

# **NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY AND PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR INTERSTATE HIGHWAY (IH) 35E: IH 635 TO PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH TURNPIKE**

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed expansion of IH 35E and will hold a Public Hearing to discuss the proposed IH 35E mainlane improvements and construction of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/Managed lanes with concurrent flow from IH 635 to the President George Bush Turnpike (PGBT) in Dallas County, Texas. The term concurrent indicates that travel along the HOV/Managed lanes would be in the same direction as the main lanes of the facility. The proposed project is located within the Cities of Dallas, Farmers Branch, and Carrollton in Dallas County. The Public Hearing will be held on:

**Tuesday, September 27, 2011  
6:00 pm – Open House  
7:00 pm – Public Hearing  
R. L. Turner High School  
1600 S Josey Ln, Carrollton, TX 75006**

IH 35E is an essential element of the local and regional transportation system. Within the project area, IH 35E functions as an interstate and also serves as a major arterial serving local trips and as an important regional commuter route connecting the Cities of Dallas, Farmers Branch, and Carrollton, as well as neighboring developing communities. The purpose of the proposed project is to address the transportation needs by increasing capacity, managing traffic congestion, improving mobility, and improving roadway deficiencies within the DFW metropolitan area. The project would also serve to enhance the regional transportation system and local area through which it traverses.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to discuss the social, economic, and environmental effects of the proposed roadway improvements along the entire 5-mile length of the proposed IH 35E facility, in addition to improvements to the existing Dickerson Parkway and the IH 35E/Belt Line Road interchange. The project would require additional right-of-way (ROW).

The existing IH 35E facility, from IH 635 to PGBT, consists of six 12-ft wide mainlanes and two (interim) concurrent, buffer separated HOV lanes. The existing ROW varies from approximately 250 to 300 feet (ft) along the corridor. Concrete traffic barriers (CTB) separate the north and southbound lanes. The outside shoulders are 10-ft wide. The frontage roads are continuous along the corridor and consist of two 12-ft wide lanes.

The existing Dickerson Parkway is a two-lane arterial roadway from Mayes Drive to PGBT on the east side of IH 35E. Dickerson Parkway terminates at Mayes Drive. The width of the Dickerson Parkway existing ROW is 120 ft. The approximate width of the existing lanes are 18 ft wide with 6-ft wide sidewalks along both sides of the facility. Curbs separate the roadway from the sidewalks along the current Dickerson Parkway thoroughfare.

The existing interchange of IH 35E and Belt Line Road consists of an underpass (Belt Line Road going under IH 35E). Belt Line Road consists of six 12-ft wide lanes (three in each direction), separated by a median, within a variable ROW. The Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) railroad tracks, Belt Line Road, and the IH 35E frontage roads are currently at grade.

The proposed improvements would involve following the existing alignment and reconstruction of the existing IH 35E facility along the existing alignment; constructing an overpass for the

extension of Dickerson Parkway over IH 35E and improvements to the existing portion of Dickerson Parkway; and a grade separation of both Belt Line Road and the IH 35E frontage road from the DART railroad tracks. The proposed typical IH 35E mainlane section would consist of eight 12-ft wide lanes (four in each direction) with 10-ft inside and outside shoulders and two to four collector distributor lanes (each direction) from north of Sandy Lake Road to PGBT. Frontage roads would mostly consist of two and three lanes in each direction with 2-ft wide curb offsets (to the outside) for a maximum width of 35 ft. The frontage roads would be continuous throughout the length of the project and include 11-ft wide inside lane(s) and a 14-ft wide outer lane (excluding gutter) to accommodate bicycle travel along the IH 35E corridor. The outer lane would accommodate shared use by bicycles and vehicles. Within the corridor, the proposed sidewalks would be 6 ft wide and would be located along the frontage roads. Two 12-ft wide concurrent HOV/managed lanes with 10-ft wide outside shoulders are also proposed in each direction. The concurrent HOV/managed lanes would be separated from the mainlanes by a 10-ft wide median and concrete traffic barriers which would replace the interim concurrent HOV lanes which are currently separated by striping. The concurrent HOV/managed lanes would be tolled. The proposed IH 35E improvements would be constructed within a proposed ROW width that varies from approximately 380 to 556 ft.

The proposed improvements to Dickerson Parkway would consist of constructing an overpass for the extension of Dickerson Parkway over IH 35E and improvements to the existing portion of Dickerson Parkway. The proposed Dickerson Parkway facility would consist of four through lanes in total (two in each direction) and a 16-ft wide raised concrete median. The inside lanes would be 12 ft wide, while the outside lanes would be 14 ft wide for shared use of bicycles and vehicles. A 6-ft wide sidewalk is proposed along both sides of Dickerson Parkway. The total length of the Dickerson Parkway improvements and extension, including the overpass, is approximately one mile. The width of the proposed ROW varies from approximately 98 to 259 ft. The proposed improvements to Dickerson Parkway would provide direct access from IH 35E and PGBT to the DART North Carrollton Transit Center and to the future DART Trinity Mills station associated with the Northwest Corridor expansion (Green Line).

The proposed improvements to the interchange of IH 35E and Belt Line Road include the grade separation of both Belt Line Road and the IH 35E frontage roads from the DART railroad tracks. For this purpose, Belt Line would be rehabilitated for approximately 0.5 mile. The proposed improvements to Belt Line Road would be depressed approximately 31 ft from its current location. No increase in capacity is proposed for Belt Line Road, and the proposed improvements would consist of six through lanes (three in each direction) separated by a 16-ft wide raised concrete median, within a maximum proposed ROW of 122 ft. The two inside lanes would be 11 ft wide, while the outside lanes would be 14 ft wide for shared use of bicycles and vehicles. A 6-ft wide sidewalk is proposed for pedestrian use. The DART railroad tracks would cross underneath IH 35E.

The proposed IH 35E improvements would require approximately 86.4 acres of ROW acquisition and approximately 0.4 acre of proposed easements. The proposed reconstruction of IH 35E would result in approximately 138 displacements. Consistent with U.S. Department of Transportation policy, as mandated by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 and the Uniform Relocation Act Amendments of 1987, TxDOT provides relocation resources to all displaced persons without discrimination. All property owners from whom property is needed are entitled to receive just compensation for their land and property. Just compensation is based upon the fair market value of the property. In order to assist those who are required to move from a home or business, TxDOT also provides, through its relocation assistance program, payments and services to aid in movement to a new location. Information concerning relocation services and benefits available to affected commercial property owners and information about the tentative schedules for ROW acquisition and construction will be available at the Public Hearing and can also be obtained from the TxDOT Dallas District Office. TxDOT commits to utilizing Workforce Solutions to help minimize or mitigate for adverse impacts to individual employees as a result of the proposed project's implementation. Representatives from Texas Workforce Commission will attend the Open House/Public Hearing to answer questions or present services information on behalf of Workforce Solutions.

The project is located within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated 100-year floodplain of Rawhide Creek, Cooks Branch, Hutton Branch, Furneaux Creek, and the Elm Fork Trinity River. The hydraulic design for this project would be in accordance with current FHWA 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 project would not increase the base flood elevation to a level that would violate applicable floodplain regulations and ordinances. Two wetlands, totaling approximately 0.55 acres, and 13 water features, totaling approximately 5.04 acres, are located within the proposed ROW and are considered potentially jurisdictional. Approximately 1.68 acres of waters of the U.S., including wetlands, would be permanently impacted and approximately 0.38 acre would be temporarily impacted by the proposed project. 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.

The schematic layout showing the location and design of the proposed projects, the EA, and other information related to the proposed projects would be available for viewing at the Public Hearing and are currently on file and available for public inspection at the City of Carrollton City Hall, 1945 E. Jackson Road, Carrollton, Texas 75006; City of Dallas City Hall, 1500 Marilla Street, Dallas, Texas 75201; City of Farmers Branch City Hall, 13000 William Dodson Pkwy, Farmers Branch, TX 75234; and at the TxDOT Dallas District Office, 4777 East Highway 80, Mesquite, Texas 75150. The tentative construction schedule can be obtained at the TxDOT Dallas District Office in Mesquite, Texas.

All interested persons are invited to attend this Public Hearing. Persons interested in attending the Public Hearing who have special communication or accommodation needs are encouraged to contact the TxDOT Dallas District public information officer at (214) 320-6100 at least two (2) work days prior to the Public Hearing. Because the Public Hearing will be conducted in English, requests for language interpreters or other special communication needs should also be made at least two work days prior to the Public Hearing. TxDOT will make every reasonable effort to accommodate these needs.

Verbal and written comments relative to the proposed project may be presented at the Public Hearing. Written comments can also be submitted to the following address:

Robert Hall, P.W.S., CFM  
TxDOT Dallas District Environmental Coordinator  
P.O. Box 133067  
Dallas, Texas 75313-3067

Verbal or written comments may be presented for a period of 10 days after the Public Hearing and must be postmarked by October 7, 2011 to be included as part of the official public record. The EA and schematic are available for viewing and comment throughout the public notice period and comment period. For additional information please contact Robert Hall, TxDOT Dallas District, via phone 214-320-6157, fax 214-320-4470, or e-mail: Robert.Hall@txdot.gov