



**WELCOME**

**Virtual Public Meeting**

Farm-to-Market (FM) 529 Improvement Project  
from State Highway (SH) 99 (Grand Parkway) to FM 362  
CSJ: 1006-01-074

June 9, 2020

**Script:**

Welcome to the Texas Department of Transportation Houston District's virtual public meeting for the Farm-to-Market 529 Improvement Project from State Highway 99, otherwise known as Grand Parkway, to FM 362.

This is the second public meeting being conducted for the FM 529 Improvement Project. This is a prerecorded presentation that was developed to present the status of the proposed project and describe the proposed improvements.



## National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Assignment to the Texas Department of Transportation

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 9, 2019, and executed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and TxDOT.



### Script:

The FM 529 improvement project is federally funded and construction is proposed to begin in 2025. Due to the project receiving federal funds, TxDOT is required to take a hard look at the potential environmental consequences of the proposed project. The process that is followed is called the National Environmental Policy Act process, otherwise known as NEPA. The NEPA process results in documentation that is provided to a decision maker so the decision maker may make an informed decision on whether or not to proceed with the project. On December 9, 2019, TxDOT received a signed Memorandum of Understanding from the Federal Highway Administration that permits TxDOT to assume responsibility from the Federal Highway Administration for reviewing and approving certain assigned NEPA projects. This review and approval process applies to this project.

## Virtual Public Meeting in Response to Public Health

TxDOT changed the traditional in-person public meeting to an online format only in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The virtual public meeting and TxDOT website provide the same information as an in-person meeting:

- Study information
- Estimated study timeframe
- Process for submitting comments
- Key contacts

[www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/houston/fm529-sh99-to-fm362.html](http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/houston/fm529-sh99-to-fm362.html)

### Share facts about COVID-19

Know the facts about coronavirus (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors.

**FACT 1** Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity. Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.

**FACT 2** For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low. Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

**FACT 3** Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people. For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.

**FACT 4** There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- When in public, wear a cloth face covering that covers your mouth and nose.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

**FACT 5** You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms, which can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Seek medical attention immediately if you or someone you love has emergency warning signs, including:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or not able to be woken
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

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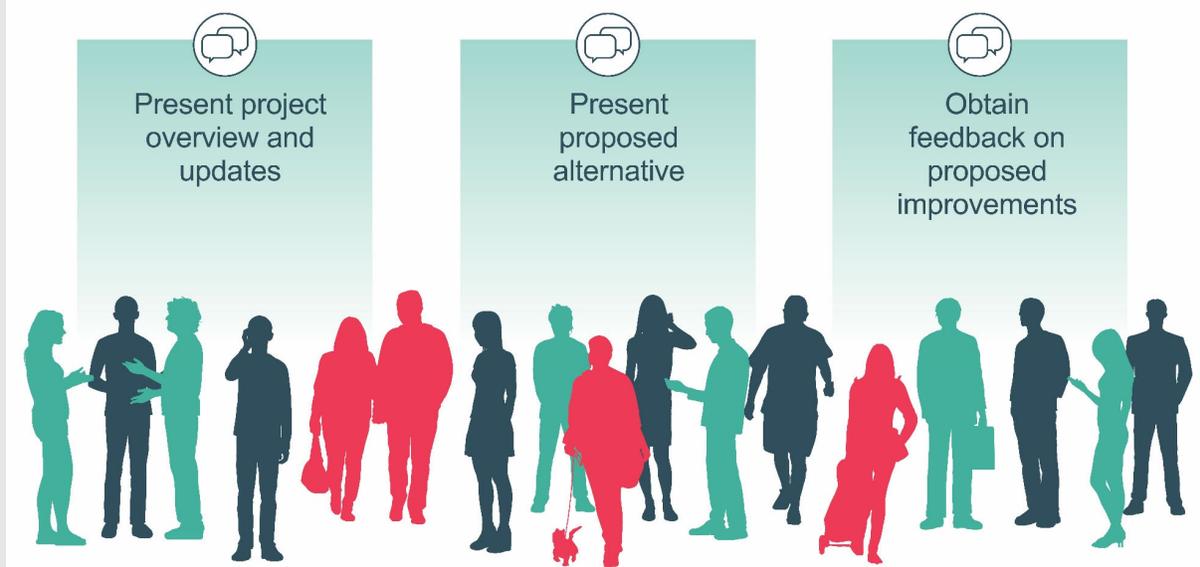
Script:

Given the unique circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the department's commitment to protecting public health during this national emergency, TxDOT is conducting this virtual public meeting to avoid in-person contact. At this time, the online format will be conducted in-lieu of an in-person public meeting.

This presentation will cover the same information that the Houston District would have presented at an in-person public meeting. The comment process for this virtual public meeting will be described near the end of this presentation.

All meeting materials can be found on the TxDOT website on the FM 529 meeting notice page. The website for the project is: [www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/houston/fm529-sh99-to-fm362.html](http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/houston/fm529-sh99-to-fm362.html).

## FM 529 Public Meeting No. 2



FM 529 Improvement Project

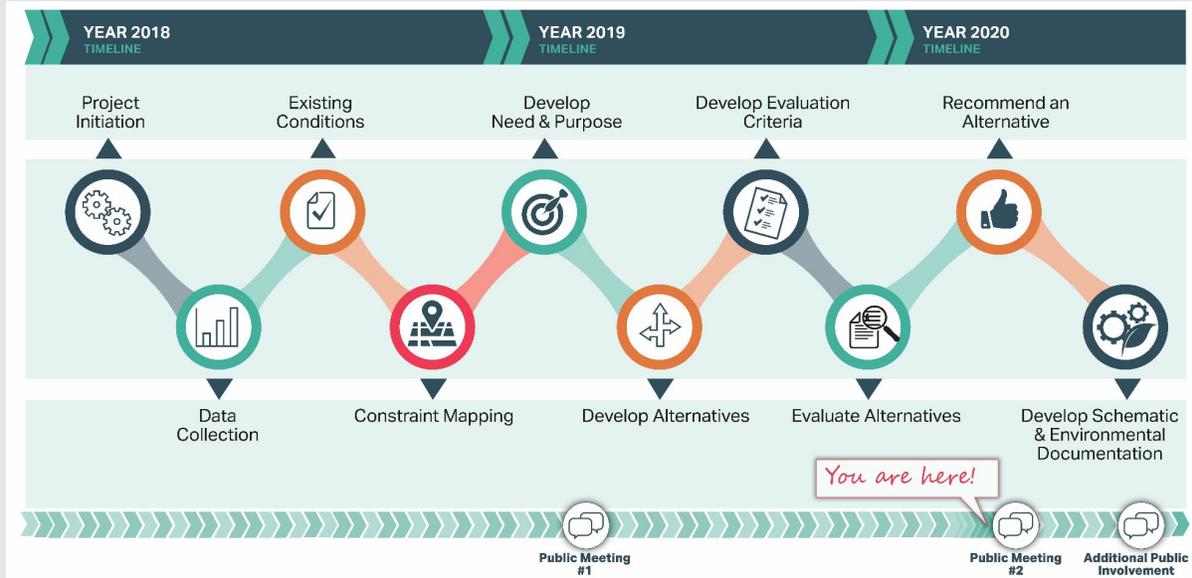
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### Script:

This virtual public meeting is being held to provide updated information on the proposed project and to describe what work has occurred since the first public meeting. You are encouraged to submit comments on the proposed project after reviewing the meeting materials and listening to this presentation.

## FM 529 Study Process



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### Script:

TxDOT began the FM 529 Improvement Project in 2018.

As a quick review, TxDOT began the project development process by collecting data and reviewing current conditions and constraints that exist in the project corridor. The data collected permitted the project team to develop and preliminarily evaluate three build alternatives. Existing conditions, the project's purpose and need, and the preliminary build alternatives were presented at the first public meeting held in April 2019.

Since April 2019 the project team has reviewed comments received from the first public meeting, and has developed a fourth build alternative and an alternative evaluation process that will be described later in the presentation.

If you're interested in the information presented and comments received from the first public meeting, you can find them on the FM 529 project page on the TxDOT website. Information on how to access the project page on the TxDOT website will be provided at the end of this presentation.

## FM 529 Project Overview

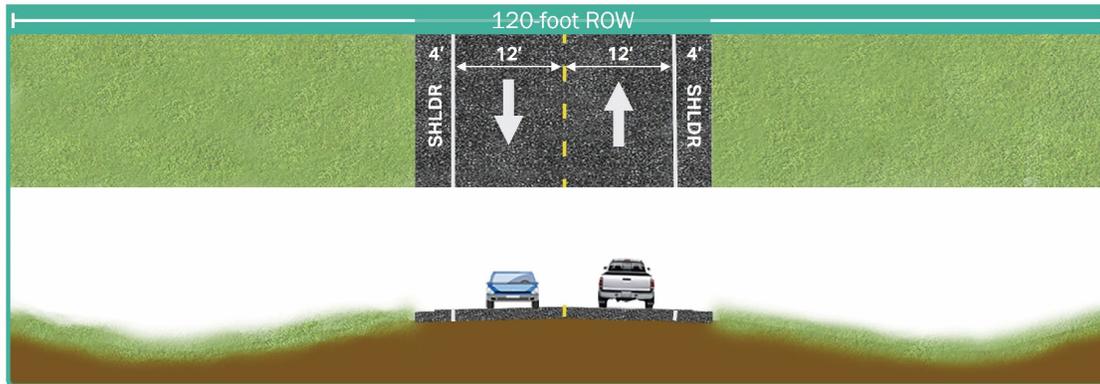


### Script:

The project's study limits extend on FM 529 from Grand Parkway to FM 362 for a length of 12 miles. The project is located in both Harris and Waller counties.

Land along FM 529, especially between Grand Parkway and Katy Hockley Cut Off Road, is experiencing rapid growth. Several residential communities currently are being constructed and the Katy Independent School District is planning to build a new multi-school campus in this area.

## FM 529 Existing Typical Section



### Existing Typical Section

- Two undivided 12-foot wide travel lanes (one in each direction)
- 4-foot outside shoulders (SHLDR)
- Open ditches
- Typical right-of-way (ROW) width of 120 feet



### Script:

FM 529 in the project area currently has one twelve-foot travel lane in each direction, four-foot shoulders on the outside of the travel lanes, no center median and an open ditch for drainage, all within an average right of way width of 120 feet.

## Study Purpose and Need



### What Are the Issues? Study Needs

- Two-lane undivided roadway does not provide adequate mobility to accommodate projected traffic volumes
- Crash rates are higher than statewide average along the proposed project corridor

### What Are We Trying to Do? Study Purpose

- Improve mobility within the study area
- Improve safety within the study area



### Script:

The proposed project is being developed to address two major needs along the project corridor. First, the current 2-lane undivided roadway doesn't provide adequate mobility to accommodate traffic volumes projected for the next 25 years. Currently, the roadway between Grand Parkway and Katy Hockley Cut Off Road does not provide adequate mobility. Second, crash rates on this segment of FM 529 are higher than average crash rates on similar roadways in Texas. The purpose of the proposed project is to improve mobility and safety within the project corridor.

## FM 529 Daily Volumes and Level of Service



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Script:

Now let's talk about level of service, or how congested FM 529 is today and what is projected for the future. Level of service is illustrated in the graphic on the right. Level of service ranges from A, free flowing traffic as shown in light green, to F which is heavily congested as shown in red.

Traffic volumes are projected to grow to almost 6 times the existing volumes on FM 529 between Grand Parkway and Katy Hockley Cut Off Road and 4 times between Katy Hockley Cut Off Road and FM 362 by the year 2045.

With no improvements, FM 529 will experience moderate to high congestion in 2045. At this level of congestion, the roadway is projected to operate at levels of service D and E. The intersections at Grand Parkway, Katy Hockley Cut Off Road and FM 362 are projected to operate at a level of service F. For study purposes, making no improvements to the roadway other than routine maintenance is known as the no build alternative.

With the proposed FM 529 improvements, which include widening the roadway from Grand Parkway to FM 362, FM 529 is projected to operate at level of service D between Grand Parkway and Katy Hockley Cut Off Road and level of service B between Katy Hockley Cut Off Road and FM 362 through 2045.

# FM 529 Safety and Crash Analysis (Years 2013 – 2017)



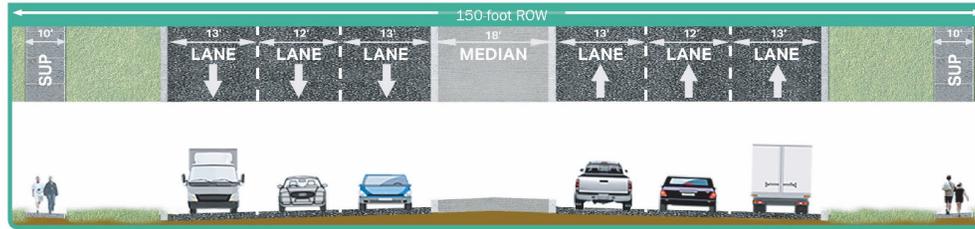
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Script: In regard to safety, we analyzed crashes along the FM 529 corridor for the 5 year period from 2013 through 2017. The map on the top shows the location of each of the crashes. Top crash hot spot locations along FM 529 include Grand Parkway, FM 2855, Pitts Road, Hockley Cut Off Road, Peek Road, and Katy Hockley Road. For example, during the 5 year period, there were 174 crashes on FM 529, with 23 percent, or 40 of the crashes occurring at the Grand Parkway intersection and 18 percent, or 31 of the crashes occurring at the FM 2855 intersection.

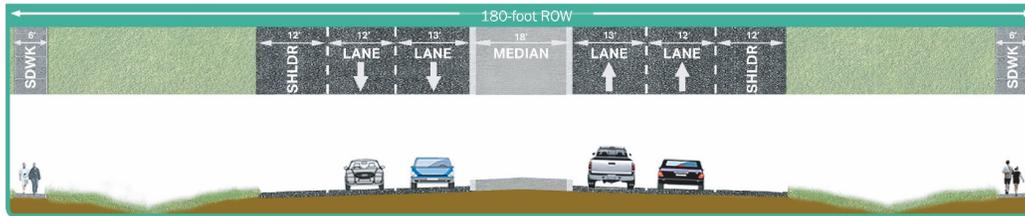
The chart at the bottom presents the crash rate along FM 529. The state average crash rate for a similar roadway is 124 crashes per 100 million vehicle miles, as shown by the red line on the chart, and crashes occurring on FM 529 between 2014 and 2017 were above the state average.

## FM 529 Proposed Typical Sections



### SH 99 (Grand Parkway) to Katy Hockley Cut Off Road

- Six travel lanes (three in each direction)
- 18-foot median with openings
- Closed drainage system (storm sewers)
- 10-foot shared-use path (SUP) in each direction
- Typical right-of-way width of 150 feet



### Katy Hockley Cut Off Road to FM 362

- Four travel lanes (two in each direction); inside lane would be 13 feet
- 18-foot median with openings
- 12-foot outside shoulders
- Open ditches
- 6-foot sidewalks (SDWK) in each direction
- Shoulders can be utilized by bicycles
- Typical right-of-way width of 180 feet



### Script:

TxDOT has developed proposed typical sections for FM 529 based on identified needs for the corridor.

From Grand Parkway to Katy Hockley Cut Off Road the proposed improvements would include an urban roadway section with 6-travel lanes, 3 in each direction, with curb and gutter. The roadway would include an 18-foot median with openings and 10-foot shared-use paths for cyclists and pedestrians. The proposed new right-of-way width would be 150 feet, which is 30 feet wider than the existing right-of-way

From Katy Hockley Cut Off Road to FM 362 the proposed improvements include a rural roadway section with 4 travel lanes, 2 in each direction, and an open drainage system. The roadway would include an 18-foot median with openings, 12-foot outside shoulders that can be used by cyclists and 6-foot sidewalks for pedestrians. The proposed right-of-way width in this section is 180 feet, which is an additional 60 feet of width of additional right-of-way.

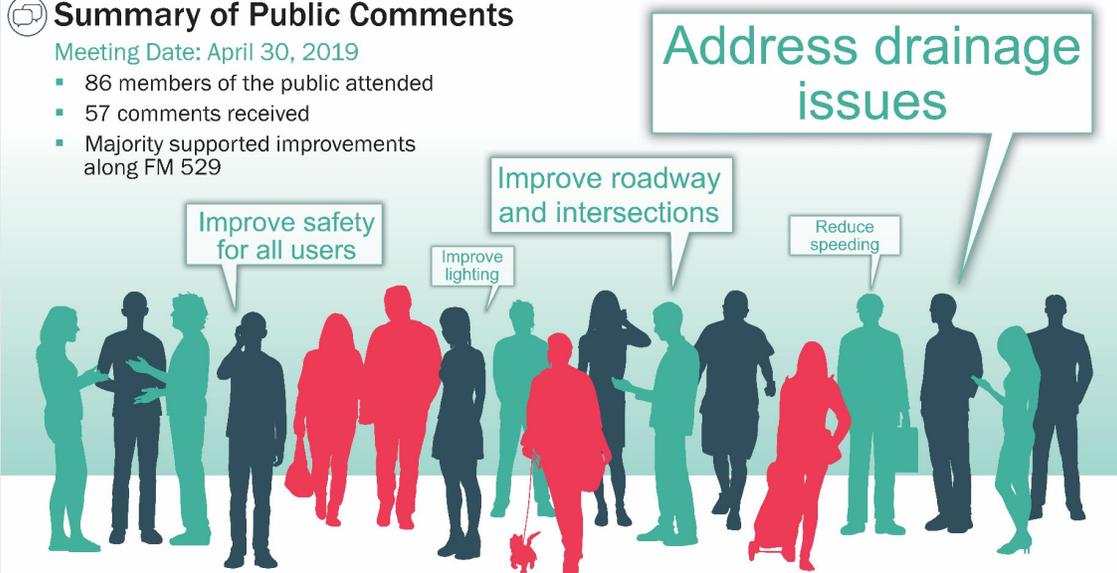
## FM 529 Public Meeting #1



### Summary of Public Comments

Meeting Date: April 30, 2019

- 86 members of the public attended
- 57 comments received
- Majority supported improvements along FM 529



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Script:

Public input received at the first public meeting for the FM 529 improvement project was considered in developing an additional build alternative. Fifty-seven comments were received and the majority of the comments supported the proposed improvements along FM 529.

Most of the public comments addressed drainage issues, improving the roadway and intersections, and improving safety.

If you're interested in the information presented and comments received from the first public meeting, you can find it on the FM 529 project page on the TxDOT website. Information on how to access the project page on the TxDOT website will be provided at the end of this presentation.

## Preliminary Build Alternatives



### Alternatives Presented at Public Meeting #1



 **Alternative 4:** Combination of Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 to minimize impacts to the natural and built environment



### Script:

The three build alternatives presented at the first public meeting were based on the proposed typical sections shown earlier. Using evaluation criteria and input received at the first public meeting the project team developed a fourth alternative, now referred to as the proposed build alternative.

The schematic exhibits of the proposed build alternative are located on the FM 529 project page on the TxDOT website. Please review these exhibits which show the proposed improvements for FM 529.

# FM 529 Evaluation of Build Alternatives



**Note:** The No Build Alternative will be evaluated during the environmental review process.

Evaluation Criteria	Alternative 1 Widen to the North	Alternative 2 Center Widening	Alternative 3 Widen to the South	Alternative 4 Proposed Build Alternative (Hybrid of Alternatives 1, 2 & 3)
<b>ROW</b> Acreage of ROW required, in addition to the existing TxDOT ROW	88 ac Right-of-Way	87 ac Right-of-Way	87 ac Right-of-Way	81 ac Right-of-Way
<b>Utilities</b> Linear feet of utilities impacted	3 Electr. Trans. Lines: 48,480 LF 1 Gas Pipeline: 22,145 LF	3 Electr. Trans. Lines: 48,480 LF 1 Gas Pipeline: 22,145 LF	3 Electr. Trans. Lines: 48,480 LF 1 Gas Pipeline: 22,145 LF	3 Electr. Trans. Lines: 48,575 LF 1 Gas pipeline: 22,145 LF
Count of major utility crossings	2 Trans. Towers 8 Electr. Trans. Lines	1 Trans. Tower 8 Electr. Trans. Lines	11 Gas Pipelines 4 Crude Oil Pipelines	8 Electr. Trans. Lines 11 Gas Pipelines
<b>Traffic Control / Constructability</b> High/Neutral/Low traffic control/constructability impacts	Low	Medium	Low	Low
<b>Drainage Assessment</b> High/Neutral/Low drainage impacts	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
<b>Waters of the United States, including Wetlands</b> Linear feet of streams, creeks, bayous, etc., impacted	24,170 LF	31,770 LF	37,500 LF	30,220 LF
Acreage of wetlands impacted (as mapped by NWI)	7 ac Right-of-Way	5 ac Right-of-Way	4 ac Right-of-Way	4 ac Right-of-Way
<b>Floodplains</b> Acreage of 100-yr floodplains impacted	56 ac Right-of-Way	59 ac Right-of-Way	62 ac Right-of-Way	60 ac Right-of-Way
<b>Floodway</b> Acreage of floodways impacted	65 ac Right-of-Way	60 ac Right-of-Way	54 ac Right-of-Way	52 ac Right-of-Way
<b>Hazardous Materials</b> Count of potential hazmat sites	7	7	7	7
<b>Number of Structures Displacement</b> Count of residential displacements	1	0	3	0
Count of business displacements	0	3	7	0
Count of other displacements	3	3	3	2
<b>Cultural Resources</b> Acreage of surface survey recommended	9 ac Proposed Right-of-Way	12 ac Proposed Right-of-Way	18 ac Proposed Right-of-Way	13 ac Proposed Right-of-Way
Count of National Register of Historic Places sites impacted	0	0	0	0
<b>Environmental Justice Communities</b> Count of Minority Census Blocks impacted	3	7	4	7

Approximately 25 acres would be required for detention basins for all alternatives.



## Script:

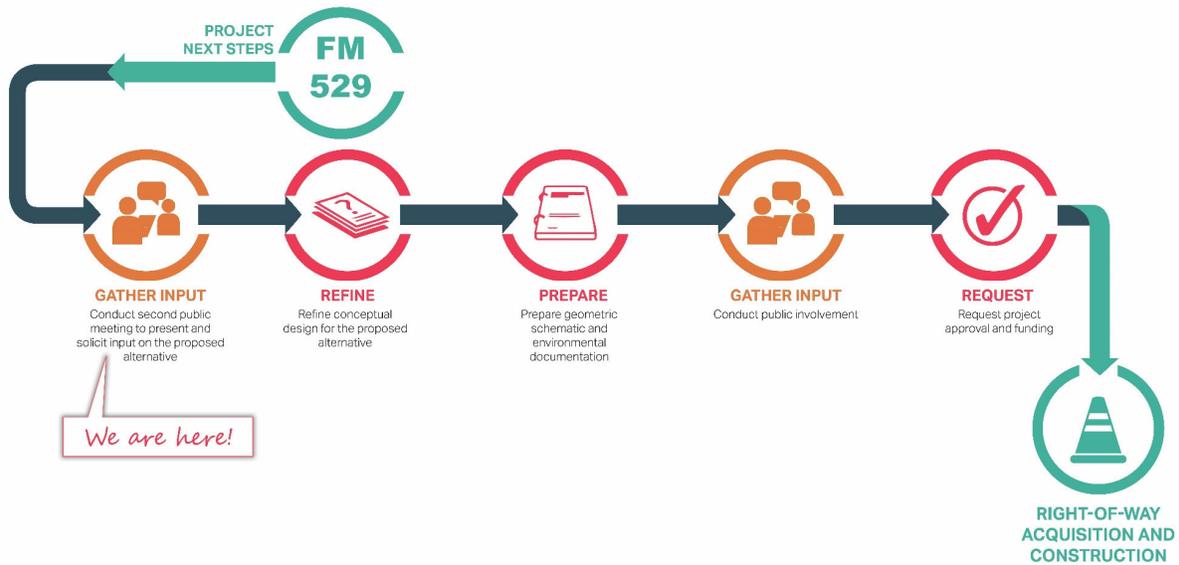
The table shown here summarizes how the four build alternatives were evaluated against various evaluation criteria to determine each alternative's potential impacts on the natural and built environment. Evaluation criteria includes:

- Right-of-way,
- Utility impacts,
- Constructability,
- Drainage,
- Waters of the United States, including Wetlands,
- Floodplains and floodways,
- Hazardous materials,
- Residential, commercial and other displacements,
- Cultural resources, and
- Environmental justice communities.

As mentioned earlier, Alternative 4 was developed to minimize impacts to the natural and built environments.

During the study process, TxDOT also evaluates drainage needs for proposed projects. For this project, TxDOT determined that it would need approximately 25 acres of additional right-of-way to accommodate for drainage requirements for any of the proposed build alternatives. The total amount of additional right-of-way for the proposed project, combining the roadway need and the drainage need, is estimated at 106 acres.

## Next Steps



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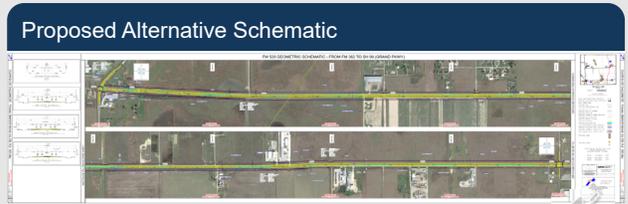
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### Script:

This virtual public meeting is intended to gather input on the proposed alternative. After the comment period closes on June 24<sup>th</sup>, TxDOT will prepare a summary of the comments received at this public meeting and, with consideration of those comments, will move towards completing the preliminary design and environmental documentation for the proposed alternative. When the environmental documentation is complete, the NEPA documents will be submitted for a project decision. Provided the environmental process is approved, the project then would move into detailed design and right-of-way acquisition.

# Public Meeting Materials

- Public meeting materials are provided on the TxDOT website:
  - Public meeting exhibit boards
  - Fact sheet
  - Proposed alternative schematic
  - Comment card



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## Script:

The project website includes all materials presented at the first FM 529 public meeting that was held in April 2019 as well as tonight's materials that include this presentation, exhibit boards, a fact sheet, the proposed alternative schematic and a comment card. The next slide will show the project website address.

## How to Submit Your Written Comments

All Comments must be post marked by June 24, 2020

Comments can be provided:



### Script:

TxDOT encourages you to provide written comments on the materials you have seen tonight. The comment form is located on the project's website. Comments must be received via email or mailed and postmarked by Wednesday, June 24, 2020, to be included in the Virtual Public Meeting Summary Report.

You can submit written comments in the following ways:

- Via email to [hou-piowebmail@txdot.gov](mailto:hou-piowebmail@txdot.gov)
- Via mail to the TxDOT Houston District, Attention: Director of Project Development, P.O. Box 1386, Houston, Texas, 77251-1386
- Online by visiting [www.TxDOT.gov](http://www.TxDOT.gov) and searching in the upper right-hand search box for "FM 529." Click on the email link at the bottom of the project page to open the comment form.

Again, please submit your written comments no later than midnight on Wednesday June 24, 2020, for your comments to be included in the public meeting record.

Responses to your comments submitted during the comment period will be included in the Public Meeting Summary Report. This report will be posted on the project's website in approximately three months. The website for the project is: [www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/houston/fm529-sh99-to-fm362.html](http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/studies/houston/fm529-sh99-to-fm362.html).



# Thank you!

Please don't forget to submit comments by  
Wednesday, June 24, 2020.

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Script:

Please don't forget to submit your written comments by Wednesday, June 24, 2020.

Thank you for participating in this virtual public meeting for the FM 529 Improvement Project.