



VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING PRESENTATION SCRIPT

STATE LOOP (SL) 288 FRONTAGE ROADS PROJECT

**FROM: IH 35W
TO: IH 35**

CSJs: 2250-02-013 & 2250-02-014

Denton County, Texas

July 9, 2020; 6:00 PM

Texas Department of Transportation – Dallas District

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 9, 2019, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

SLIDE 1 – Title Slide

Welcome to the virtual public hearing for the State Loop 288 Frontage Roads Project from IH 35 West to IH 35 presented by the Texas Department of Transportation Dallas District. We appreciate your interest in the State Loop 288 Project and welcome each of you.

Please note that this presentation can be paused at any point to allow you more time to review the slides.

SLIDE 2 – Public Hearing Purpose

Given the unique circumstance of the COVID-19 outbreak, along with our commitment to protecting public health during this national emergency, TxDOT is conducting this virtual public hearing to minimize in-person contact.

The presentation will cover the same information the Dallas District would have shared at an in-person public hearing. However, the comment process will be different. Details on how to submit a comment and have your questions addressed will be covered later on in this presentation. All project information can be found on the TxDOT website.

SLIDE 3 – Public Hearing Purpose

This virtual hearing has been convened by TxDOT and is being held to receive and consider comments from the public regarding the SL 288 Frontage Roads Project from IH 35 West to IH 35.

Many of you may have attended previous public hearings conducted by TxDOT. However, for the benefit of those of you who have never attended one, I would like to explain how and why the department conducts a public hearing.

A public hearing has four essential purposes:

- Inform the public of the status of planning on the project and present the recommendations based on studies performed to date.
- Describe the project so those attending can determine the project's potential to affect their lives and property.
- Provide the public an opportunity to see information and express 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.
- And finally, to develop a record of public views and participation to accompany recommendations for subsequent decisions.

This virtual public hearing is being held in compliance with both federal and state laws. For the official record, a transcript of this hearing will be made.

SLIDE 4 – How to Submit Public Comments

Following this hearing, TxDOT will proceed with the preparation of the final environmental documentation. Your statements and comments will be addressed in this documentation and will be given full consideration in the preparation of the final recommendation and design for the SL 288 Frontage Roads Project.

Comments will be accepted in a number of ways. Written comments can be emailed to TxDOT Project Manager Nelson Underwood, P.E. at Nelson.Underwood@txdot.gov or mailed to Nelson Underwood, P.E. at the TxDOT Dallas District Office, 4777 East Highway 80 in Mesquite, Texas 75150. Comments will also be accepted using an online comment form available on the project website. Verbal comments can be provided by leaving a message via voicemail at (940) 441-5260.

Comments must be received or postmarked by July 28, 2020, to be part of the official public hearing record. However, the public may email project staff at any time in the project development process to ask questions about the project.

SLIDE 5 – Viewing Design Schematic and Environmental Documentation

The next slides will cover the design aspects of the SL 288 Frontage Roads Project. The design schematic and environmental documentation for the SL 288 Frontage Road Project may be viewed online at www.keepitmovingdallas.com/SL288 or at www.txdot.gov by searching “Public Meetings and Hearings.” The information on these websites is the same information being presented in this video.

SLIDE 6 – Project Location, Need and Purpose

TxDOT is proposing to construct an approximately 9.0-mile new location frontage road system for State Loop 288 on the west side of Denton from IH 35W to IH 35 within the City of Denton in Denton County, Texas.

The project is needed because population growth in the region is anticipated to result in congestion, reduced mobility, and safety issues along the existing roadway network in and around Denton.

The purpose of the project is to improve mobility, accommodate future traffic demand, and improve safety.

SLIDE 7 – Proposed Highway – Phase I

The proposed project would be constructed in two phases. Phase 1 would construct a single two-lane, two-way frontage road, and would also acquire the proposed ROW to accommodate the frontage roads and the future ultimate mainlane facility.

For urbanized areas, the facility would consist of two travel lanes (one 12-foot wide lane and one 14-foot wide lane for bicycle accommodations), with curb and gutter drainage. For rural areas, the facility would consist of two travel lanes (one 12-foot wide lane and one 14-foot

wide lane for bicycle accommodations) and 8-foot wide shoulders in each direction, with open ditch drainage. The facility would also include a 6-foot wide sidewalk along the road throughout the project limits. The proposed project right of way would be 420 feet wide typically.

SLIDE 8 – Proposed Highway – Phase 2

As traffic warrants and funding becomes available, Phase 2 would involve the completion of the full frontage road system, which would include the conversion of the two-way frontage road built in Phase 1 to a one-way operation, the construction of the other two-lane, one-way frontage road, and the construction of grade separations at specific high-volume intersections.

For urbanized areas, the facility would consist of two travel lanes (one 12-foot wide lane and one 14-foot wide lane for bicycle accommodations) in each direction, with curb and gutter drainage. For rural areas, the facility would consist of two travel lanes (one 12-foot wide lane and one 14-foot wide lane for bicycle accommodations) and 8-foot wide inside and outside shoulders in each direction, with open ditch drainage. The facility would also include 6-foot wide sidewalks along both sides of the road throughout the project limits. No additional ROW would be needed to implement the Phase 2 improvements.

SLIDE 9 – Utility Adjustments

Utilities such as water lines, sewer lines, gas lines, telephone cables, electrical lines, and other underground and overhead utilities may need to be adjusted to accommodate the proposed improvements. The adjustment and relocation of any utilities would be managed so that no substantial service interruptions would occur while these adjustments are being made.

SLIDE 10 – Projected Cost & Schedule

The proposed project is anticipated to let for construction in 2026 and would take approximately three years to construct. Letting is when TxDOT notifies the construction community that a project is ready to be bid on. Construction on a project begins after the letting process is complete. The estimated total cost for the project is approximately \$135.7 million and the project is partially funded.

This concludes the project information and design portion of the presentation. The next few slides will provide an overview of the environmental evaluation for the proposed SL 288 Frontage Roads Project.

SLIDE 11 – Review and Approval of Environmental Document

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 Memorandum of Understanding was renewed on December 9, 2019. The review and approval process applies to this project.

Environmental studies have been performed for the proposed SL 288 Frontage Roads Project to support environmental clearance in accordance with NEPA. The environmental analyses are necessary to identify, avoid, and minimize effects to the human and natural environments.

Notices for this public hearing were advertised in the *Dallas Morning News, Al Dia, and the Denton Record-Chronicle*, on the TxDOT.gov website and search “Public Meetings and Hearings,” and on keepitmovingdallas.com under “Public Hearings and Meetings”. The TxDOT Public Information Office also prepared a news media release to advertise the public hearing. The environmental technical reports are available on the project website.

SLIDE 12 – Environmental Review / Impacts Addressed

The technical documentation for this project addressed the potential environmental impacts identified during the schematic phase of the proposed project. These areas of potential impacts included natural, social, and cultural resources as well as potential impacts to adjacent and surrounding land use. The environmental reports were approved by TxDOT and have been coordinated with other public agencies..

This slide shows a list of all resources that were evaluated during the environmental phase of the project. The following slides include a summary of the more notable findings.

SLIDE 13 – Environmental Review – Right of Way

The proposed project would require approximately 414.7 acres of proposed right of way and 1.2 acres of proposed permanent drainage easements to accommodate the proposed improvements. The proposed project would result in the displacement of five single-family residences and one commercial property. Two barns and a shed would also

be displaced. No public facilities such as parks, recreational facilities, churches, schools, or cemeteries, would be displaced as a result of the proposed project. TxDOT would be responsible for all right of way acquisition for the proposed project. All right of way acquisition would be completed in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended.

Information about the TxDOT Relocation Assistance Program and services and benefits for displacees and other affected property owners, as well as information about the tentative schedule for right of way acquisition and construction, can be obtained from the TxDOT Dallas District Office by calling (214) 320-6628 or visiting the project website. Brochures, including two booklets titled "The Purchase of Right of Way," and "Relocation Assistance," are also available for you on the project website. These booklets contain detailed information to inform you of your rights and provide information about TxDOT right of way acquisition procedures.

SLIDE 14 – Environmental Review – Waters of U.S.

The proposed improvements would result in the permanent fill of approximately 0.41 acre of streams, 0.04 acre of impoundments, and 0.18 acre of wetlands and special aquatic sites associated with waters of the U.S. Regulated activities would be authorized by the US Army Corps of Engineers under a Section 404 Nationwide Permit 14, or NWP 14, Linear Transportation Projects. Compensatory mitigation would be required for the Section 404 impacts.

SLIDE 15 – Environmental Review – Floodplains

Portions of the project are within the 100-year floodplain at Hickory Creek, Dry Fork Hickory Creek, and their associated tributaries. The hydraulic design for the proposed project would be in accordance with current TxDOT policies, laws, regulations, and standards.

SLIDE 16 – Environmental Review – Cultural Resources

TxDOT historians evaluated a total of 13 historic-age structures constructed prior to 1977 and found that none of them met eligibility criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or NRHP. Properties that were surveyed for archeological resources did not contain

any findings of artifacts or archeological sites that meet NRHP eligibility criteria or warrant designation as a state antiquities landmark.

SLIDE 17 – Environmental Review – Hazardous Materials

A hazardous materials initial site assessment, or ISA, was completed for the proposed project. The components of the ISA included reviewing project design and right of way requirements, reviewing existing and previous land use, reviewing federal and state regulatory databases and files, and conducting project site visits. Five sites were determined to be a moderate environmental risk to the project. The regulatory sites are associated with oil and gas well operations. The sites are all located adjacent to the proposed right of way so there is a potential concern for encountering contamination during the construction phase of the project.

Special provisions or contingency language would be included in the project's construction plans to handle hazardous materials and/or petroleum contamination according to applicable federal and state regulations. Any unanticipated hazardous materials encountered during construction would be handled according to applicable federal, state, and local regulations per TxDOT Standard Specifications. Early regulatory agency coordination would also be initiated during project development.

SLIDE 18 – Environmental Review – Traffic Noise

A Traffic Noise Analysis was performed in accordance with TxDOT's (and FHWA approved) Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise (2011). Based on the analysis, 5 receivers are expected to be impacted by noise. Noise abatement options were considered for these receivers in accordance with TxDOT and FHWA criteria. It was determined that noise barriers would not be feasible and reasonable for the impacted noise receivers.

SLIDE 19 – Environmental Review – Conclusion

In conclusion, the studies, analyses, and evaluations performed indicate the proposed project would cause no significant environmental impacts.

SLIDE 20 – Next Steps and Timeline

Following this hearing, documentation of this public hearing will be reviewed by TxDOT for final environmental clearance and design approval. If there are no major issues arising from this hearing that cannot be addressed in a reasonable time frame, final environmental clearance is expected in the Fall of 2020.

As mentioned earlier, the project has an anticipated Let Date in 2026. The project is anticipated to be constructed in multiple phases and take three years to construct.

This concludes the environmental evaluation portion of the presentation.

SLIDE 21 – Public Comments

All comments and questions will be fully considered and responded to in the project record and made part of the final environmental document for this proposed project. This document will then be made available for public review at www.keepitmovingdallas.com/SL288.

As a reminder, there are several methods available for you to leave a public comment. All forms of comments must be received or postmarked on or before Tuesday, July 28, 2020 to be included in the public hearing summary. Comments and questions can be emailed or mailed to the TxDOT Project Manager Nelson Underwood. The email address and mailing address are listed on the screen. Verbal comments can be provided by leaving a message via voice mail at (940) 441-5260. Please include your name and address in your message. You may also leave a comment by clicking the link on the project website.

SLIDE 22 – “Thank You for your Interest”

We sincerely appreciate your interest concerning the SL 288 Frontage Roads Project from IH 35 W to south of IH 35. Your questions, comments and concerns will receive careful consideration.

Thank you very much. This concludes the presentation and the hearing is now adjourned.