

PUBLIC MEETING SCRIPT
FARM-TO-MARKET ROAD (FM) 740 / FM 548 IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT
KAUFMAN COUNTY
CSJ(S): 1091-02-025, 2588-01-025
Tuesday, July 11, 2023, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Forney High School Cafeteria
1800 College Avenue, Forney, TX 75126
www.keepitmovingdallas.com/projects/fm-roads/FM740FM548

SLIDE 1 – Title Slide

Hello and welcome to the Public Meeting for the FM 740 / FM 548 Improvements Project. This public meeting has been convened by the Texas Department of Transportation and is being held to receive and consider comments from the public. Please note, you may pause this presentation at any point to allow more time to review the information.

SLIDE 2 – End the Streak

November 7, 2000 was the last deathless day on Texas roadways. That means for over 22 years, at least one person has died every single day. That's a streak we want to end. Help TxDOT End the Streak of roadway fatalities by buckling up, driving the speed limit, putting down your phone and never driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

SLIDE 3 – Public Meeting Purpose and Protocol

You may have attended previous public meetings conducted by TxDOT. Due to changes in TxDOT public involvement protocols, we will not have a live speech or take comments from the floor at this public meeting. In lieu of a live speech, we are showing this pre-recorded presentation. Verbal comments will still be accepted on our voicemail line.

For the benefit of those who have never participated before, we will explain why the Department conducts a public meeting.

A public meeting has four essential purposes:

1. Inform the public of the status of planning on the project and present the recommendations based on studies performed to date.
2. Describe the project so those attending can determine the project's potential to affect their lives and property.
3. Provide the public an opportunity to see information and express their views at this 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 recommendations for subsequent decisions.

This public meeting is being held in compliance with both federal and state laws.

Following this meeting, the Department will proceed with the preparation of the final environmental documentation. Your statements and comments will be addressed in this document and will be given full consideration in the preparation of the final recommendation and design for the FM 740 / FM 548 Improvements Project.

SLIDE 4 – Viewing Design Schematic and Project Information

The design schematic and environmental documentation for the FM 740 / FM 548 Improvements Project are available for inspection and reproduction at the Texas Department of Transportation Dallas District Office, located at 4777 East US Highway 80 in Mesquite, Texas 75150. In addition, the design schematic may be viewed at www.KeepItMovingDallas.com/projects/fm-roads/FM740FM548. The information on this website is the same information being shown in this presentation.

SLIDE 5 – Project Location

TxDOT and Kaufman County are proposing the reconstruction and widening of FM 740 / FM 548 for approximately 4 miles from I-20 in Mesquite to FM 1641 in Forney within Kaufman County.

SLIDE 6 – Project Details

The FM 740 / FM 548 proposed improvements include reconstruction and widening of FM 740 / FM 548 from a two-lane rural minor arterial roadway to a four-lane divided urban roadway with raised medians, curbs, sidewalk, and shared-use path for approximately 4 miles.

SLIDE 7 – Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed project is to reconstruct and widen FM 740 / FM 548 in order to improve north-south mobility and to accommodate future traffic demand by adding capacity.

The proposed project is needed because population growth within Kaufman County has caused increases in current and forecasted traffic volumes that exceed the capacity of FM 740 / FM 548 between I-20 and FM 1641, leading to increased congestion and reduced mobility.

SLIDE 8 – Existing Facility

The existing FM 740 / FM 548 roadway within the project limits is currently two 12-foot-wide lanes with 3 to 10-foot-wide shoulders. There are no pedestrian or bike

accommodations. The existing right-of-way varies between 60-ft to 150-ft wide throughout the length of the project.

SLIDE 9 – Proposed Facility

The proposed project would widen approximately 4 miles of FM 740 / FM 548 to a four-lane divided arterial roadway. The existing bridge will be expanded across Mustang Creek. Right and left turn lanes are provided as appropriate along the project. The proposed project would require approximately 8.5 acres of additional ROW to expand the roadway.

SLIDE 10 – Projected Cost & Schedule

The FM 740 / FM 548 Improvements Project is anticipated to be Ready to Let by 2027. “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 total estimated cost for the project construction is approximately \$52 million. The project is not funded for construction and cannot let until full funding is identified; however, right of way acquisition can proceed even if the project is not funded for construction.

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 agreement was updated on December 9, 2019.

Environmental studies are ongoing for the proposed FM 740 / FM 548 Improvements Project to support an environmental clearance in accordance with NEPA. These environmental analyses are necessary to identify, avoid, and minimize effects to the Human and Natural Environments.

Notices for this public meeting were advertised in *The Kaufman Herald*, *The Mesquite Gazette*, and *Al Día*, on the TxDOT.gov website under “Hearings and Meetings Schedule” and on Keepitmovingdallas.com under “Public Hearings and Meetings.” The TxDOT Public Information Office also prepared a news media release to advertise the public meeting. The TxDOT roadway design schematics are available on the project website at www.keepitmovingdallas.com/projects/fm-roads/FM740FM548.

SLIDE 12 – Environmental Constraints Map

The project Environmental Constraints Map is used to help planners and engineers determine the least impactful method to fulfill the purpose of the project. The full map can be viewed on the project website. In the case of FM 740 / FM 548 Improvements Project, some of the major known constraints include three stream crossings for Mustang Creek, one community park, and crossings of the 100-year floodplain. Environmental studies for this project are ongoing.

SLIDE 13 – Environmental Review – Right-of-Way

Approximately 8.5 acres of new right-of-way would be required for the proposed improvements. 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. Brochures titled “The Purchase of Right of Way,” and “Relocation Assistance,”

are available on the project website. These materials contain detailed information to inform you of your rights and to provide information about the TxDOT right-of-way acquisition process.

SLIDE 14 – Project Timeline

The public comment period for the proposed project ends Wednesday, July 26, 2023. Following this meeting, documentation of this public meeting will be reviewed by TxDOT for final environmental clearance and design approval. If there are no major issues arising from this meeting that cannot be addressed in a reasonable time frame, final environmental clearance is expected by Fall 2024. As mentioned earlier, the project has an anticipated Ready to Let Date of 2027. The project is anticipated to be open to traffic by 2029. This concludes the environmental evaluation portion of the presentation.

SLIDE 15 – Public Comments

Comments will be accepted in a number of ways as shown on the screen. If you would like to leave a verbal comment, please call the number listed. Comments must be received or postmarked by Wednesday, July 26, 2023, to be part of the official public meeting record.

All substantive 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 and copying at the TxDOT Dallas District Office located at 4777 East Highway 80 in Mesquite, Texas 75150, and online at the project website.

SLIDE 16 – “Thank You for Participating” / Meeting is now Adjourned

We sincerely appreciate your participation and interest concerning the proposed design of the FM 740 / FM 548 Improvements Project. Your questions, comments and concerns will receive careful consideration.

Thank you very much.