



**Notice
Public Hearing
And
Draft Environmental Assessment Available for Public Review
State Loop 335
From FM 2590 to SW 9th Avenue
CSJs: 0904-02-038, 0275-01-178, 0904-11-058
Randall and Potter County, Texas**

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), in conjunction with the Amarillo Metropolitan Planning Organization, is proposing approximately 7.96 miles of improvements to State Loop 335 (SL 335) from Farm to Market (FM) 2590 to Southwest (SW) 9th Avenue in Randall and Potter counties in Texas. This notice advises the public that TxDOT will be conducting a public hearing on the proposed project and that a draft environmental assessment (EA) is available for public view. The hearing will be held on Thursday, June 8, 2017 at the TxDOT Amarillo District Office, Building H located at 5715 Canyon Drive, Amarillo, Texas, 79110. Displays will be available for viewing at 6 p.m. with the formal hearing starting at 6:30 p.m. The purpose of the hearing is to present the planned improvements and to receive public comment on the proposed project.

The proposed project consists of upgrading existing roadways and a new location alignment to a controlled access facility including bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. The proposed project would generally follow the FM 2186 alignment west from FM 2590 to Helium Road and then follow Helium Road north to near the Randall/Potter county line then would veer northeast on a new location alignment crossing Interstate Highway (IH) 40 and Business IH 40 to merge with the existing SL 335 near SW 9th Avenue.

The proposed controlled access facility would include four 12-foot (ft) mainlanes (two in each direction), grade separated over intersecting cross streets, two-lane frontage roads with a 12-ft wide inside lane and a 14-ft wide outside shared-use lane to accommodate bicycles, and connecting ramps. The design will accommodate future expansion to an ultimate six-mainlane section. The proposed project would include 6-foot sidewalks on both sides of SL 335.

The proposed project would generally be constructed in phases. The general phasing of the proposed project would consist of the construction of the frontage roads including the IH 40 mainlane bridge at level two, then construction of the of the mainlanes including the SL 335 mainlane bridge at level 3, and then finally the construction of the ultimate condition of the IH 40/SL 335 interchange all based on the availability of funding.

The proposed IH 40/SL 335 interchange would consist of an interim and ultimate condition. The interim condition would consist of a three-level interchange, with frontage roads at level one, IH 40 mainlanes at level two, and SL 335 mainlanes at the third level. The ultimate condition would include direct connector ramps over the 3-level interchange. Additionally, improvements along IH 40 to the mainlanes, ramps and frontage roads are proposed to accommodate the proposed IH 40/SL 335 interchange.

The proposed project would require the acquisition of approximately 268 acres of additional right of way (ROW) impacting 32 parcels. Three drainage easements would be required totaling approximately 16 acres. No businesses or residences would be displaced or require relocation. A metal structure at a storage facility along IH 40 would be impacted by the proposed project. However, the structural impact would not result in displacement or relocation of the storage facility business.

Information about the TxDOT Relocation Assistance Program, benefits and services for displacees, as well as information about the tentative schedules for ROW acquisition and construction can be obtained from the TxDOT district office at the address listed below. Relocation assistance is available for displaced persons and businesses. Although additional ROW is required, no residential or non-residential structures would be displaced. Information concerning services and benefits available to affected property owners and information about the tentative schedule for ROW acquisition may be obtained from the district office at the address listed below.

Approximately 24.18 acres of three playas are mapped within the study area. It is anticipated all of the acreage of the playas within the study area would be impacted due to the construction of the proposed roadway and retention basins for the proposed project. Playas may be regulated under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) if there is a hydrologic or "significant nexus" to navigable waters. For each of the playas, there is not a significant nexus to navigable water. These features would not be considered jurisdictional and would not be subject to Section 404 of the CWA.

The National Register of Historic Places eligible Amarillo Helium Plant is subject to Section 4(f) evaluation. As part of this project, TxDOT is considering Programmatic Section 4(f) Net Benefit determinations for impacts to the Helium Plant near the City of Amarillo. A total of 5.96 acres of impact would occur on the 18.56 acre parcel that comprises the entire historic district. A Section 4(f) Net Benefit finding means that this project would have an impact on the resource, but TxDOT, in consultation with the officials with jurisdiction over the resource, has made a preliminary determination that the use of the Section 4(f) property would result in a net benefit to the Section 4(f) property.

The draft EA document, 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 TxDOT Amarillo District Office, 5715 Canyon Drive, Amarillo, Texas and at www.txdot.gov under the Public Meetings and Hearings section. 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 the TxDOT Amarillo District Office. Comments must be received on or before Friday, June 23, 2017 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 Sonja Gross at (806) 356-3256, or email: sonja.gross@txdot.gov. 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 Lance Williams at (806) 356-3200, or email: lance.m.williams@txdot.gov.

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.