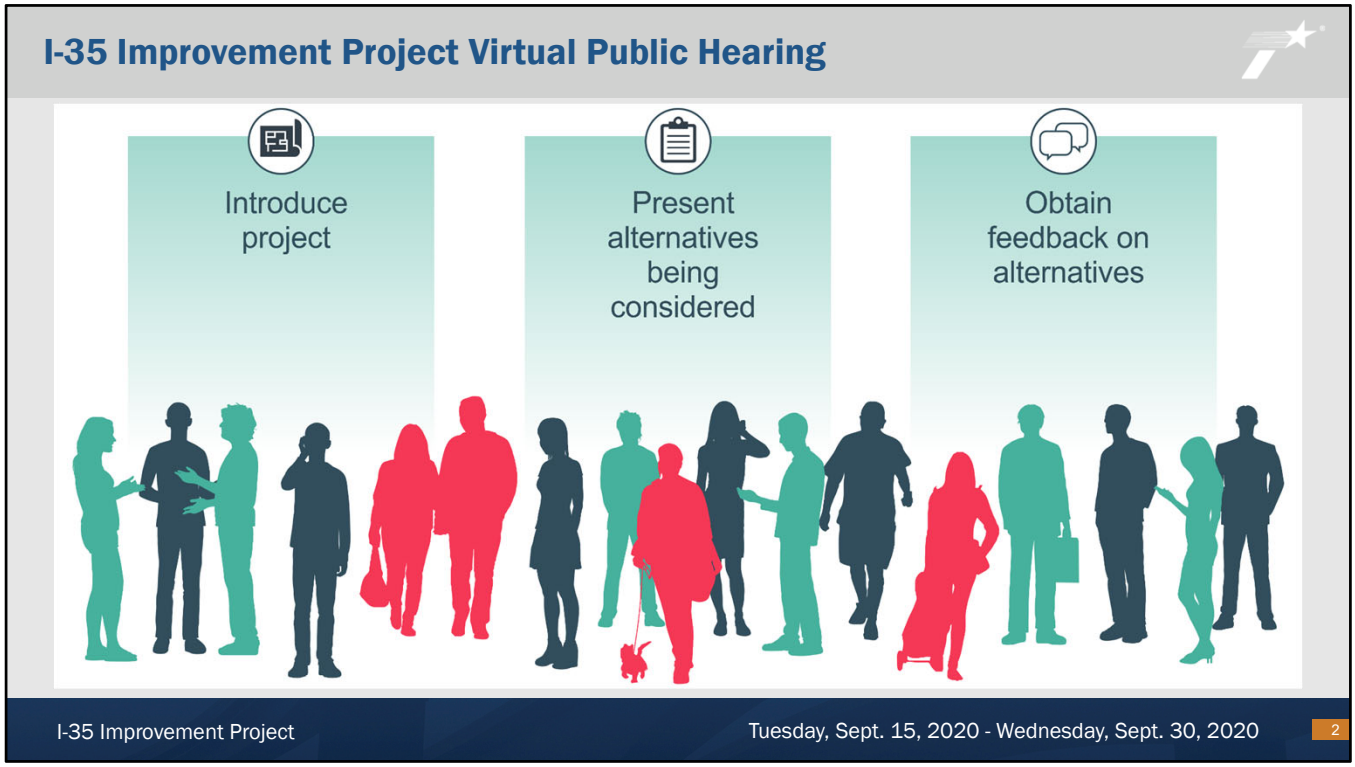
Welcome to the Texas Department of Transportation Wichita Falls District's virtual public hearing for the I-35 Improvement Project from Farm-to-Market (FM) 3002 in Cooke County, Texas to Mile Marker 1/Merle Wolfe Road in Love County, Oklahoma. My name is Adele Lewis, the Public Information officer for the Texas Department of Transportation Wichita Falls District and I would like to thank you for participating in this virtual public hearing. First, we would like to ask you to please sign-in if you haven't already done so, by clicking on the Sign-In Table in this room. Second, we would like it if you rotate around the room, pushing on the blue buttons to discover information about the project. Please be sure to watch a brief pre-recorded presentation about the project and the results of the Draft Environmental Assessment.

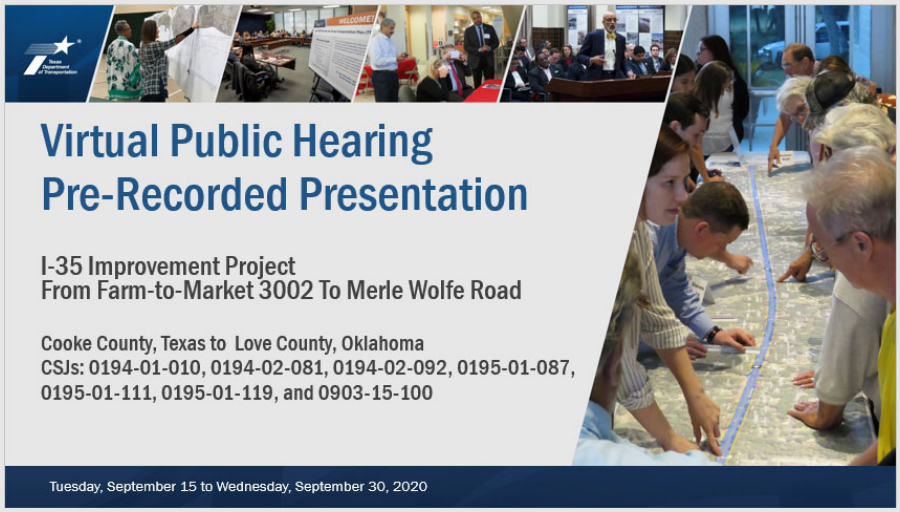
The virtual room and the presentation is available for viewing starting today,



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 hearing to avoid in-person contact.

This virtual public hearing is being held to introduce the proposed project, present the Recommended Build Alternative, summarize the results of the Draft Environmental Assessment and gather public input. You are encouraged to submit comments on the proposed project after reviewing the hearing materials and listening to the presentation.

Presentation



National Environmental Policy Act

The project would receive federal funds and, as such, the potential environmental effects of the proposed project must be assessed in accordance with Federal standards. The process that is followed is called the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The NEPA process provides analyses of the potential impacts to the natural and manmade environment, and helps the decision maker to make an informed decision on whether or not to proceed with the project. The lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the proposed I-35 project is the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

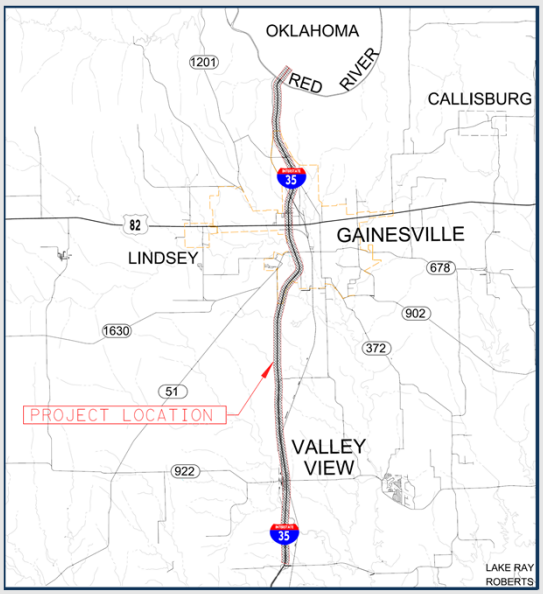
The I-35 project would receive federal funds, and because of the federal component, TxDOT is required to assess the potential environmental effects of the proposed project in accordance with Federal standards. The process that is followed is called the National Environmental Policy Act process, otherwise known as NEPA. The NEPA process provides analyses of the potential impacts to the natural and manmade environment and helps the decision maker to make an informed decision on whether to proceed with the project. The lead agency under NEPA for the proposed project is the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

I-35 Project Overview

Project Limits:
FM 3002 in Cooke County, Texas to Mile Marker 1/Merle Wolfe Road in Love County, Oklahoma

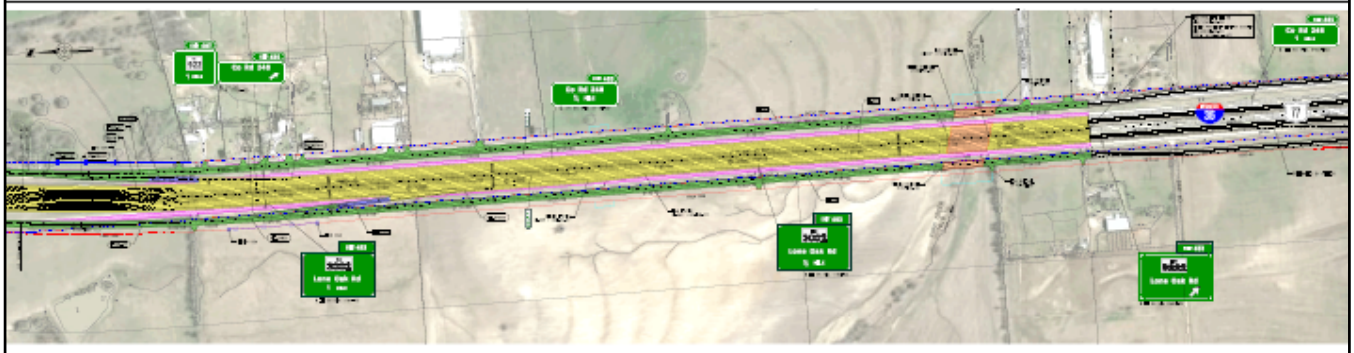
Project Length:
21.6 miles

Project Setting:
The proposed project is predominately rural and passes though the Cities of Valley View and Gainesville



TxDOT and FHWA are proposing to widen 21.6 miles of I-35 from near FM 3002 in Cooke, Texas to Mile Marker 1/Merle Wolfe Road in Love County, Oklahoma. The proposed project is predominately rural and passes through the Cities of Valley View and Gainesville, Texas.

Schematics



The proposed Recommended Build Alternative proposes to widen existing I-35 to eight lanes (four lanes in each direction) following the existing alignment.

The proposed typical section would include four, 12-foot-wide travel lanes and 10-foot-wide inside and outsides shoulders in each direction.

Studies of one-way traffic patterns have identified one-way frontage roads as a safer option for the traveling public. Therefore, the Recommended Build Alternative would convert existing non-continuous, two-way frontage roads to continuous, one-way frontage roads.

Grade separated crossover access would be provided approximately every 1.5 miles throughout the project.

In addition, two new bridges would be constructed for the main lanes and one existing bridge would be used for a two-way frontage road over the Red River.

Please click on the schematic here at the table to review the schematic in further detail.

Project Planning and Funding

- Estimated Construction Cost is approximately $675 million for the interim six-lane facility. For an additional $78 million the ultimate 8-lane facility would be built, for a total estimated construction cost of $753 million.

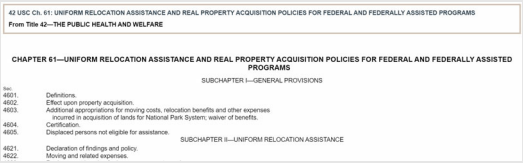
- A portion of the proposed project is consistent with the TxDOT 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP). FHWA will not take final action on the environmental document until reasonable available funding for the project is demonstrated.

The proposed project would be funded with a combination of federal and state funds. Texas would fund the portion of the project in Texas and Oklahoma would fund the portion in Oklahoma. The estimated construction cost is approximately $675 million for the interim six-lane facility. For an additional $78 million the ultimate 8-lane facility would be built, for a total estimated construction cost for the project of $753 million.

The 2035 Texas Rural Transportation Plan, the rural component of the 2035 Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan, identifies improvements to I-35 between the Denton County line and the Texas/Oklahoma state line (Red River Bridge), as the top four ranked improvement projects for the TxDOT Wichita Falls District. A portion of the proposed project is consistent with the TxDOT 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP). The proposed project would be funded with federal and state funds. Final NEPA action cannot be completed unless funding for the project described in the environmental document is reasonably available. TxDOT is currently working on identifying reasonably available funding for the proposed project. FHWA will not take final action on the environmental document until reasonably available funding for the project is demonstrated.

Right-of-Way (ROW) Acquisition Information

- Approximately 124 acres of additional right of way (ROW) would be required for the proposed project
- Proposed project would potentially displace six commercial structures
  - Two abandoned structures (a warehouse and motel)
  - Luigi's Italian Restaurant
  - Lone Star Exxon
  - Joe McElreath Company
  - Hilltop Conoco
- No residential displacements are anticipated


42 USC Ch. 61: UNIFORM RELOCATION ASSISTANCE AND REAL PROPERTY ACQUISITION POLICIES FOR FEDERAL AND FEDERALLY ASSISTED PROGRAMS
From Title 42—THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

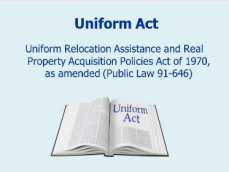
CHAPTER 61—UNIFORM RELOCATION ASSISTANCE AND REAL PROPERTY ACQUISITION POLICIES FOR FEDERAL AND FEDERALLY ASSISTED PROGRAMS

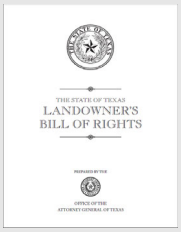
SUBCHAPTER I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec.
4601. Definitions.
4602. Effect upon property acquisition.
4603. Additional appropriations for moving costs, relocation benefits and other expenses incurred in acquisition of lands for National Park System; waiver of benefits.
4604. Certification.
4605. Displaced persons not eligible for assistance.

SUBCHAPTER II—UNIFORM RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

4621. Declaration of findings and policy.
4622. Moving and related expenses.





Please visit www.txdot.gov for more information about the Uniform Act and TxDOT Relocation Assistance Program information

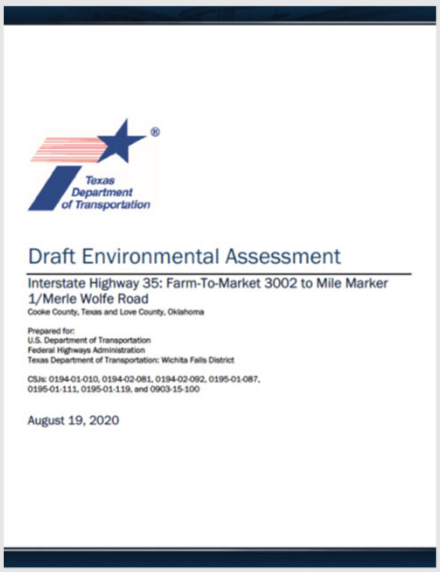
I-35 Improvement Project | Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2020 - Wednesday, Sept. 30, 2020 | 8

The proposed I-35 project would, subject to final design considerations, require 124 acres of additional right of way for the proposed right-of-way and would require 163 parcels and displace six commercial structures. Two of the commercial properties are currently abandoned (a warehouse and a motel). Of the four properties left, two have already been acquired through the early acquisition process and have already relocated (Luigi's Italian Restaurant and Joe McElreath Company). One commercial property, Hilltop Conoco, is currently in early acquisition discussions with TxDOT. Early acquisition of Lone Star Exxon is currently on hold.

No residential displacements are anticipated.

TxDOT offers relocation counseling and financial assistance to residences and businesses that are displaced by the acquisition of highway right-of-way in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. TxDOT would provide assistance to potentially displaced businesses. The ROW pamphlet is available here at the table to review in further detail.

Environmental



Texas Department of Transportation

Draft Environmental Assessment

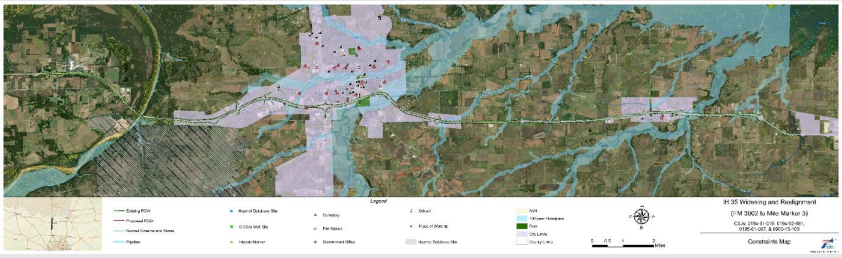
Interstate Highway 35: Farm-To-Market 3002 to Mile Marker 1/Merle Wolfe Road

Cooke County, Texas and Love County, Oklahoma

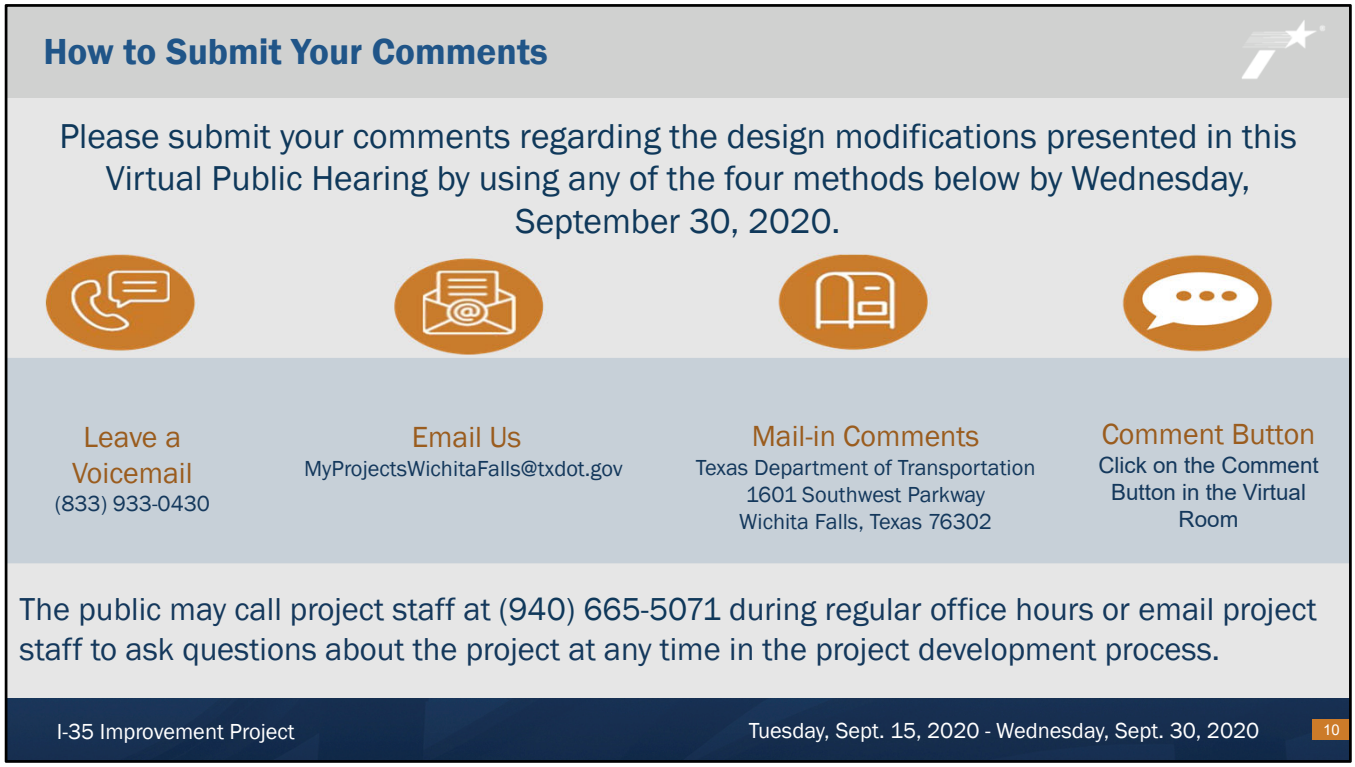
Prepared for:
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highways Administration
Texas Department of Transportation: Wichita Falls District

CSJs: 0194-01-010, 0194-02-081, 0194-02-092, 0195-01-087, 0195-01-111, 0195-01-119, and 0903-15-100

August 19, 2020



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. The Draft EA and the constraints map can be reviewed by clicking here at the table. A summary of the environmental findings have been presented in the public hearing presentation.



TxDOT encourages you to review the materials posted on the virtual public hearing web site and to provide your comments on what you like about the project and/or any concerns you may have.

Comments must be received via voicemail, the on-line comment form, emailed or mailed and postmarked by September 30, 2020 to be included in the official virtual public hearing summary report.

You can submit comments in the following ways:

- Leave a Voicemail at (833) 933-0430
- Via email to MyProjectsWichitaFalls@txdot.gov
- Via mail to the TxDOT Wichita Falls District, 1601 Southwest Parkway, Wichita Falls, Texas, 76302 (a printable form can be found online by visiting www.TxDOT.gov and searching in the upper right-hand search box for keyword search "I-35 Cooke County")
- Click on the Comment Button in the Virtual Room

Again, responses to comments received during the comment period will be included in the Virtual Public Hearing Summary report that will be posted on the project website in approximately three months. The project website is www.txdot.gov; keyword search "I-35 Cooke County"

Quick Contacts – Engage TxDOT Online

- TxDOT Wichita Falls District Office
  Shaun Barnes (940) 720-7744
- TxDOT Gainesville Area Office
  Mike Hallum (940) 665-5071
- Email **MyProjectsWichitaFalls@txdot.gov**
- **Follow us: Twitter:**
  https://twitter.com/TxDOTWF

Secondly, don't hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Please feel free to contact Shaun Barnes at the Wichita Falls district office or Mike Hallum at the Gainesville Area Office with any questions or comments. And don't forget to follow us on Twitter for ongoing road closures and construction updates on the Wichita Falls District Twitter page.

Thank you for participating in this virtual public hearing

Please remember to submit comments by Wednesday, September 30, 2020

Thank you for participating in this virtual public hearing and please remember to submit comments by Wednesday, September 30, 2020.