



Notice
Draft Environmental Assessment Available for Public Review
and
Public Hearing
US 59 UPGRADE SHEPHERD TO CLEVELAND
From FM 2914 to 0.65 mile south of SL 573
CSJs: 0177-02-057 and 0177-03-099
San Jacinto and Liberty Counties, Texas

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), as the lead agency, is proposing to upgrade existing US 59 by constructing frontage roads and overpasses from FM 2914 south of Shepherd in San Jacinto County to 0.65 mile south of SL 573 in Cleveland in Liberty County, Texas. This notice advises the public that a draft environmental assessment (EA) is available for public review and that TxDOT will be conducting a public hearing on the proposed project. The hearing will be held on Tuesday, May 14, 2019 at Shepherd High School Cafeteria, 1 Pirate Lane, Shepherd, Texas 77371. Displays will be available for viewing at 4:00 p.m. with the formal hearing starting at 6:00 p.m. The purpose of the hearing is to present the planned improvements and to receive public comment on the proposed project.

The proposed 6.62 miles long project would bring US 59 up to interstate standards by constructing northbound and southbound frontage roads with two 12-foot wide lanes and reconstructing the existing US 59 main lanes to include two 12-foot wide travel lanes in each direction with median barrier. The proposed project would become a controlled access freeway which means there would not be direct access to the main lanes. Access to the main lanes would be allowed via entrance and exit ramps. The proposed project would also include the construction of two overpasses with U-turns at Red Road and just south of the San Jacinto/Liberty County Line.

Existing right-of-way (ROW) width varies from typical width of 200 feet to 830 feet near the US 59/SL 573 intersection in Cleveland. The proposed ROW width varies from 321 feet to 544 feet through the project area. The proposed project would potentially displace five residences, one church, and 11 commercial structures. 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 potentially displaced persons and businesses.

Wetlands are present within the proposed ROW and will be impacted by the proposed improvements. Therefore, TxDOT would be required to obtain authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act from the United States Army Corps of Engineers. In accordance with Executive Order 11990, no practicable alternatives were identified that would avoid impacts to wetlands. The proposed project would also cross floodplains; therefore, coordination with the local floodplain administrator would be required. The project is subject to and will comply with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management.

The draft EA, 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 the TxDOT Lufkin District Office, 1805 N. Timberland Dr., Lufkin, TX 75901, (936) 634-4433, and at www.txdot.gov, keyword search "US 59 Shepherd-Cleveland". This information also will be available for inspection at the hearing. Verbal and written comments from the public regarding the proposed project are requested and may be presented at the hearing, or submitted in person or by mail to the TxDOT Lufkin District Office. Comments must be received on or before May 29, 2019 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 the need for an interpreter, are encouraged to contact Rhonda Oaks, District Public Information Officer at (936) 633-4395 or at Rhonda.Oaks@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 Jennifer Adams, I-69 Project Manager, at (936) 633-4469 or at Jennifer.Adams@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.