Texas Department of Transportation Public Hearing

Public Hearing 11/18/2010

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              TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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                        PUBLIC HEARING
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                   INTERSTATE HIGHWAY TH 35F
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        FROM PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH TURNPIKE TO FM 2181
 9
                  DALLAS AND DENTON COUNTIES
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       CSJ NOS: 0196-02-068, 0196-01-096, 0196-02-073,
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                   0196-02-114, 0196-03-245
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                  THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2010
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               LEWISVILLE HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
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                     1098 WEST MAIN STREET
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                    LEWISVILLE, TEXAS 75067
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        BE IT REMEMBERED THAT on Thursday, the 18th day of
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   November, 2010, the above entitled came on for public
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   hearing at Lewisville High School Auditorium, 1098 West
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   Main Street, City of Lewisville, County of Denton, State
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   of Texas, and the following proceedings were had, to
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   wit:
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Public Hearing 11/18/2010

Texas Department of Transportation Public Hearing

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1	APPEARANCES
2	Elected Officials:
3	Mary Horn, Denton County Judge
4	Patrick Davis, Highland Village City Council
5	Charlotte Wilcox, Highland Village City Council
6	Mayor Ron Branson, City of Carrollton
7	Mayor John Smith, Hickory Creek
8	William Meek, Highland Village City Council
9	John Gorena, City Council, Lewisville
10	Bobbie Mitchell, Denton County Commissioner
11	
12	Also Present:
13	Phil Ullman, HDR, Incorporated
14	Jennifer Halstead with HNTB
15	Charles Emery, Denton County Transit Authority
16	Jerry Goodall, City of Corinth
17	Tom Hammons, Transportation Engineer, City of Carrollton
18	Steve Bacchus, Assistant City Manager, Lewisville
19	Todd King, Lewisville City Manager
20	Michael Leavitt, Highland Village City Manager
21	Mark Nelson, Denton Transportation Director
22	Matt McCormick, Lewisville Chamber of Commerce
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Public Hearing 11/18/2010

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                      APPEARANCES
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                            (Continued)
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   TxDOT Staff:
   Stan Hall, Robert Hall, Nasser Askari, Moosa Saghian,
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   Cynthia Northrop-White, Bob Brown, Don Toner.
 5
   Area Engineers: Gary Bailey, David Hensley, Barry
   Heard, Bruce Smiley and John Williams.
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 9
   Right-of-Way Section:
10
   Erma Wisham, Nisha Thomas, Carlitha Womack, Susan
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   Saghian, Travis Henderson and Cecil Saldana.
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   U.S. Army of Corps of Engineers:
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   Doug Cox, James Murphy, Dale King and Brandon Moseley
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(November 18, 2010; 7:05 p.m.)

MR. SELMAN: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. It's now 7 o'clock, so if you'll please take your seats we'll begin tonight's public hearing. I'm Kelly Selman, Director of Transportation Planning and Development for the Dallas District Office of the Texas Department of Transportation. I'm here representing our District Engineer Bill Hale. We appreciate your interest in the IH 35E middle section improvement project of President George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181. We welcome each of you here this evening.

Later this evening, you'll be invited to directly participate in the Opportunity for Public Comment portion of this hearing. We want to express our appreciation to Lewisville High School for the use of this facility this evening. The study area limits for the planned and proposed improvements of IH 35E are from President George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181. The total length is approximately 12 miles within Dallas and Denton Counties.

Before proceeding further, I would like to introduce members of the federal, state and local elected officials who are in attendance tonight or who were able to stop by during the open house. First of all, we have Denton County Judge Mary Horn; Patrick

Davis from Highland Village City Council; Charlotte 1 2 Wilcox, Highland Village City Council; Mayor Ron 3 Branson, City of Carrollton; Mayor John Smith, Hickory 4 Creek; William Meek, Highland Village City Council; and John Gorena, City Council, Lewisville. 5 6 Have I overlooked any other elected 7 officials? We appreciate your attendance and we thank 8 you for your interest in this project. Now I'd like to 9 introduce several members of the Texas Department of 10 Transportation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Cities of 11 Carrollton, Lewisville, Highland Village, Lake Dallas, 12 Corinth and the Town of Hickory Creek as well as Dallas and Denton County officials who are present tonight to 13 14 assist you and answer your questions. We have Charles 15 Emery from the Denton County Transit Authority. 16 Goodall, City of Corinth. Tom Hammons, Transportation 17 Engineer, City of Carrollton. Steve Bacchus, Assistant 18 City Manager in Lewisville. Todd King, Lewisville City 19 Manager. Michael Leavitt, Highland Village City 20 Manager. Mark Nelson, Denton Transportation Director, 21 and Matt McCormick with Lewisville Chamber of Commerce. 22 From the U.S. Army of Corps of Engineers we have Doug 23 Cox, James Murphy, Dale King and Brandon Moseley. 24 And the TxDOT staff tonight in attendance 25 from our Right-of-Way Section, Erma Wisham, Nisha

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Thomas, Carlitha Womack, Susan Saghian, Travis Henderson and Cecil Saldana.

Other TxDOT staff; Stan Hall, Robert Hall, Nasser Askari, Moosa Saghian, Cynthia Northrop-White, Bob Brown, Don Toner. Our Denton County Area Engineer Gary Bailey, David Hensley from our Denton County Area Office. Barry Heard, Bruce Smiley and John Williams.

Our specific study team members are Phil Ullman, HDR, Incorporated, and Jennifer Halstead with HNTB.

These individuals will be available during the recess to answer your particular questions regarding the IH 35E improvement project from George Bush Turnpike to 2181. We thank those of you who had an opportunity to attend the open house earlier this evening. As you arrived you were given the opportunity to register your attendance for this hearing. Our registration forms are the 8 1/2 by 11 sheets at the front sign-in table and provide you the opportunity to express your interest in this project and indicate that you would like to make a verbal statement during tonight's Opportunity for Public Comment portion of the hearing. In this event if you did not register and would like to, please do so during the upcoming recess.

Many of you may have attended previous

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Public Hearing
11/18/2010
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public hearings conducted by the Texas Department of
Transportation. However, for the benefit of those of
you who have never attended one, I would like to explain
how the Department conducts its public hearing.

Following my initial comments, Mr. Phil
Ullman will give a detailed presentation concerning the
location and design features of the project. And Ms.
Jennifer Halstead will follow with the environmental
effects for the proposed improvements to IH 35E from
President George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181. Following
Ms. Halstead, Mr. Cecil Saldana of our Dallas District
Right-of-Way Office will explain the right-of-way

of the displaced persons and businesses. At that time we will recess the hearing for 20 minutes and allow you to view the project design currently on display here tonight.

acquisition procedures and relocation assistance program

During the recess you are encouraged to ask any questions which the Department representatives will address and answer. Following the recess we will reconvene the hearing and ask those persons who indicated on the registration form who would like to make a statement to come forward to our floor microphone, state your name and address for the Record, and provide any comments concerning the project.

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Following the registered speakers, anyone else who did not register will also be given the opportunity for comment. You might be asking; what is the purpose of the public hearing? The four essential purposes of the public hearing are to:

- (1) Inform the public of the status of planning on the project and present recommendations based on studies performed to date.
- (2) Describe the recommended location and design so that those attending can determine the project's potential to affect their lives and property.
- (3) Provide the public an opportunity to present information and their views at a stage in the planning process when flexibility to respond to comments still exists and before location and design decisions are finalized.
- (4) And finally, to develop a record of public views and participation to accompany recommendation for subsequent decisions.

This public hearing is being held in compliance with both federal and state laws. The State is required to certify to the Secretary of Transportation that a public hearing was held concerning the IH 35E improvement project from President George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181. For the official Record a

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    transcript of this hearing will be made. For this
    reason we ask that all comments be made from the floor
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   microphone.
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                  Following this hearing the Department will
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   proceed with the preparation of the final environmental
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    documentation. Your statements and comments, whether
   positive or negative, will be addressed by TxDOT in the
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   project's documentation and will be given full
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   consideration in the preparation of the final
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    recommendation of design for the IH 35E improvement
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   project from President George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181.
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                  This public hearing is being convened to
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   discuss the design features and environmental effects of
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   the proposed improvements to IH 35E from President
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   George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181. The total project
   length is approximately 12 miles. A design schematic
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   has been developed showing typical cross sections,
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   roadway profiles and proposed right-of-way boundaries.
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   The proposed IH 35E improvements would require
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   approximately 179 acres of proposed right-of-way and
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   approximately 54 acres of proposed easement.
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                  Of the total proposed easement acreage the
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   proposed project would require approximately 20.7 acres
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   of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers property at
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   Lewisville Lake. In addition to the proposed project
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would convert approximately 0.5 acre of the 1.4 acre
Highland Lakes Park for transportation use. The
proposed reconstruction would result in approximately
displacements.
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An environmental assessment document has also been prepared which analyzed the social, economic, and environmental effects of the project.

The design schematic and environmental document for IH 35E from President George Bush Turnpike FM 2181 improvement project are available for inspection and reproduction at the Texas Department of Transportation, Dallas District Office located at 4777 East Highway 80 in Mesquite, Texas 75150; or at the City of Lewisville City Hall, 151 West Church Street, Lewisville, Texas 75057; City of Corinth City Hall, 3300 Corinth Parkway, Corinth, Texas 76208; Town of Hickory Creek, 1075 Ronald Reagan Avenue, Hickory Creek. 75065; City of Lake Dallas City Hall, 212 Main Street, Lake Dallas, Texas 75065; City of Carrollton City Hall, 1945 East Jackson Road, Carrollton, Texas 75006; City of Highland Village City Hall, 1000 Highland Village Road, Lewisville, Texas 75077; and at the TxDOT Denton County Area Office 2624 West Prairie, Denton, Texas 76201. In addition, the design schematic may be

viewed on the Internet at www.keepitmovingdallas.com.

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Highway planning and construction requires close cooperation on all levels of government. The design from IH35 E from President George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181 is being developed cooperatively by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Cities of Carrollton, Lewisville, Highland Village, Lake Dallas, Corinth, and the Town of Hickory Creek, Denton and Dallas Counties, the State, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Federal Highway Administration. TxDOT has worked closely with these local governments and has previously received input regarding the proposed design.

At the conclusion of the major investment study phase of this project, TxDOT held a public meeting on March 20th, 2003, to share their design information and the environmental analysis. Between the time period from the first public meetings held in 2003 and 2008 the proposed IH 35E project underwent schematic design modifications and additional coordination with the adjacent municipalities occurred.

TxDOT held over 20 Stakeholder meetings between August of 2008 and January of 2010, where stakeholders had an opportunity to discuss the variety of topics including the project financing and construction phasing, managed lanes in addition to bicycle and pedestrian features to the proposed project.

These meetings were open to the public. Public input was also gathered previously from a public meeting held in November of 2008.

At this time Mr. Ullman will discuss the geometric design features and cost estimates followed by Ms. Halstead who will discuss the environmental effects of the proposed project.

MR. ULLMAN: Thank you, Mr. Selman. The presentation tonight will cover the proposed improvements to IH 35E middle section from President George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181. The 12-mile IH 35E middle section from President George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181 includes proposed improvements consisting of adding mainlanes; adding variable priced HOV/managed lanes in the center union, making frontage roads continuous throughout the length of the project, and integrating bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Existing mainlanes would not be converted into variable priced tolled HOV/managed lanes. The proposed project would require some improvements to intersections and would result in constructing, rebuilding, or upgrading the existing and proposed overpasses, bridges, and interchanges along IH 35E from President George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181.

Some of the overpasses, bridges, and

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interchanges will be developed as standalone projects.

The proposed IH 35E corridor reconstruction would

generally follow the existing IH 35E alignment, although

portions of the IH 35E alignment would be re-aligned to

either the east or west to accommodate the proposed

reconstruction while minimizing adverse impacts.

Mainlanes on the IH 35E from President

George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181 would generally be
expanded from six to eight 12-foot wide lanes, four in
each direction, with inside and outside shoulders from
north of SH 121 to north of FM 2181. In the segment of
IH 35E from south of PGBT to north of State Highway 121,
collector distributor lanes would be incorporated, and
six mainlanes will be maintained.

Collector distributors consist of parallel lanes running between the mainlanes and the frontage roads that collect the traffic from closely spaced entrance ramps and then distribute it onto the facility at a single entrance ramp beyond the congested areas. Four 12-foot wide concurrent flow variable priced toll HOV/managed lanes with outside shoulders would be added from President George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181. Continuous frontage roads would consist of two to four lanes in each direction, which includes a 16-foot wide outside shared-use bicycle and vehicle lane including

the 2-foot curb offset. In addition, continuous pedestrian sidewalks are proposed along each side of the entire project.

Design schematics for this project have been prepared and are displayed in the foyer area outside of this auditorium. These schematics depict the horizontal and vertical alignments of the improvements previously mentioned, along with existing and proposed right-of-way lines.

The existing facility is located within a primarily urbanized area with a few undeveloped areas adjacent to the right-of-way. The existing facility consists of six 12-foot wide mainlanes and has a posted speed limit of 60 miles per hour. The mainlanes are divided by a concrete traffic barrier, CTB, throughout the project limits. The inside shoulders of the mainlanes vary from 0 to 10 feet wide and the outside shoulders are 10 feet wide. The frontage roads consist of 12-foot lanes and are mostly continuous along the corridor with the exception of the segment from FM 407 to Denton Drive where there are no frontage roads.

Interim High Occupancy Vehicle lanes in the median of IH 35E currently extend from IH 635 to near SH 121, terminating in the southern portion of this segment of IH 35E. Along the corridor, Denton County

1 Transit Authority is currently developing a commuter 2 Rail Line to the east of IH 35E which will help to 3 reduce commuter travel demand for the IH 35E corridor. This rail line will ultimately run from Downtown Denton 4 5 to Carrollton and link to Dallas Area Rapid Transit 6 stations in Carrollton. It is not anticipated that the proposed improvements to IH 35E to President George Bush 8 Turnpike to FM 2181 would substantially change any 9 existing or future land usage in the project area. 10 The proposed improvements would generally 11 consist of eight 12-foot wide lanes, four in each 12 direction, with 10-foot wide inside and outside shoulders and two to four collector distributor lanes, 13 14 each direction, from south of PGBT to north of SH 121. 15 Frontage road lanes would generally be 11 feet wide. 16 However, the outside lane would be 14 feet wide in order 17 to accommodate shared bicycle/vehicle usage. The number 18 of frontage road lanes include three lanes each 19 direction from State Highway 121 to FM 407 and two lanes 20 from FM 407 to FM 2181. Auxiliary lanes would be 21 included after exit ramps in order to reduce the weaving 22 along the frontage roads. The maximum frontage road 23 width for the three-lane frontage road, plus added 24 auxiliary lane after an exit ramp, would be 49 feet 25 wide, including the gutter width. The frontage roads

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would be continuous throughout the length of the project. Four 12-foot wide concurrent flow variable priced toll HOV/managed lanes with 10-foot wide shoulders to the outside would be added from PGBT to FM 2181.

As mentioned, in the segment from IH 35E from south of PGBT to north of State Highway 121, collector distributor lanes would be incorporated, and six mainlanes will be maintained.

The term "variable priced toll HOV/Managed lanes" encompasses several types of lane management strategies, including vehicle occupancy and price-based lane or facility management; which means, for example, that HOV lanes could be variably priced, ranging from 7 cents to 47 cents per trip, according to occupancy, time of day, congestion level, etc.

The term "concurrent" indicates travel in the variable priced toll HOV/managed lane is the same direction as the mainlanes of the roadway facility. The northbound and southbound variable priced toll HOV/managed lanes would be separated by 10-foot wide shoulders, median sections, and a concrete traffic barrier. The design speed of the proposed project is 70 miles per hour on the mainlanes, 70 miles per hour on the variable priced toll HOV/managed lanes, 40 miles per

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hour on the frontage roads, and 40 miles per hour on the ramps. Concrete traffic barriers would be used to separate the mainlanes from the variable priced toll HOV/managed lanes.

These concurrent variable priced toll HOV/managed lanes would operate as variable priced or a toll lane, which means that users of the IH 35E HOV/managed lanes would be charged a toll which would be collected for both single occupancy and HOV users; defined as having two or more occupants.

A reduced toll rate, half price, would be applied towards HOV users during the a.m. and p.m. peak During the off-peak periods HOVs would pay the periods. same toll as single occupancy vehicles (SOV). Regional Transportation Council, RTC, the independent transportation policy body of the Metropolitan Planning Organization comprised of elected or appointed officials representing cities, counties, and transportation providers adopted this managed lane policy because it provides the ability to: Provide and manage additional capacity in the corridor; increase trip reliability for HOV and transit; potentially improve air quality through the encouragement of increased vehicle occupancy and person movements; and generate revenue to construct, operate, and maintain the facility.

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The Managed Lane Policy, also known as
Business Terms for TxDOT- Sponsored Managed Lane
Facilities, was adopted by the RTC on May 11, 2006.
                                                     The
policy was modified in September 2006 and
September 2007, and the final policy is detailed in the
Environmental Assessment and has been displayed here
tonight during the open house.
              According to this policy, a fixed-fee
schedule would be applied during the first six months of
operation and dynamic-fee pricing may be applied
thereafter. Toll rates would be updated monthly during
the fixed-fee schedule phase. The toll rate could be
set up to $0.75 per mile during the fixed-fee schedule
phase in accordance with current policy. However, that
toll rate is not likely to be established.
potential toll rates that users of the IH 35E Managed
Lanes are likely to be charged, assuming an opening year
of 2020 are presented in the Environmental Assessment
and include:
              Morning Peak; 6:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.,
which may be .47 cents per mile.
               Mid-day Peak Off-Peak, which is 9:00 a.m.
to 3:00 p.m. which may be .13 cents per mile.
               Evening Peak, which is 3:00 p.m. to 6:30
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Late Night Off-Peak, which is midnight to

p.m., would be .47 cents per mile.

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5:00 a.m., which may be .07 cents per mile.

Varying toll rates, or dynamic-fee pricing allows operators to set market-based toll rates based on corridor demand, and those rates could fluctuate at any time throughout the day, even in realtime, in response to changing traffic conditions. As a reminder, the policy does include a reduced toll rate, half price, that would be applied toward HOV users, two or more occupants, during the a.m. and p.m. peak periods (weekday periods from 6:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. respectively).

The toll rate would be established to maintain a minimum average corridor speed of 50 miles per hour during the dynamic-pricing phase, travelers would receive rebates if the average speed drops below 35 miles per hour.

However, rebates would not apply if speed reduction is out of the control of the operator. During the off-peek periods, HOV users would pay the same toll as single occupancy vehicles. Users of the tolled HOV/managed lanes would be notified of the toll rate before entering the designated lanes by an electronic message board. Clearly posted overhead signage would designate the lane that drivers should use to enter and exit the facility. Mainlanes and frontage roads,

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including the proposed added capacity, would remain as non-tolled options for all users.

According to the draft, Level 2 Traffic and Toll Revenue Study conducted for the IH 35E Managed Lanes between IH 635 and U.S. 380, the average travel distance per household that would use the proposed toll HOV/managed lanes on IH 35E from PGBT to FM 2181 would be 8 miles out of the total 12-mile section. This equates to 16 miles for a round trip. TxDOT estimates that HOV/managed lane use would average 2 1/2 trips per week for the morning peak and the evening peak scenarios at an annual cost ranging from \$224 to \$281 per year, and would average two trips per week for the off-peak scenarios at an annual cost of \$112 per year.

The existing right-of-way width for this stretch of IH 35E varies from approximately 256 to 300 feet. The proposed project will be constructed within the proposed right-of-way width that varies from approximately 380 to 556 feet. The proposed IH 35E improvements would require approximately 179 acres of proposed right-of-way and approximately 54 acres of proposed easement. Of the total proposed easement acreage, the proposed project would require approximately 20.7 acres of USACE property at Lewisville Lake. In addition, the proposed project would convert

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approximately a half-acre of the 1.4 acre Highland Lakes
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    Park for transportation use. The proposed
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    reconstruction of IH 35E would result in approximately
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    180 displacements.
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                  Utilities such as water lines, sewer lines,
    gas lines, and other underground and overhead utilities
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    may require adjustments. The adjustment and relocation
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    of any utilities will be handled so that no substantial
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    interruptions will take place while these adjustments
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    are being made.
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                  Currently, the total estimated cost for the
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    project is approximately $1.7 billion. This includes
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    the cost of construction and right-of-way costs.
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                  Now, Ms. Jennifer Halstead will discuss an
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    overview of the environmental evaluation of the project.
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                  MS. HALSTEAD: Thank you, Mr. Ullman.
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                  Ladies and gentlemen, an Environmental
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    Assessment Document has been prepared for this project.
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    The document has been written to document the
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    environmental analyses performed for this proposed
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    project and is in accordance with the National
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    Environmental Policy Act, also known as NEPA.
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    environmental analyses are necessary to identify the
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   potential effects and to avoid and minimize effects to
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    the human and natural environments.
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The Environmental Assessment Document describes the need and purpose for the project, the description of the alternatives considered, the affected environment and the environmental consequences, and the recommendation of the preferred alternative. environmental document covered the following topics: Need and Purpose Proposed design, including alternatives, traffic, and typical sections Right-of-way/easements Project Cost and Funding Displacement and Relocations Waters of the U.S., including Wetlands Lakes, Rivers, and Streams Water Quality Floodplains Socio-economic Impacts Community Cohesion and Environmental Justice Public Facilities and Services Parklands/Section 4(f) Properties Threatened and Endangered Species and Wildlife Habitat. Historical and Archeological Sites Aesthetic Considerations Topography and Soils

1 Land Use Air Quality Assessment 3 Traffic Noise Assessment 4 Hazardous Materials 5 Construction Impacts And Indirect Cumulative Impacts 6 7 The document was approved for further 8 processing by the Department's Environmental Affairs 9 Division in Austin and by the Federal Highway 10 Administration, and has been coordinated with the U.S. 11 Army Corps of Engineers and other public agencies. 12 Environmental Assessment for this project is available 1.3 here tonight for your review. 14 I want to share some specifics from the 15 Environmental Assessment. As stated previously, the 16 proposed project would require approximately 179 acres 17 of new right-of-way to construct this project. right-of-way acquisition would result in approximately 18 19 180 displacements. Of the total proposed ROW/easement 20 acreage, the proposed project would require a total of 21 20.7 acres from USACE Section 4(f) property at 22 Lewisville Lake and a total of 0.5 acre of Highland 23 Lakes Park Section 4(f) property. As part of this 24 project, the Federal Highway Administration is 25 considering Programmatic Section 4(f) Net Benefit

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determinations for impacts to Highland Lakes Park in the City of Lewisville, and USACE Property, including
Copperas Branch Park, around Lewisville Lake. A total of 20.7 acres of impact would occur on the USACE Section 4(f) property and a total of 0.5 acre of impact would occur at Highland Lakes Park Section 4(f) property. A Section 4(f) Net Benefit finding means that this project would have an impact on the resource, but the Federal Highway Administration in consultation with TxDOT and the officials with jurisdiction over the resource, has made a preliminary determination that the use of the Section 4(f) property would result in a net benefit to the Section 4(f) property. The FHWA will consider comments received during this Public Hearing before making final Section 4(f) Net Benefit determinations.

The project is located within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated 100-year floodplain at the Elm Fork Trinity River, Timber Creek, Prairie Creek, a tributary of Prairie Creek, Lewisville Lake and a tributary of Lewisville Lake. The hydraulic design for this project would be in accordance with the current Federal Highway Administration and TxDOT design policies. The facility would permit the conveyance of the 100-year flood without causing significant damage to the facility, stream, or other property. The proposed

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project would not increase the base flood elevation to a 2 level that would violate applicable floodplain 3 regulations and ordinances. Eight wetlands, totaling approximately 11 acres, and 19 water features, totaling approximately 67 acres, are located within the proposed right-of-way and are considered potentially jurisdictional. The proposed project would result in the placement of temporary or permanent dredge or fill material into these jurisdictional features and would require a Section 404 USACE permit.

It is estimated that 93 commercial entities would require relocation. A total of approximately 1,181 employees would be potentially impacted by the displacement of the 93 anticipated commercial entities. An Employment Opportunities Impact Assessment technical report was prepared as part of the environmental assessment and was included in Appendix I. This report assessed whether any adverse effects would be caused by the implementation of the proposed IH 35E improvements given the current economic climate and the potential effects to existing employment opportunities if the businesses anticipated to be displaced by the proposed reconstruction cannot reestablish successfully. While uncertainty exists in predicting the outcome of reestablishment within close proximity to the

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businesses' original locations, and it is unknown which of the business owners would choose or be able to continue operation, sites with suitable zoning and in close proximity are currently available in the Employment Opportunities Impact Assessment study area. Loss of key employees may occur if the businesses are displaced and employees are not willing to travel in order to remain employed at the relocation site. This could affect the business' ability to reestablish itself at the new location. However, the severity of this type of employment impact varies with the type of business, the distance to and attractiveness of the relocation site, as well as the employees' interest in continued employment with the business.

There appear to be future employment opportunities of varying skill requirement intensities identified within this report. Again, Appendix I of the Environmental Assessment report and this is based on information provided by the NCTCOG's development Monitoring database, and DART and DCTA regional rail expansions, as well as interviews with stakeholders including local chambers of commerce and economic development representatives within the study area. The addition of new businesses would create additional employment opportunities throughout the study area and

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may represent an opportunity to absorb many employment 1 impacts that could result in the proposed IH 35E 3 improvements within the affected municipalities. The 4 expansion of the DART and DCTA transit lines also 5 enhance future employment opportunities by providing new centers for employment at the newly developed rail stations and access to locations such as City of Denton and the Dallas Central Business District and additional 8 9 regional employment centers in between.

The City of Lewisville's IH 35E Corridor

Development Plan is being advanced to retain the

potentially displaced businesses, recapture the lost tax

revenue associated with the potential displacements, and

increase future tax revenue along the IH 35E corridor.

If approved to proceed to construction, the IH 35E

improvement project would create a number of job

opportunities related to construction and operation of

the facility.

Representatives from the Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas are here tonight and the agency will be proactive in assisting any employees that will be affected as a result of the displacements associated with the proposed reconstruction of IH 35E. As presented in Appendix I of the Environmental Assessment, Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas can

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coordinate with employers identified for relocation by TxDOT via the right-of-way acquisition phase of project development to engage provide 1- to 2-hour rapid response workshops if requested by the employers, regardless of the number of employees anticipated to be impacted. Multiple rapid response workshops could be conducted by the Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas to distribute information to all employees potentially impacted by the proposed IH 35E project. Efforts by Workforce Solutions' services are targeted toward assisting the individual employees and can help prepare those employees to find work in other occupations if the employee is unable to find work in or chooses to leave their current field of employment. Workforce Solutions staff are here tonight at the proposed project's open house/public hearing to provide handouts and answer questions regarding Workforce Solutions services.

Approximately 65 single family homes would be displaced by the proposed project. According to the Environmental Assessment, a total of 233 homes within comparable price ranges are currently available in the municipalities associated with the potential single family displacements. Based on current available market data, comparable housing appears to be available for a

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   majority of the potential residential displacements.
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   All relocation efforts would be consistent with the
    requirements of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the
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 4
    Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Properties
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   Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended, and the Housing and
 6
   Urban Development Act of 1974.
 7
              Eight noise barriers were determined to be
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   both feasible and reasonable along portions of the
   IH 35E corridor as a means to mitigate for anticipated
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   traffic noise impacts. The final decision to construct
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   the proposed noise barriers would be made upon
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   completion of the project design, utility evaluation,
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   and the polling of adjacent property owners.
              In conclusion, the studies and evaluations
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   performed thus far indicate that the proposed
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    improvements would cause no significant environmental
   effects. And now I return the hearing back to
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   Mr. Selman.
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19
                           Thank you, Ms. Halstead.
              MR. SELMAN:
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              Following this hearing, documentation of this
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   public hearing will be forwarded to our Austin Office
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time frame, final environmental clearance is expected by

for final environmental clearance and design approval.

hearing that cannot be addressed within the reasonable

Assuming there are no major issues arising from this

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January of 2011. It is at this stage of project development where we are able to proceed with detailed construction plans and right-of-way acquisition. Subject to availability of funds and approval of construction plans, project letting is expected by 2013-2014 time frame.

At this time Mr. Cecil Saldana from our District Right-of-Way Office will provide an overview of our right-of-way acquisition procedures.

MR. SALDANA: Thank you, Mr. Selman.

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Ι would like to take a few minutes to present some information about the right-of-way acquisition phase of this project. This project, as previously described, will be the object of my remarks and will require approximately 179 acres of additional right-of-way and 54 acres of proposed easement to accommodate improvements to IH 35E Middle Section from President George Bush Turnpike to FM 2181. The right-of-way to be acquired consists of land on properties owned by various entities, including private individuals and commercial businesses on both sides of the roadway along the length of the project. The proposed project would result in approximately 180 displacements. As previously mentioned, some of the proposed easement acreage would

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require 20.7 acres USACE property Section 4(f) at Lake Lewisville and 0.5 acres Highland Lakes Park Section 4(f) property. No places of worship or cemeteries would be displaced as a result of the proposed project. The following will help describe our right-of-way procedures.

Two booklets are available for you at the right-of-way table in the foyer area outside the auditorium. One is titled The Purchase of Right-of-Way and the other one is titled Relocation Assistance. If there is a possibility that some of your property may be acquired and you did not pick up the booklets, you may secure copies at the right-of-way table during the break. These booklets contain a significant amount of information. Rather than trying to cover all of this material in detail this evening, I would like to acquaint you with the answers to the most commonly asked questions.

Before the right-of-way acquisition process may begin, the Texas Department of Transportation, also known as TxDOT, has to obtain environmental clearance, local agency agreements, an approved right-of-way map, and funding. With the route approved, maps will be prepared by registered professional land surveyors to show the exact amount of land to be acquired from each

affected property owner. The additional right-of-way will be used for roadway purposes and will be acquired in the name of the State of Texas.

Standard procedure for many projects is that the local governments will be responsible for land acquisition and utility relocation. However, if requested, it may be done by the State of Texas. Costs associated with the purchase of real property will be the responsibility of TxDOT. In some cases the adjacent cities may be responsible for increased costs due to more stringent zoning ordinances or building codes than state law. All acquisitions must be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended.

After the release is obtained from the Austin Right-of-Way Division, TxDOT will order property title information, five-year sales data, and preliminary title commitments. The acquiring agency, whether TxDOT or a local government, in order to establish land values, may employ independent real estate appraisers to determine their opinions of the fair market value for the part of each owner's property to be acquired.

This procedure is explained on Pages 3 and 4 of The Purchase of Right-of-Way booklet. The

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appraisers will contact each owner before proceeding with appraising the properties. Each of you as owners will be given the opportunity to accompany the real estate appraiser on an inspection of your property.

Once the property is appraised and submitted to TxDOT for review and approval, a written offer will be made to you, the property owner.

TxDOT's acquisition agent presents the offer to the property owner. This offer will be based upon the amount of the approved appraised value with any compensable damages to the remaining real property.

TxDOT will also provide relocation assistance to those who are eligible.

The decision of whether the offer is acceptable or not, of course, remains with each owner. An owner may wish to donate land for the project for various reasons. In these cases, the appraisal process will not be necessary provided that the property owner signs a waiver to waive their right to receive fair market value and an appraisal of the property. This does not include donations at less than fair market value or partial donations which must be appraised.

If the property owner chooses to receive compensation for the needed right-of-way, then the following are the options available to the property

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owner. The owner may accept the offer or submit a counter offer, if appropriate. Also, as another option the booklet further describes the procedures by which right-of-way is acquired when the property owner does not agree with the acquiring agency's the determination of fair market value. This procedures is known as eminent domain and is described on Page 9.

When the owner accepts the approved value, a deed and a Memorandum of Agreement is prepared for the owner's signature. TxDOT will issue a warrant, a check, made out to the title company for the owner. The owner closes at the title company and is then compensated for the newly acquired right-of-way.

The owner may submit a counter offer if the owner believes the offer does not represent fair market value. TxDOT reviews the counter offer and either accepts or rejects it. If rejected, the owner may still accept the original offer or proceed with eminent domain. In eminent domain, the Court points three independent Commissioners who themselves are land owners and live in the county, to hear the owner and TxDOT.

Based on the evidence presented, the Commissioners will decide the award to the owner. TxDOT deposits the award, which the owner may withdraw, in the registry of the Court, and at that point TxDOT will take possession

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of the needed right-of-way. If desired, either the owner or TxDOT shall have the right to appeal the award to a jury trial.

The State's relocation program for personal property, administered solely by the State with no local government funding required, is available to those of you who may qualify for certain benefits as a result of the acquisition of properties. Monetary payment for incidental expenses which are the owners' out-of-pocket expenses to convey good title to the State may be eligible for reimbursement and are applicable whether or not a displacement occurs.

These benefits are applicable to all individuals, families, businesses, farmers, ranchers, and nonprofit organizations, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. This information is contained in the Relocation Assistance booklet. If you believe a move is to be necessitated by the proposed project, the Department would caution you not to move before negotiations have begun unless you first secure a written notice of "Intent to Acquire" from the acquiring agency. This must be done so as to avoid the possibility of your loss of personal property relocation benefits to which you may otherwise be eliqible for reimbursement by the Department.

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Should a displacee be dissatisfied with any of the amounts offered for relocation reimbursement, appeal procedures are available. These are discussed on the last page of the Relocation Assistance booklet, Page 39. Additional information is available from TxDOT's Dallas District Office should you need for relocation assistance.

Lastly, regulations governing the relocation of advertising signs which are not purchased by the acquiring agency as real property are discussed on Pages 31 and 32 of the Relocation Assistance booklet. This concludes my presentation. Thank you for your attention.

MR. SELMAN: Thank you, Mr. Saldana. I would like to mention that we will not attempt to answer your questions while you have the floor during the Opportunity For Public Comment. This procedure is necessary so that everyone is given the opportunity to speak and because your comments will be given due consideration. We'd be happy to answer your questions during the recess or even after the public hearing. All verbal and written comments and questions presented tonight will be addressed in, and made part of, the final environmental document for this project. This document will then be made available for public review

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and copying at the Dallas District Office located at
 1
 2
    4777 East Highway 80, Mesquite, Texas 7150; or at the
 3
    City of Lewisville City Hall, 151 West Church Street,
    Lewisville, Texas 75057; City of Corinth City Hall 3300
 4
 5
    Corinth Parkway, Corinth, Texas 76208; Town of Hickory
    Creek City Hall, 1075 Ronald Reagan Avenue, Hickory
 7
    Creek Texas, 75065; City of Lake Dallas City Hall, 212
    Main Street, Lake Dallas, Texas 75065; City of
 8
 9
    Carrollton City Hall, 1945 East Jackson Road,
    Carrollton, Texas 75006; City of Highland Village City
10
    Hall, 1000 Highland Village Road, Lewisville, Texas
11
12
    75077; and at the TxDOT Denton County Area Office, 2624
13
    West Prairie, Denton, Texas 76201.
14
                  For the benefit of you who may have arrived
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    late, I would ask the members of the Department,
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    consultant team, and local government staff to please
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            They are available to answer your questions and
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    discuss your concerns regarding the project.
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                  At this time, we'll take a 20-minute recess
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    and reconvene at 8:15. Thank you.
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                  (Break taken from 7:54 to 8:19 p.m.)
22
                  MR. SELMAN:
                               Okay. Ladies and gentlemen,
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    we are now going to reconvene tonight's public hearing.
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                  If you will please take your seats, we're
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   now reconvening the hearing. Before we start we failed
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to recognize Bobbie Mitchell Denton County Commissioner. 1 She's in attendance. We thank you for her attendance. 2 3 Okay. We made our presentation on the latest available information on the project, and now 4 it's time for us to listen to your comments. Again, 5 6 please be aware that we will not attempt to answer your 7 questions during this comment period. Some of you may 8 not wish to make a statement from the microphone. In 9 that event, your written statements will be equally accepted both tonight and for the next 10 calendar days 10 following this hearing. For those of you who wish to 11 12 submit a written comment tonight, a comment box is located at the registration table. Questions and 13 14 comments may also be mailed to the Texas Department of Transportation, attention Robert Hall, TxDOT Dallas 15 16 District Environmental Coordinator, P.O. Box 133067, 17 Dallas, Texas 75313-3067. 18 All of your statements, comments and 19 questions will be given careful consideration before 20 final design features are determined. Furthermore, all 21 information developed in regard to the proposed design 22 is available for public inspection and copying and is

The final deadline for our acceptance of statements or comments is by a postmarked date of Monday

also posted at www.keepitmovingdallas.com.

November 29th, 2010.

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We have a listing of 13 people registered who would like to make statements. Please limit your speaking time to 3 minutes so that everyone who wishes to speak may have an opportunity to do so. For the official transcript, please state your name and address as you take the floor before proceeding with your statements.

Our first speaker tonight is Mary Horn.

MS. HORN: Good evening, my name is Mary Horn, Denton County Judge, address is 110 West Hickory Street, Denton, Texas 76201. First, I want to thank TxDOT for all the hours of work put in to date to get this project to the point of being able to hold a public hearing. Interstate Highway 35E from I-635 in Dallas to US 380 in Denton is a 28-mile major north/south corridor in the D/FW Metroplex.

With ever increasing mobility and air quality issues, the completion of this project is vital to the economic well-being of the region, the safety of our residents and a trade route for international commerce. Currently the most congested segments of I-35E averages between 175,000 to 200,000 vehicles per day. With D/FW's anticipated growth, it is projected that volumes for Interstate 35E will exceed 330,000

vehicles by 2030.

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Since 2000 the Texas Department of Transportation has been working closely with local elected officials, stakeholders and communities along this section of I-35E on expansion plans. Significant public involvement has occurred in the development of the Interstate Highway 35E design including multiple public meetings and forums. All communities along the I-35E corridor are in support of the proposed TxDOT design and the use of public/private partnerships to deliver this project which will be evidenced by the resolutions provided tonight and during the 10-day comment period.

This design schematic for Interstate 35E which includes managed lanes in the corridor has already been approved by the Federal Highway Administration.

Since every major roadway in Denton County at some point feeds to Interstate 35E, the quality of life of our citizenry is directly related to the expansion of I-35 and every day, congestion grows more and more intolerable. Every day motorists waste more of their time sitting in traffic. Any accident on I-35E shuts down a significant portion of the county for hours at a time. Commerce is impacted, people's lives are needlessly disrupted, we have heard from our citizens in

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the form of phone calls and letters and certainly by
 1
    their yes votes in two county bond elections to dedicate
 3
    funds to advance this project.
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                  Rightfully so, they expect their elected
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    officials to do something about the congestion on I-35E.
    Denton County calls on TxDOT and the Federal Highway
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   Administration to quickly process the environmental
   assessment and commit to clearing this critical project
8
 9
   by January 2011. This project has been debated, value
    engineered, shown to the public and adjusted multiple
10
11
    times to address Federal Highway Administration
12
    comments.
13
                  Now is the time to clear this project and
   deliver this critical highway to the traveling public.
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   Thank you for your time.
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                  MR. SELMAN:
                               Thank you. Next we have
   Geraldine Kuehne? Okay.
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                  John McTernan?
                                 Nope?
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                  Tile & Marble Clearinghouse Company? Okay.
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   Sira Olinda de Oramas? Okay. Tim House.
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                  MR. HOUSE: I would like to first of all
   echo what's just been said. I'm a part of Denton
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   County's traveling public on I-35 and the congestion is
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   sometimes intolerable. Thank you for considering those
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   issues. I'm here tonight though representing GNL
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Properties. We own about a half mile of frontage on I-35 in the City of Carrollton. This property includes several buildings which is leased to several different tenants, and we also have vacant land which will be used for development.

Our properties have for years been encumbered by the uncertainty of this project. As you know, it's been rumored for 10 years plus that something was going to happen. This affects our ability to lease to our tenants. We've lost tenants. We've also not been able to proceed with development plans which we would like to move forward with.

We are effectively in a state of limbo until we know for certain what's going on with this I-35 project. And we are here tonight to strongly encourage TxDOT to move forward as quickly as possible. It'd be appreciated by all -- not just travelers -- but also the landowners. Thank you very much.

MR. SELMAN: Thank you.

Darrell and Diana Oliver? Okay.

Jack Graham? Jack Graham? Okay. Sandy

22 | Wesch?

MS. WESCH: Good evening. My name is Sandy

Wesch. My address is 616 Six Flags Drive, Arlington,

Texas. I am here this evening representing the Regional

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Transportation Council and the North Central Texas

Council of Governments, together serving as the

Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort

Worth area. Interstate 35E is a vital transportation

corridor that sustains the local, regional, state and

national economy.

In the North Texas region this corridor also serves the primary route for local commuters. The improvements to 35E presented this evening are vital to the management of congestion in this corridor and the continued enhancements to the quality of life enjoyed by area residents. Commuters and other travelers on 35E regularly experience mere congestion between President George Bush Turnpike and FM 2181 in Dallas and Denton Counties.

As communities along this corridor and the North Texas region as a whole continue to grow, traffic flow is expected to further deteriorate on 35E. The recommended improvements for this section including the general purpose lanes, tolled managed lanes, and continuous frontage roads are consistent with Mobility 2030 which is the region's metropolitan transportation plan. Mobility 2030 identifies the need for active management, a regional transportation corridor through auto occupancy and tolls as critical elements as

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combatting congestion. The managed lane revenue can also accelerate the delivery of projects such as 35E and offset maintenance and operation costs for the entire corridor.

Because of the critical nature of this project, the North Central Texas Council of Governments is willing to provide any assistance in the planning, design and implementation of the proposed improvements on 35E. Thank you.

MR. SELMAN: Thank you. Holly Moore?
Okay. Kent Bass?

MR. BASS: My name's Kent Bass. I live at 1003 League Road in Lewisville, Texas. I also own property at 24 Shore Haven Drive in Hickory Creek, that is which I am here for and what I'm addressing. My comments are really directed to that stretch of the highway between Swisher and the south side of -- or the south end of Lake Lewisville bridge.

My concern with this project, really, all along has been the noise pollution that will be generated by the project. I am gratified to see that TxDOT has addressed during the last four years some of those concerns by adding noise screening walls through Hickory Creek and to some portion of the Lake Lewisville bridge.

1 However, I think that the noise pollution 2 that is created by the Lake Lewisville bridge has always 3 been underestimated. The bridge creates a tremendous 4 amount of noise because there's nothing to abate the 5 noise as it goes across the water. So I would like 6 TxDOT, as they go forward in this, to think about the noise pollution of that bridge for property owners. 8 Property values in Hickory Creek and the quality of life 9 of the citizens of Hickory Creek. 10 I have two suggestions; one is to extend 11 the screening wall -- noise screening walls further out 12 on Lake Lewisville bridge from where they are currently 13 shown to help alleviate some of that noise. Secondly, I 14 think it would be good to have some type of surface 15 other than concrete surface on that bridge. There is a 16 product I know that's called Asphalt Rubber Permeable 17 Friction Course, which is a noise-abating asphalt surface. I would like to see that across -- all the way 18 19 across the bridge, and quite frankly, all the way 20 through Hickory Creek and Lake Dallas. Thank you for 21 your time. MR. SELMAN: 22 Thank you. All right. Kevin Toth? Okay. And Bonnie Brown? Okay. 23 24 Is there anyone else who would like to come 25 forward and make a statement? Okay. Ladies and

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1
    gentlemen, we sincerely appreciate your attendance and
 2
    interest concerning the proposed design of IH 35E.
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    of your questions, comments and concerns will receive
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    careful consideration subsequent to tonight's public
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    hearing. Thank you very much. This hearing is now
 6
    adjourned.
 7
                   (Public Hearing concluded at 8:34 p.m.)
 8
    ***Reporter's Note: The address for Mr. Tim House is 240
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    McMakin Road, Double Oak, Texas 75077.
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   STATE OF TEXAS
 2
   COUNTY OF DENTON )
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         I, Carmel Martinez, Certified Shorthand Reporter in
 4
   and for the State of Texas, do hereby certify that the
 5
   facts as stated in the caption hereto are true and that
 6
 7
   the foregoing 46 pages are a full, true, and correct and
   complete transcript of the public hearing had on the
8
   date and at the place set forth.
 9
10
11
        GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL of office on this
                day of November, 2010.
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                             Gartinen
16
                      Carmel Martinez
                      CSR No. 8128 Expiration: 12/31/12
17
                      Steven H. Gentry & Associates, Inc.
18
                      Firm Registration No. 195
                      2379 Gus Thomasson Road, Suite 100
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                      Mesquite, Texas 75150
                      214-321-5333
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