



VIRTUAL/IN-PERSON PUBLIC MEETING SCRIPT
FM 917 (I-35W to Mansfield) Safety and Mobility Improvements
From I-35W to south of BU 287P
CSJ: 1181-04-047
Johnson County, Texas
July 11, 2024

MR. RICARDO GONZALEZ, P.E., TxDOT DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

SLIDE 1 – Title

Welcome to the Texas Department of Transportation’s prerecorded virtual public involvement presentation. We appreciate your interest in the project and welcome each of you. Please note that you may pause this presentation at any point to allow more time to view the slides, and you may also pause the presentation and navigate forward or backward as needed. In this presentation, we will cover the public involvement purpose, project overview, environmental, and right-of-way considerations. This is followed by an explanation of how to provide comments for the proposed project and the adjournment.

SLIDE 2 – Welcome

My name is Ricardo Gonzalez, and I serve as the Director of Transportation, Planning and Development for the Fort Worth District of the Texas Department of Transportation, better known as TxDOT. Your input on the proposed improvements is valuable and will help benefit the community and shape the final project recommendations. The virtual public materials and project information can be found at www.txdot.gov by typing the project keyword in the search box in the upper right-hand corner. After the project information is presented, we would appreciate your feedback.

SLIDE 3 – End the Streak TX

November 7, 2000, was the last deathless day on roadways in Texas. That means for over two decades at least one person has died every single day. We all have a part to play to change that. This message is that reminder – to End the Streak of deaths on Texas highways. We need drivers and passengers to act more responsibly and help us reach our goal of zero deaths by 2050. Texans can play a major role in ending fatal crashes with a few simple driving habits: wear seatbelts, drive the speed limit, put away the phone and other distractions, and never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs. So please do your part and share this message with your friends and family.

MR. RANDALL DILLARD, CONSULTANT TO TxDOT

SLIDE 4 – Table of Contents

Hello, my name is Randall Dillard, and I am consultant supporting the TxDOT Fort Worth District with public involvement services.

We will cover several topics regarding the FM 917 project throughout this presentation, including:

- Public meeting purpose
- Opportunities for public involvement

- Project background
- Preferred alternative
- Alternative analysis
- Environmental issues being studied
- Potential right-of-way acquisition, and the
- Estimated project schedule

Near the end of the presentation, we will provide the various options on how to provide comments.

SLIDE 5 – Public Meeting Purpose

The purpose of this public meeting is to:

- Present the project's preferred alternative,
- Engage with the community,
- Gather feedback on the preferred alternative, and
- Share information on the right-of-way acquisition process

SLIDE 6 – Public Involvement

Public input is welcome throughout the project process. To encourage public input, we have had and will continue to have several public involvement opportunities:

- October 21, 2022, a Technical Working Group was held
- July 20, 2023, we hosted stakeholder meetings with elected, non-elected and other city officials
- August 10, 2023, we had our first public meeting
- November 14, 2023, we hosted a second stakeholder meeting with elected officials and stakeholders, and
- Today we are hosting our second public meeting
- A public hearing is anticipated for late 2024 or early 2025

SLIDE 7 – Project Background – Location

The project is located in Johnson County, just west of Mansfield. The project limits are from I-35W to south of BU 287P. The project length is 9.4 miles.

SLIDE 8 – Project Background – Existing Roadway

The existing roadway consists of two 12-foot-wide undivided travel lanes in each direction and outside safety shoulders that vary in width. There are no existing sidewalk, bicycle or pedestrian facilities. The existing roadway also has a low design speed on various curves and a rolling terrain.

SLIDE 9 – Project Background – Proposed Roadway

The proposed project includes a typical right-of-way width of 150 feet. This would allow for two 12-foot travel lanes in each direction separated by a 42-foot center grassy median, which would allow one additional lane in each direction, if needed in the future.

Expanding the current two-lane undivided roadway to a four-lane **divided** roadway will improve both safety and mobility by:

- Separating traffic moving in opposite directions with a center median to help prevent head-on crashes
- The additional lane in each direction will allow improved mobility

- Vehicles making a left turn will no longer be in the travel lane, there will be left-turn bay storage at appropriate crossovers providing a refuge area, separate from through traffic lanes, for vehicles waiting to make left turns
- The median will also provide a better turning radius for vehicles (including vehicles with trailers) making U-turns

The proposed project will also include a 10-foot wide shared-use path on each side of the roadway for bicyclists and pedestrians. To improve safety, the shared-use paths will be separated from vehicular traffic by a 6-foot buffer.

SLIDE 10 – Project Background – Safety Overview

Safety is one of the most important considerations for the improvement of the FM 917 corridor, and a comprehensive safety analysis was performed to evaluate safety conditions. Based on the crash data collected between 2018 and 2022, a total of 508 crashes were reported along the 10-mile section of FM 917 during the analysis period. The bar graph shows that the number of crashes is generally increasing during the analysis period from 85 crashes in 2018 to 128 crashes in 2022.

SLIDE 11 – Project Background – Safety Overview

This graph captures the number of crashes broken down by crash severity. While a majority of the crashes were property damage only crashes, there were a total of 52 fatal and severe injury crashes reported during the analysis period.

SLIDE 12 – Project Background – Safety Overview

This map shows locations of the fatal and severe injury crashes along the FM 917 corridor.

SLIDE 13 – Project Background – Safety Overview

The daily traffic volumes traveling FM 917 were forecasted using an annual growth rate of 2% for the open year (2030) and the design year (2050). The existing traffic volumes are within a range of 12,000-18,000 in 2022, and the traffic volume is expected to increase to 18,000 - 29,000 in 2050.

SLIDE 14 – Project Background – Important Features

This slide shows several important features that have been considered along this section of FM 917, including:

- 28 drainage structures
- 4 major utility conflicts
- 3 churches and a cemetery
- 7 regulatory floodways

SLIDE 15 – Preferred Alternative

This image highlights two locations of the current roadway that have sharp, low-speed curves. Within the vicinity of these curves, the preferred alternative (shown in red) would realign FM 917, removing the existing curves and meet current design speeds.

SLIDE 16 – Preferred Alternative Factors

There were three alternatives, as well as a no-build option presented to the public at the last public meeting. The factors used in choosing the preferred alternative are:

- Least amount of new right-of-way acquisition
- Least number of displacements
- Second lowest number of parcels impacted
- Fewer water crossings
- Avoidance of environmental, cultural and community resources
- Removes low-speed horizontal curves
- Supported by public input

SLIDE 17 – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Impacts

In addition to receiving public comment, a detailed analysis was conducted including potential environmental impacts to community, cultural and natural resources. The table on this slide presents the alternative analysis.

SLIDE 18 – Environmental Process

Prior to December 16, 2014, the Federal Highway Administration, or FHWA, reviewed and approved documents prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act, known as NEPA; however, on December 16, 2014 the Texas Department of Transportation assumed responsibility from FHWA to review and approve certain assigned NEPA environmental documents. This agreement was updated on December 9, 2019.

SLIDE 19 – Environmental Process

An environmental assessment of the FM 917 project is ongoing. The final report will be developed according to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.

Once completed, the report will be available on the TxDOT project website: www.txdot.gov using the keyword “**FM 917 from I-35W to BU 287P**” in the search box.

This slide shows the numerous environmental resources that are being evaluated.

SLIDE 20 – Right of Way

The preferred alternative would require 82 acres of additional right of way to construct the proposed project. It would also require 23 displacements, 7 being residential and 16 being non-residential as well as approximately one acre of additional easements for drainage.

SLIDE 21 – Right of Way

TxDOT offers relocation counseling and financial assistance to businesses and residents that are impacted by the acquisition of roadway right of way in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. TxDOT will provide assistance to potentially displaced businesses and property owners.

SLIDE 22 – Estimated Schedule

This slide shows the anticipated schedule for the FM 917 project. After this public meeting an environmental study will be completed. A public hearing will be held prior to receiving

environmental clearance. After approval, any right of way will be acquired, and existing utilities will be adjusted as needed. Construction, which is dependent on available funding, could begin as early as 2029. Please note, this schedule is subject to change.

SLIDE 23 – Project Contact Information

Here is the contact information for the TxDOT FM 917 Project Manager, Nazrul Chowdhury. The public is welcome to contact Mr. Chowdhury or other project staff at any time during the project development process.

SLIDE 24 – Share your Input

Comments will be accepted in a variety of ways including email, comment form submission (submit in person at the public meeting or mail in) or provide your comment online as shown on the screen.

Comments must be received or postmarked by **Friday, July 26, 2024** to be included in the official public meeting record.

All comments and questions will be fully considered and responded to in the Public Meeting Summary Report and made part of the final environmental document for this proposed project. This document will be made available for review on the TxDOT website, once available.

SLIDE 25 – Thank you

We sincerely appreciate your participation and interest in the proposed design of the FM 917 safety and mobility improvements. Your questions, comments and concerns will receive careful consideration. Thank you very much.