



**Notice  
Draft Environmental Assessment Available for Public Review  
and  
Opportunity for a Public Hearing**

**US 281 (Future I-69 C)  
From FM 490 to SH 186/FM 1017  
CSJ: 0255-07-140  
Hidalgo County, Texas**

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is the lead agency proposing to reconstruct and improve US 281 (future I-69 C) from FM 490 to SH 186/FM 1017 in Hidalgo County, Texas. The total distance of the project is approximately 7.04 miles. Pursuant to Texas Administrative Code, Title 43, §2.106 and §2.108, this notice advises the public that a draft environmental assessment (EA) is available for public review and that TxDOT is affording an opportunity for a public hearing on the proposed project. 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.

The planned improvements to US 281 consist of reconstructing and upgrading the existing rural divided highway to interstate standards as part of the future I-69C. US 281 will be designated as I-69C once construction is complete. The proposed project would include widening the existing facility from a 4-lane divided highway to an urban freeway with continuous frontage roads in each direction. Specifically, the improvements include constructing 4 main lanes (2 in each direction) and 2-lane frontage roads in each direction. The ultimate completed improvements would add 2 main lanes (1 lane each direction) as future traffic warrants. Additionally, overpasses would be added at Laguna Seca Road, Red Gate Road, and Los Venados Drive. The length of the proposed project is approximately 7.04 miles. The purpose of the proposed project would be to enhance mobility, safety, and improve traffic operations along US 281 (future I-69C).

The proposed project will be constructed generally within the existing right-of-way (ROW) which varies between 200 feet and 320 feet. However, approximately 65.38 acres of additional ROW will be required, at select locations, to upgrade the facility.

The proposed project would potentially impact two residential properties, a City of Edinburg water utility facility and a non-functional windmill. 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.



Some areas of the proposed project are located within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-designated 100-year floodplain. The hydraulic design for the proposed project would be in accordance with current FHWA and TxDOT design policies. The project will also require the relocation of an Official Texas Historical Marker (OTHM) for the La Noria Cardenena.

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 TxDOT Pharr District office, 600 West Interstate 2, Pharr, Texas 78577, and (956) 702-6181 and at TxDOT website at [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov), keyword: "US 281 Future I-69C".

Any interested person may request a public hearing covering the social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed location and design for this project. Requests for a public hearing must be submitted in writing on or before August 27, 2019 to the TxDOT Pharr District Office, Melba Schaus, P.E., Project Manager, 600 West Interstate 2, Pharr, Texas 78577. A hearing will be held if ten or more individuals submit timely written requests for a hearing, or if an agency with jurisdiction over the project submits a timely written request for a hearing that is supported by reasons why a hearing will be helpful.

Additionally, any comments on the draft EA can be submitted to the address included above. Comments must be submitted on or before August 27, 2019. If you have general questions or concerns regarding the proposed project or the opportunity for the public hearing, contact Melba Schaus, P.E., Project Manager, at (956) 702-6181, or by email at [Melba.Schaus@txdot.gov](mailto:Melba.Schaus@txdot.gov).

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