cove relief route will be constructed by 2013.
- There are concerns about the interchange at US 190 and US 281 in Lampasas.



Public Meeting in San Saba



Killeen – March 3, 2011

- US 190 shares many other roadway shields so the facility is really part of other highways along some segments.
- This study takes into account the existing and projected growth at Fort Hood.
- Killeen has a high population growth rate.
- Traffic counts reach 120,000 vehicles per day on either side of the Main Gate at Fort Hood.



Public Meeting in Killeen

Jasper – March 7, 2011

- This project will address different types of traffic including military forts to ports, truck traffic, and automobile traffic.
- The federal government decides the designation of an interstate for a highway.
- LA 8 is currently being upgraded to four lanes between Leesville and Alexandria in Louisiana.



Public Meeting in Jasper

Livingston – March 8, 2011

- The Alabama Coushatta Indian Reservation supports the improvements to upgrade US 190.
- A relief route is needed around Livingston and Onalaska.
- FHWA will be conducting a study of the 14th Highway Amendment which is a proposed interstate type facility between Natchez, Mississippi and Augusta, Georgia.



Public Meeting in Livingston

Huntsville – March 9, 2011

- SH 30 is often utilized as a route from Huntsville to Bryan rather than US 190.
- Crossing I-45 is a major concern. Also, there are safety issues with FM 1791, SH 75, and FM 2821.
- This study does not go into the level of detail to determine access locations onto a four-lane divided facility.



Public Meeting in Huntsville



Bryan – March 10, 2011

- The underpass near Rodgers belongs to the railroad, and it will remain as it is unless they plan improvements.
- There are many fatalities in the Buckholts area.
- The section of US 190 from Heidenheimer to Cameron is currently two-lane and is difficult to pass.



Public Meeting in Bryan

2.3.2 Final Series of Local Outreach Group Meetings

The following summarizes comments and responses to questions received at the second series of Local Outreach Group meetings.

Jasper – September 26, 2011

- Jasper area is one of the largest log/wood distributors in the country. A new plant that makes wood pellets for Germany has been built in Woodville and will generate around 80 trucks per day going to the Port of Beaumont. Improvements are needed to US 69 and not US 96 to provide better access to the Port of Beaumont.
- Sludge being hauled along US 69 from near Kountze to Doucette will also increase truck traffic.
- The Dam B Bridge crossing B.A. Steinhagen Lake needs improvement. TxDOT is in the process of dealing with the Historic Commission to discuss possible upgrades.
- TxDOT has a new policy for right-of-way (ROW). If ROW is acquired by imminent domain, the project has to be started within 10 years. It is still best to try to prevent development around potential interchange areas, which should be done in conjunction with the cities and counties.
- The 14th Amendment Highway and Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition projects are being studied. There have been no determinations of feasibility or funding for these projects.

Livingston – September 27, 2011

- The study considered the impacts to the US 190/I-10 corridor with and without the Gulf Coast Strategic Highway and 14th Amendment Highway.
- Consider low cost interim improvements such as Lufkin to Lake Livingston where there is major congestion now. Also need to



coordinate the signal timing in Huntsville. Another major obstacle to widening US 190 is Lake Livingston on the west side of Livingston.

- For the I-69 study, many of the people indicated they were in favor of the project but there is not any money to fund the project. Therefore, studies need to be focused on local, interim improvements to improve the roadways. Need to be honest with the public that there is no funding to build major highway corridor projects. Also, need to stay on the existing footprint of US 190 as much as possible.
- For I-69, consideration is being given to first start the section from Houston to Splendora.
- For US 190, passing lanes and widening in specific areas will show people that progress is being made. TxDOT still needs to plan for the future.

Huntsville – September 28, 2011

- Highway 19 is being widened from two to four lanes.
- FM 1791 at I-45 is the most congested intersection in the Huntsville area.
- Elected officials support using SH 30 from Huntsville to College Station.

Bryan – September 29, 2011

- Consider addressing safety issues in this study.

Eldorado – October 3, 2011

- San Angelo has five transit routes with low demand. It also has an on demand services for elderly and disabled citizens. Preliminary engineering and environmental analyses are currently being conducted for a route proposed from US 277 to US 87 which will be a hazardous material route.

Brady – October 4, 2011

- Brady should consider a bypass or an alternate to US 190 through town. This may not be needed now but could be in 10 or so years. This was discussed about 45 years ago and again a few years ago with significant opposition. The suggested route extends from SH 71 south to the west of Brady connecting to US 87/US 283.
- The issues are on US 87 (not US 190), which has significant more traffic in the Brady area. With the increased traffic on both facilities



something eventually will be needed to support this increase from the downtown square the south of Brady. There will also be increased traffic along US 190 from US 87/US 283 to the US 190/US 377 intersection.

- The roadways that traverse Brady are also included for improvement in other transportation plans.
- When there is a wreck on US 190 in Brady, the downtown area is shut down and people have to find alternative routes.
- What does a relief route study consist of? Relief route studies consider need, engineering studies, public meetings, determination of how much traffic will be diverted, evaluation of economic impacts, etc.
- Hydraulic fracturing sand is a big industry in Brady. Sand comes from the south side of the San Saba River near the FM 3293 and FM 1851 area. A significant amount of trucks hauling sand use SH 71, and go through the town of the Brady. A relief route would assist in taking trucks out of Brady.
- A relief route is not needed now in San Saba, but ROW needs to be preserved. The city and county need to work with the community to get support for the project.
- There is enough room to stripe four lanes through San Saba but that would require removal of the on-street parking.
- An improved interchange is needed at US 190 and US 281 immediately north of Lampasas.
- A grade separation would be possible at the railroad crossing near Rochelle, but there is not adequate room at the crossing in Brady.
- TxDOT has no plans to initiate a relief route study for Brady, but the city or county could request a study and they would possibly consider one.

Lampasas – October 5, 2011

- For this study, the four-lane highway is assumed to be divided with a median in both the rural and urban areas. The width and type of median will vary from urban to rural area type.
- The current construction on US 190 in Lampasas is reconstruction of the pavement – no widening is occurring. The utilities are being upgraded and the project is ahead of schedule at this point.
- An interchange is needed at US 190 and US 183 near US 281.
- The intersection of FM 2657 and US 190 will be at-grade with a traffic signal. The eastern edge will be grade separated.
- At one point San Saba was interested in having one-way pairs in the area.



- A few years ago, a bypass in Lampasas was discussed. The problem is not just on US 190 but also on US 281. The bypass should start at the intersection of 190 and 183 north of town, continue around the east side of town and connect to US 281 in the south.

Killeen – October 6, 2011

- One comment mentioned that improvements need to be called out for the Central US 190 Section. It was confirmed that the study report will discuss corridor needs and improvements by section along US 190. The general public needs to have a general idea of what the options are going to cost – in total and by section.
- For the four-lane highway option, the additional ROW needed would be identified. The cost of preserving the ROW for a freeway was not included when looking at a highway option. However, the ROW costs for a freeway can be added together to provide a cost for this.
- It was suggested that the costs of the options be made available to the public.
- Connecting the forts and ports was considered. This traffic is a small percentage of the overall US 190 traffic.
- The future traffic volumes projected as part of this study indicated that eight lanes are needed along US 190 in the Killeen area.
- There needs to be more parallel routes for US 190. The extension of FM 201 helps but it will not divert that much traffic from US 190.
- FM 93 would be a good route to divert traffic from the US 190/I-35 area whereas widening US 190 in the Temple area would impact a lot of development. There needs to be agreement between Temple and the Belton area about what facility to widen due to the anticipated economic impact.

These comments received at both the public meetings and Local Outreach Group meetings were considered during the alternative evaluation process (Chapters 5 and 6) and the identification of potential localized projects (Chapter 7).

