



Notice
Draft Environmental Assessment and
Virtual Public Hearing with In-Person Option
US 79 Widening Project
From West of IH 45 to West of FM 1512
CSJ: 0205-04-047
Leon County, Texas

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is proposing improvements to US 79 from IH 45 in Buffalo to west of FM 1512 near Jewett in Leon County, Texas. This notice advises the public that TxDOT will be conducting an in-person public hearing with an online virtual option.

The in-person option will be held on Monday, August 15, 2022, starting at 4:30 p.m. with an open house followed by a live presentation at 6:00 p.m. at the Jewett Civic Center, 111 N Robinson, Jewett, TX 75846. In-person attendees will be able to review hard copies of project materials, ask questions of TxDOT staff and/or consultants, and leave written comments. There will be an opportunity for members of the public to provide verbal comments following the live presentation.

The virtual hearing option will consist of a pre-recorded video presentation and will include both audio and visual components. The presentation will be posted online by Monday August 8, 2022, at 4 p.m. To log onto the virtual public hearing, go to the following web address at the date and time indicated above: www.txdot.gov, keyword search "US 79 Leon County". Please note that the virtual hearing option will present the same information as the in-person hearing and will remain posted throughout the comment period outlined below.

For both the virtual public hearing and in-person option, members of the public may submit a verbal comment by calling the TxDOT Public Comment Line established for this project at (903) 345-4724 any time during the formal comment period for this hearing from 4 p.m., Monday, August 8, 2022, until 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, August 30, 2022.

Formal written comments may also be provided by mail or email as explained below. All verbally provided testimony and timely written comments will be considered by TxDOT and included as part of the official record. Responses to verbally provided testimony and comments will be prepared by TxDOT and included as part of the hearing and project record.

The project development process, including the Existing Corridor Alternative and the Relief Route Alternative, will be presented. Comments relating to all aspects of project development are welcome as part of this public hearing.

The Existing Corridor Alternative is recommended for further development. Those improvements consist of a roadway widening to enhance safety and increase capacity along the corridor. Along rural US 79 between Jewett and Buffalo, the proposed project would widen the existing two-lane highway to a four-lane divided highway consisting of two 12-foot travel lanes in each direction separated by a grass median. The proposed right of way on rural US 79 would be between 200 to 315 feet wide. Proposed urban improvements in Jewett would provide two 12-foot travel lanes in each direction separated by a 16-foot center turn lane, and pedestrian accommodations including curb and gutter.

The proposed project would, subject to final design considerations, require approximately 215 acres of additional right of way with potential displacements throughout the corridor. Relocation assistance is available for displaced persons and businesses. Information about the TxDOT Relocation Assistance Program and services and benefits for those displaced 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 district office by calling (979) 213-7591.

The proposed project would involve construction in wetlands. The proposed project would involve an action in a floodplain.

Any environmental documentation or studies, any maps and drawings showing the project location and design, tentative construction schedules, and other information regarding the proposed project are on file and available for inspection Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at TxDOT Bryan District Office, 2591 North Earl Rudder Freeway, Bryan, TX 77803, (979) 778-2165. These materials will also be available in hard copy form for review at the in-person option.

The virtual public hearing and in-person option will be conducted in English. If you need an interpreter or document translator because English is not your primary language or have difficulty communicating effectively in English, one will be provided to you. If you have a disability and need assistance, special arrangements can be made to accommodate most needs. If you need interpretation or translation services or are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation

to attend and participate in the virtual public hearing or in-person option, please contact Bob Colwell, Bryan District Public Information Officer, at (979) 778-2165 no later than 4 p.m. CT, Wednesday, August 3, 2022. Please be aware that advance notice is required as some services and accommodations may require time for TxDOT to arrange.

Written comments from the public regarding the proposed project are requested and may be submitted by mail to the TxDOT Bryan District Office, 2591 North Earl Rudder Freeway, Bryan, TX 77803. Written comments may also be submitted by email to Steve.Higgins@txdot.gov. All comments must be received on or before August 30, 2022.

If you have any general questions or concerns regarding the proposed project or public hearing—virtual or in-person option, please contact Steve Higgins, P.E., TxDOT Project Manager, at (979) 778-2165 or by email at Steve.Higgins@txdot.gov.

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.