Spur 399 Extension from US 75 to US 380 Frequently Asked Questions

CSJ: 0364-04-051, 0047-05-058, 0047-10-002
October 21, 2021 Public Meeting

Spur 399 Extension from US 75 to US 380 Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the status of the project?

TxDOT completed the US 380 Collin County Feasibility Study in March 2020 and separated the study area into five independent project segments. In each of these segments, TxDOT has started the process to complete more in-depth environmental study, public involvement, and schematic design. The following are the five Collin County projects being studied:

- Blue segment - CSJ 0135-11-024: US 380 from West of CR 26 (Denton County line) to Coit Road
- Red segment - CSJs 0135-02-065 and 0135-03-053: US 380 from Coit Road to FM 1827
- Purple segment - CSJs 0364-04-0510047-05-058, 0047-10-002: Spur 399 from US 75 to US 380
- Gold segment - CSJ 0135-04-036: US 380 from FM 1827 to CR 560
- Green segment - CSJ 0135-05-028: US 380 from CR 560 to CR 699 (Hunt County line)

These projects are advancing at different paces depending on the needs and availability of funding.

This FAQ document focuses specifically on the Spur 399 Extension improvement project from US 75 to US 380 shown in purple on the map above. The proposed action would involve the construction of a six to eight-lane freeway from US 75 to US 380 in the southeast quadrant of McKinney.

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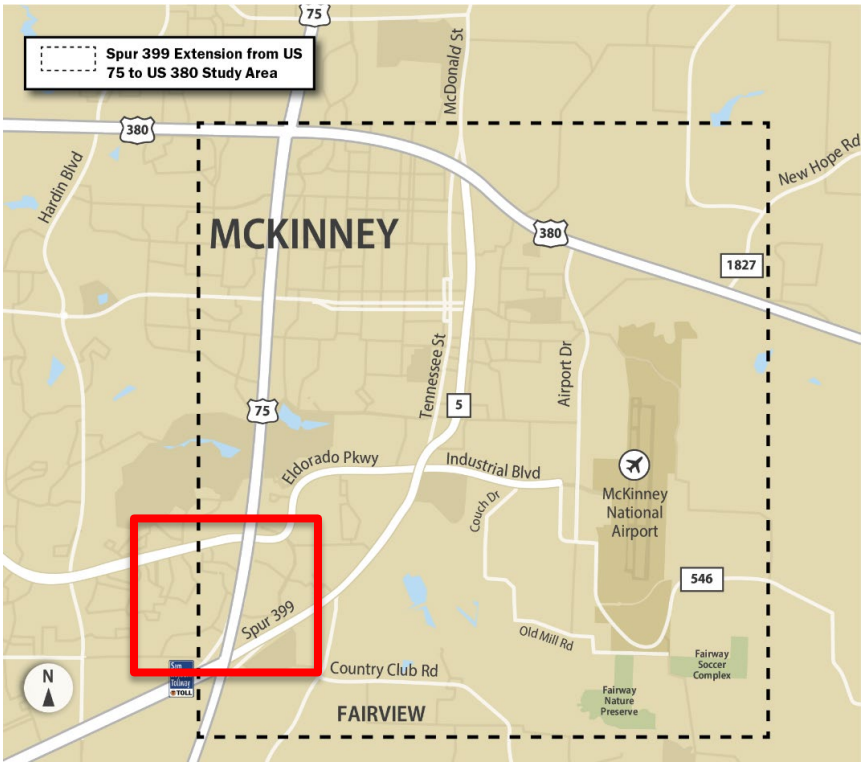
In 2020, TxDOT began the Spur 399 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and schematic design project. TxDOT hosted an Agency Scoping Meeting in late 2020 and a Public Scoping Meeting in early 2021. TxDOT gathered input on the draft Purpose and Need, Range of Alternatives, Methodology and Level of Detail for Analyzing Alternatives, and Coordination Plan. After the Public Scoping meeting, TxDOT started developing the schematic design and a more detailed environmental study for the proposed alternatives. TxDOT is currently hosting an in-person and virtual Public Meeting to provide updates on the project status and schedule, present its comparison of Reasonable Alternatives, answer questions, and gather feedback.

2. Didn't TxDOT already announce a final alignment?

No. TxDOT announced a Recommended Alignment at the end of its Collin County Feasibility Study. That recommendation was based on the data collected during the Feasibility Study and with the information that was available at the time. For TxDOT to name a final alignment (also referred to as a Preferred Alternative), the project must undergo a more in-depth environmental study and development of a schematic design.

3. Where is Spur 399 today?

Spur 399 is a limited-access spur highway about 0.5 miles in length that connects SH 121/Sam Rayburn Tollway (SRT) and US 75 to SH 5. Spur 399 begins where SH 121 branches off the SRT to merge with US 75 in the southern part of McKinney. See area outlined in red on the map to the right.



4. Why is TxDOT studying this area again?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that federal agencies assess the environmental effects of projects prior to making decisions. NEPA also requires TxDOT, as part of the EIS process, to evaluate viable alternatives as well as others developed by TxDOT.

5. Why is this project needed?

The project is needed because of reduced mobility and connectivity between the eastern portion of Collin County and destinations south of McKinney. The purpose of the proposed action is to improve north-south mobility and connectivity of travelers from eastern Collin County to destinations south of McKinney, including the Dallas metroplex. The Purpose and Need Memorandum is available here for review.

6. What is the schedule for this project?

TxDOT's goal is to complete the development of the EIS and schematic design within two years.

After TxDOT evaluates input received at the Public Meeting, TxDOT will compile technical reports and develop a Draft EIS which will include identifying a Preferred Alternative and conducting agency reviews. At that time, TxDOT will also continue to further develop the schematic design of the Preferred Alternative. The public will have the opportunity to provide input on the Draft EIS and Preferred Alternative at a Public Hearing. After the Public Hearing, TxDOT will finalize the EIS and anticipates obtaining a Record of Decision (ROD) in early 2023. A ROD is the official approval of an EIS.

7. What is an Environmental Impact Statement?

An EIS is a multi-year environmental review process that provides rigorous analysis of proposed alternatives and their environmental impacts. During the development of the EIS, TxDOT gathers more field data, completes a more detailed evaluation and schematic design, and completes even more coordination with agencies, stakeholders, and the public. An EIS is prepared when it is anticipated that a proposed project could significantly affect the quality of the human and natural environment. There are three categories of analysis that TxDOT can complete as a part of NEPA, of which an EIS is the most rigorous.

8. What is the difference between the in-person and virtual Public Meeting?

TxDOT is conducting both an in-person and online virtual Public Meeting. The same information will be available at both the in-person and virtual meetings. The in-person meeting will be held at 6 p.m. on October 21, 2021 and be an open house format where the public may come and go at their convenience. A pre-recorded video will be available for viewing. TxDOT staff will be available to answer questions and take comments. The virtual meeting can be viewed beginning Thursday, Oct. 21, 2021 at 6 p.m. through Friday, Nov. 5, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. The virtual Public Meeting materials will be posted to the project website at www.keepitmovingdallas.com/Spur399PublicMeeting and will consist of a pre-recorded video presentation that includes both audio and video components (the same video from the in-person meeting), along with other

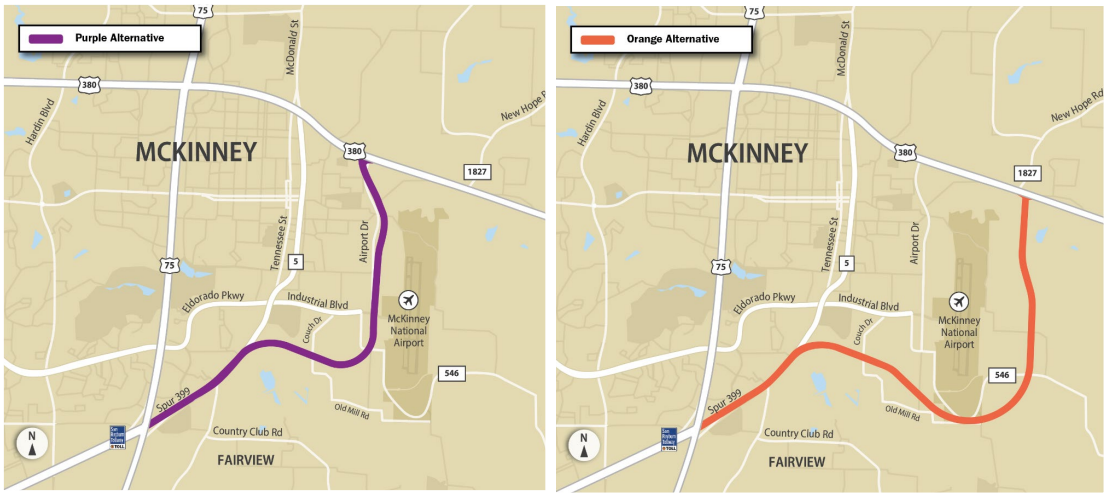
exhibits. The virtual Public Meeting is not a live event. More information about the meetings including meeting location and how to submit comments can be found here.

9. What are the proposed project alternatives?

TxDOT is currently considering a No-Build Alternative and two Build Alternatives within the southeastern portion of McKinney, near the McKinney National Airport. The project area also includes or is near portions of the town of Fairview and the cities of Lowry Crossing and New Hope. Spur 399 currently is a limited-access spur highway that connects the Sam Rayburn Tollway (SRT) and the US 75 interchange to SH 5 in the southern part of McKinney.

The No-Build Alternative means no new improvements would be constructed. The No-Build Alternative serves as a baseline for comparison of the two Build Alternatives and is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The proposed action would involve the construction of a new location freeway that would extend the existing Spur 399 from US 75 to US 380. The two Build Alternatives share a common segment from US 75 to approximately 500 feet west of Couch Drive/Old Mill Road. Typical sections showing what the freeway could look like will be available at the in-person Public Meeting and on the Public Meeting website here.



The alternatives range in total length from approximately 4.8 miles for the Purple Alternative to approximately 6.5 miles for the Orange Alternative. Both alternatives would connect the existing Spur 399 to US 380.

The proposed roadway would accommodate a six to eight-lane freeway with one-way frontage roads on both sides. Connectivity to the existing and planned roadway network would be provided through grade-separated interchanges at major arterial roadway crossings. TxDOT did the following in select areas to minimize impacts to the project:

- Removed frontage roads in constrained areas
- Elevated the freeway on bridges or lowered it below grade

Modifications to the alternatives may continue as the project progresses.

10. What factors will be considered in the EIS?

You can view the Alternatives Analysis Matrix on the Public Meeting website here as well as on exhibit boards and handouts at the Public Meeting. An Alternatives Analysis Matrix is a tool used to review alternatives and objectively compare them according to various evaluation criteria. The comparisons will be used to identify a Preferred Alternative. The matrix includes both qualitative and quantitative data. It is organized into four different categories that TxDOT will consider including how well the projects meets criteria for 1) Purpose and Need 2) engineering analysis 3) environmental analysis and 4) public input.

11. What engineering tasks will TxDOT complete?

After the Public Scoping meeting, TxDOT started to develop the schematic design for the two Build Alternatives by evaluating how much right-of-way (ROW) is needed, developing horizontal and vertical alternatives, customizing typical sections for different locations, developing ramp locations and interchanges, calculating more detailed cost estimates, evaluating and designing drainage, considering bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, and determining the constructability of the project.

TxDOT has developed a schematic design that includes the following for review:

- mainlanes
- ramps
- frontage roads
- horizontal and vertical alignments
- bridges or elevated structures
- retaining walls
- culverts
- proposed ROW needed for the proposed freeway
- existing utilities

- displacements

These features will be available for review on the schematic roll plots at the Public Meeting and the Public Meeting website here. A guide with information and tips for how to review a schematic design will also be available on the Public Meeting website.

12. What kinds of traffic analysis have been completed?

TxDOT has completed a freeway Level of Service comparison and found that the Orange and Purple Alternatives offer similar and acceptable Levels of Service. The project team evaluated future roadway capacity to determine that the Orange Alternative would better support future regional growth and provide approximately 18% more north-south roadway capacity. The Orange Alternative better serves regional northbound and southbound traffic by offering more options and increased vehicle volume throughput.

13. Could public input or input from local governments change TxDOT's Recommended Alignment or influence TxDOT's selection of the Preferred Alternative?

Public and stakeholder input is one of the many things that TxDOT must consider when making its final decision. The Preferred Alternative will not be selected based on input from the public or a city alone. TxDOT does prefer to work with local governments to find ways to address mobility issues in their areas. TxDOT will continue to work with local governments as it progresses through the EIS process and the evaluation of alternatives.

14. Will noise be evaluated during the EIS?

Yes. A traffic noise analysis will be conducted after TxDOT assesses public input from the October-November 2021 Public Meeting for any feasible changes that can be made to the schematic design. Existing sound level measurements will be collected at noise sensitive areas adjacent to the Alternatives. Noise modeling software will also predict what noise would be expected in 2050. Noise abatement measures, such as noise walls, are evaluated if traffic noise impacts are identified. Results will be presented at the Public Hearing.

15. Why did TxDOT propose Spur 399 Extension alignments during the Feasibility Study?

The Feasibility Study was initially focused along the existing US 380 corridor across Collin County followed by development of new location alignments that could draw traffic away from US 380 and other congested roadways within the county. Alignments were also developed to try to address the magnitude of growth occurring in Collin County communities. One such new roadway was the Spur 399 Extension.

16. Are any of the alternatives TxDOT is now considering impacting my property?

Maps of alternatives TxDOT is considering can be viewed at www.keepitmovingdallas.com/Spur399PublicMeeting. TxDOT must consider the number of displacements for each alternative and has been working to try and reduce the number of displacements for each alternative. However, TxDOT is required to comply with state and federal design standards. TxDOT is evaluating displacements to residences, businesses, and any other structures such as outbuildings and a wastewater facility.

TxDOT is required to treat those displaced by the project fairly, consistently, and equitably. Information about relocation assistance is available on the TxDOT website. It is important to note that a final alternative has not been chosen by TxDOT and there still might be schematic design changes to the project that could change the number or types of displacements on a property. TxDOT anticipates that its Preferred Alternative will be presented at the Public Hearing in Summer 2022.

17. What will the impact be to farmland?

Consideration of farmland impacts is important because farmland is limited in this rapidly developing project area and this type of land is key in producing food for local communities. TxDOT is required to comply with the Farmland Protection Policy Act by considering how many acres of farmland would be needed to construct a project. TxDOT is also required to evaluate if any alternatives separate a home from its associated farmland. Prime and important farmland soils are determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Prime Farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food. Statewide important farmland is identified as such by the state or local agency. Constructing the Orange Alternative would separate Enloe family-owned farm properties.

18. How will historic properties be impacted?

TxDOT is required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to consider how the project could impact historic properties. Historic properties are buildings, structures, objects, sites, or districts with historical or archaeological significance. Properties must qualify for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). TxDOT referenced the NRHP and conducted in-person analysis in the study area. Initial results show no direct or adverse effect to cemeteries. TxDOT is continuing to review the potential NRHP-eligibility of properties adjacent to and within the proposed right-of-way.

During the Public Scoping comment period, TxDOT did receive more than 40 comments regarding a farmstead owned by the Enloe family. The property includes a farmhouse as well as active agricultural lands said to be

historic by the family. TxDOT intends to conduct an intensive survey for the Enloe Farm property and archeological surveys within the proposed right-of-way following the Public Meeting.

19. Who can I contact at TxDOT about the project?

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TxDOT's normal business hours are 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (central time), Monday through Friday.