



Rural Transportation Improvement Program Script for Paris District FY 2021-2024
Script from Presentation on May 26, 2020

Script:

Welcome to the Paris District Rural Transportation Improvement Program public meeting for the 2021-2024 program!

My name is Dan Perry and I'm the Director of Transportation Planning & Development for TxDOT's Paris District. We are here today to go over the projects to be included in the upcoming 2021-2024 Rural TIP.

Today we will go over the counties in the district and all the roads under the district's care. We will also review the basics of what the Rural TIP is, and why it is important for you to be here with us today. We will explain how the projects included in the program are selected and classified in order to make the most of the program.

Once you have an understanding of all of this, you will have the opportunity to review all the projects the Paris District has included in the 2021-2024 program, both the big projects and the small supporting projects.

We will also go over funding, answering questions on "where does the money come from to pay for these projects and how does it get distributed?".

Lastly we will outline all the options you have to comment on these projects and their priority.

Due to current restrictions on holding public meetings, this is a pre-recorded presentation. You will have the opportunity to make comments about the Rural TIP through email and traditional mail. Instructions for making comments and asking questions will be provided at the end of the presentation.

We appreciate everyone that is taking time to view this presentation. Yours is an important voice in helping to plan future transportation projects in the Paris District. As such, we want to make sure that you and your family stay as safe as possible while traveling. Distracted driving continues to be a problem in Texas and current data indicates that drivers are not changing their behaviors. So TxDOT wants to raise awareness on the dangers of distracted driving by encouraging Texans to put away their cellphones while driving.

The Paris District includes all of the counties shown in the map. Projects included in the 2021-2024 Rural TIP are located in Grayson, Fannin, Lamar, Red River, Hunt, Rains, Delta, Hopkins and Franklin Counties.

The Rural Transportation Improvement Program is a list of local projects to be funded in a TxDOT District over the next 4 years. This means that all projects included in the list are expected to be underway within 4 years following its approval. These are the projects you can expect to go to contract in the near future!

It is multimodal; which means that it can include projects relating to highways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit services, and freight projects as well as the preliminary studies used to define those projects.

The Rural TIP is meant to show regional agreement on the need and priority of a transportation project, so all parties involved can be sure they are making the best investment for the community. It



is also expected to be consistent with the projects and objectives included in the regional Long Range Transportation Plans, to ensure that all agencies are working towards the same goal.

The Rural TIP is a part of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Because the program's rules are established by Federal law, no project can receive federal funding unless it is listed in the Rural TIP.

It is important for you to participate because funding secured by this process is intended to address your communities' most immediate needs. By providing comments on the priority of the projects included, you are helping us identify regional priorities.

By reviewing the entire program in a single meeting you are: 1) having a regional impact, 2) helping us be more effective with your money, and 3) ensuring that we are investing where we should.

Rural Transportation Organizations, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and local governments are responsible for selecting projects within their boundaries.

TxDOT, through the District office, is responsible for selecting of all projects relating to the State Transportation System and other National roadways. This includes Interstates, State and US Highways but most importantly this can also include the Farm-to-Market roads you use every day. The projects you will review today should respond to local needs. It is our responsibility to provide you with the opportunity to provide input on which projects should be advanced.

Once projects have been defined they are evaluated according to their scale and classified according to the funding they require as well as their potential impact.

Big projects are categorized as Regionally Significant Projects and are included as stand-alone items. For Example: *Building a new bridge over a river or converting a 2-lane highway to a 4-lane highway.*

To simplify this budgeting and planning process, smaller projects are lumped together into 11 separate sub categories, referred to as Grouped Projects. Grouped projects include things like preventative maintenance, landscaping, safety lighting, or new bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This grouping practice facilitates the federal funding of smaller projects. For Example: *the pavement repair or resurfacing of an FM road.*

This table shows the details of projects included in the 2021-2024 Rural TIP for Lamar, Red River and Delta Counties. These counties are served by TxDOT's Paris Area Office.

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The table shows the details of projects included in the 2021-2024 Rural TIP for Grayson and Fannin Counties. These counties are served by TxDOT's Sherman Area Office.

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The table shows the details of projects included in the 2021-2024 Rural TIP for Hopkins and Franklin Counties. These counties are served by TxDOT's Sulphur Springs Area Office.

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The Rural TIP functions as a budget list for the District. As such it is fiscally constrained. Like the budget of a household, the Rural TIP has to be realistic about the amount of money available to covers all the needs. Frequently we identify more improvements than we have money to implement. This means prioritizing according to those items that are most necessary.

We've discussed the list but where is the money coming from? Funds can come from 3 main sources:

- 1) The Federal Government, through the establishment of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act or MAP-21. The federal government allocates these funds through the processes established by the Federal Highway and Transit Administrations.
- 2) TxDOT, like the Federal Government also allocates a section our budget for these projects through the Unified Transportation Program's 12 funding categories.

And 3) the local governments. Once the need has been identified and the amount of federal monies has been defined, the Rural TIP helps local governments assess the funding requirements to match those of the federal and state government and their capacity to meet them.

Now, after you review and comment on these projects, what's next? The timeline above illustrastes the Rural TIP process and where we are right now. Once your comments have been collected and considered, if necessary the Districts will provide TxDOT with a revised Rural TIP for approval and integration into the Statewide document.

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program is built from the Rural TIP of all of the 25 Districts in the State as well as the Transportation programs from all the MPOs. The timeline above shows where the Rural TIP process fits into this larger effort. Once the STIP is approved by the Federal government, everyone's projects are funded and become one step closer to getting on the ground.

Now that you are familiar with the Program we want to hear what you think. Go ahead and email or mail comments to us at the addresses shown on this slide.

Comments must be postmarked or otherwise received by Friday, June 12th, 2020. Please make sure to send your comments before that date.

If after today you would like more information or access to this presentation, feel free to email or call Stacy Taylor at Stacy.Taylor@txdot.gov or call (903) 737-9255.

Thank you for participating in this important process.