



IH 35W Frontage Roads Virtual Public Hearing Speech

SLIDE 1 – Title Slide

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the IH 35W Frontage Roads virtual public hearing. We appreciate your interest in the IH 35W Frontage Roads Project and welcome each of you.

SLIDE 2 – Public Hearing Purpose

Given the unique circumstance of the COVID-19 outbreak, along with our commitment to protecting public health during this national emergency, TxDOT is conducting this virtual public hearing to avoid in-person contact. At this time, the virtual format will be in lieu of an in-person public hearing.

The presentation will cover the same information the Dallas District would have shared at the in-person public hearing. However, the comment process will be different. Details on how to submit a comment and have your questions addressed will be covered later on in this presentation. All project information can be found on the TxDOT website.

SLIDE 3 – Public Hearing Purpose

This virtual public hearing has been convened by the Texas Department of Transportation and is being held to receive and consider comments from the public regarding the IH 35W Frontage Roads Project.

You may have attended previous public hearings conducted by the Texas Department of Transportation. However, for the benefit of those of you who have never attended one, I would like to explain why and how the Department conducts a public hearing.

A public hearing has four essential purposes:

1. Inform the public of the status of planning on the project and present the recommendations based on studies performed to date.
2. Describe the project so those attending can determine the project's potential to affect their lives and property.
3. Provide the public an opportunity to see information and express their views at this stage in the planning process when flexibility to respond to comments still exists and before location and design decisions are finalized.
4. And finally, to develop a record of public views and participation to accompany recommendations for subsequent decisions.

This virtual public hearing is being held in compliance with both federal and state laws. A transcript of this hearing will be made available for the official record.



SLIDE 4 – Comments

Following this virtual public hearing, the Department will proceed with the preparation of the final environmental documentation. Your statements and comments will be addressed in this document and will be given full consideration in the preparation of the final recommendation and design for the IH 35W Frontage Roads Project.

Comments will be accepted in a number of ways. You may leave a verbal comment via voicemail at 469-333-0439, submit a written comment via email to Nelson.Underwood@txdot.gov, or submit a written comment via mail to TxDOT Dallas District Office, Attention Nelson Underwood, P.E. 4777 E. Highway 80, Mesquite, TX 75150.

Alternatively, you may also submit a comment by attend the Virtual Open House and clicking on the comment button, filling out the form and submitting.

Comments must be received or postmarked within 15 days of the hearing date, which is May 15, 2020 to be part of the official virtual public hearing record.

SLIDE 5 – Viewing Design Schematic and Documentation

I will now explain the design aspects of the IH 35 W Frontage project. The design schematic and environmental documentation for the IH 35W Frontage Roads Project may be viewed at www.keepitmovingdallas.com under “Public Hearings / Meetings,” at www.txdot.gov by searching “Hearings and Meetings Schedule, or on www.keepitmovingdallas.com/IH35WFR.” The information on these websites is the same information being presented in this speech.

SLIDE 6 – Project Location, Need and Purpose

TxDOT is proposing to construct a 12.3-mile long section of continuous, one-way, frontage roads along IH 35W in Denton County. The proposed project would also reverse entrance and exit ramps; flip three interchanges so that the IH 35W mainlanes cross over these streets; construct a new interchange for the future Denton Creek Road; and expand the Cleveland Gibbs Road, FM 407, Robson Ranch Road/Crawford Road, and proposed Loop 288/Vintage Road interchanges.

The project is needed to address transportation issues associated with safety, population and employment growth, and access to development in the project corridor.

The purpose of the project is to improve safety and mobility, add capacity, and provide access to adjacent land uses.

SLIDE 7– Existing Facility

The existing IH 35W within the project limits is currently two 12-foot wide general-purpose lanes with 4 to 6-foot-wide inside shoulders and 9 to 12-foot wide outside shoulders in each direction separated by a 35 to 40-foot wide median. There are no continuous frontage roads and no pedestrian or bike accommodations.

At the north end of the project, the existing IH 35W contains an approximately 0.5-mile-long, discontinuous, two-way frontage road consisting of two 12-foot wide lanes with 10-foot wide outside shoulders and a 4-foot wide inside shoulder. The frontage road does not provide access to IH 35W.

The existing right-of-way (ROW) varies from 300 feet to 700 feet wide throughout the length of the project.

SLIDE 8 – Proposed Facility

The proposed project consists of the construction of continuous, one-way, two-lane urban, northbound and southbound frontage roads along IH 35W and the replacement of the existing IH 35W cross-street overpasses with new overpasses at Cross Timbers Road, FM 407, Old Justin Road, Robson Ranch Road/Crawford Road, and John Paine Road/Allred Road. The width of the bridge structures is based on the ultimate IH 35W mainlanes.

The proposed mainlanes at the interchanges would consist of three 12-foot wide lanes in each direction with 10-foot wide inside shoulders and 12-foot wide outside shoulders.

The proposed northbound and southbound frontage roads/bridges would consist of one 12-foot wide inside travel lane, one 14-foot wide outside shared use lane with 2-foot wide curb offsets, and a 6-foot wide sidewalk in each direction.

The proposed project would require approximately 95.43 acres of additional ROW and 2.47 acres of permanent drainage easements.

SLIDE 9 – Utility Adjustments

Utility adjustments and relocations throughout the corridor would be required prior to construction.

The adjustments and relocation of any utilities would be managed so that no substantial interruptions would occur.



SLIDE 10 – Projected Cost & Schedule

The IH 35W Frontage Roads Project is anticipated to be Ready to Let by 2025 and will take approximately 3 years to construct. “Letting” is when TxDOT notifies the construction community that a project is ready to be bid on. Construction on a project begins after the letting process is complete. The total estimated cost for the entire project is approximately \$353 million.

The project is currently unfunded.

This concludes the project information and design portion of the presentation. The next few slides will provide an overview of the environmental evaluation for the proposed IH 35W Frontage Roads Project.

SLIDE 11 – Review and Approval of Environmental Document

Prior to December 16, 2014, the Federal Highway Administration, or FHWA, reviewed and approved documents prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act, known as NEPA; however, on December 16, 2014 the Texas Department of Transportation assumed responsibility from FHWA through a Memorandum of Understanding to review and approve certain assigned NEPA environmental documents. This Memorandum of Understanding between TxDOT and FHWA was updated on December 9, 2019. The review and approval process applies this project.

Environmental studies were conducted for the proposed IH 35W Frontage Roads Project to support an environmental clearance in accordance with NEPA. These environmental analyses are necessary to identify, avoid, and minimize effects to the Human and Natural Environments.

Technical environmental documentation and the Draft Environmental Assessment, or EA, was approved for further processing by TxDOT and was coordinated with other public agencies. Notices for this public hearing were advertised in the Dallas Morning News, Al Día, Fort Worth Star Telegram, and Denton Record Chronicle, on the TxDOT.gov website under “Hearings and Meetings Schedule” and on Keepitmovingdallas.com under “Public Hearings and Meetings.” The TxDOT Public Information Office also prepared a news media release to advertise the public hearing. The TxDOT technical reports, and Draft EA are available at Keep it Moving Dallas don't com. and txdot.gov.

SLIDE 12 – Environmental Review / Impacts Addressed

The technical documentation for this project addresses the potential environmental impacts identified during the preliminary engineering of the proposed project. These areas of potential impacts included natural, social, and cultural resources. This slide shows a list of all resources that were evaluated during the environmental analyses. The following slides include a summary of those findings.



SLIDE 13 – Environmental Review / Right-of-Way

A total of approximately 95.43 acres of new ROW and 2.47 acres of permanent drainage easements would be required to complete the proposed improvements. ROW would be acquired from numerous properties along both the east and west side of the project. No businesses or residents would be displaced.

No public facilities such as parks, recreational areas, churches, schools, or cemeteries, would be displaced as a result of the construction of the proposed project.

All ROW acquisition would be completed in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended. Brochures, including two materials titled “The Purchase of Right of Way,” and “Relocation Assistance,” are available on our website at KIMD, and on the table in this virtual open house. These materials contain detailed information to inform you of your rights and provide information about the TxDOT ROW acquisition process.

SLIDE 14 – Environmental Review- Cultural Resources

TxDOT historians evaluated one historic-age structure constructed prior to 1980 and found that it did not meet eligibility criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or NRHP. An archeological background study concluded that local geologic and soil conditions are not conducive to the preservation of buried archeological materials. No additional survey is recommended at this time.

SLIDE 15 – Floodplains

Portions of the project corridor are situated within FEMA designated 100-year flood hazard areas. These flood hazard areas are associated with Catherine Branch, Denton Creek, Graham Branch, Roark Branch, Hickory Creek, Dry Fork Hickory Creek, and some associated tributaries. The hydraulic design for this project would be in accordance with current TxDOT policies.

SLIDE 16 – Waters of the U.S./Wetlands

The proposed project would result in the permanent fill of approximately 0.143 acre of streams, 0.057 acre of impoundments, and 0.196 acre of wetlands and special aquatic sites associated with waters of the U.S. Regulated activities would be authorized under a Clean Water Act Section 404 Nationwide Permit 14 with preconstruction notification to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Compensatory mitigation would also be required.



SLIDE 17 – Hazardous Materials

One site was determined to be a moderate environmental risk to the proposed project. The site, formerly Interstate Texaco and now a vacant lot, is at the adjacent southwest corner of FM 407 at IH 35W. ROW acquisition is proposed from this site along FM 407 and at the corner with IH 35W.

Any unanticipated hazardous materials impacts encountered during project construction and the site already discovered shall be addressed in accordance with regulatory requirements and TxDOT standard specifications

SLIDE 18 – Traffic Noise

A Traffic Noise Analysis was conducted in accordance with TxDOT's FHWA-approved 2011 Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise. Based on the analysis, three receivers are expected to be impacted by noise. Noise abatement options were considered for these receivers in accordance with TxDOT and FHWA criteria. It was determined that noise barriers would not be feasible and reasonable for the three impacted receivers and, therefore, are not proposed for incorporation into the project.

SLIDE 19 – Conclusion

Based on the studies thus far, the environmental investigations indicate that the proposed project would have no significant impacts on the quality of the human environment. Revisions may be made to the environmental documents to either update them or address the needs of the state and federal agencies. Revisions may also result from considerations of public comments received during the comment period. After all necessary revisions are provided, an Environmental Assessment determination is anticipated for this project.

SLIDE 20 – Next Steps and Timeline

The public comment period for the proposed project ends May 15, 2020. Following this Virtual Public hearing, documentation of this public hearing will be reviewed by TxDOT for final environmental clearance and design approval. If there are no major issues arising from this hearing that cannot be addressed in a reasonable time frame, final environmental clearance is expected by Summer 2020.

The project has an anticipated Ready to Let Date of 2025. The project is anticipated to be open to traffic by 2028.

This concludes the environmental evaluation portion of the presentation.

SLIDE 21 – Public Comments

Comments will be accepted in four ways, which are outlined on this slide.



Slide 22 -

All comments will be fully considered and responded to in the project record and made part of the final environmental document for this proposed project. This document will then be made available for public review online at www.keepitmovingdallas.com under Upcoming Public Hearing/Meeting and www.txdot.gov by searching "Hearings and Meetings Schedule."

All of your statements, comments and questions will be given careful consideration before final design features are determined. Additionally, all information developed for the proposed design is available for public inspection and copying at www.keepitmovingdallas.com under Upcoming Public Hearing / Meeting. Or on www.txdot.gov by searching "Hearings and Meetings Schedule," As a reminder, written and emailed comments must be received or postmarked by May 15, 2020.

SLIDE 23 – "Thank You for your Interest" / Hearing is now Adjourned

Ladies and gentlemen, we sincerely appreciate your attendance and interest concerning the proposed design of the IH 35W Frontage Roads Project. Your questions, comments and concerns will receive careful consideration.

Thank you very much.

This concludes the formal presentation. We are now adjourned..