



Open-Ended (d) Categorical Exclusion Classification Request Form

District environmental staff must use this form to request ENV's approval to proceed with processing a project as an open-ended (d) CE based on TxDOT's experience with similar projects.

Projects requiring less than 30 acres of total new right-of-way, and less than 10 total displacements (residential and commercial), are commonly approved as open-ended (d) CEs, but still require ENV's review and approval using this form prior to processing the project as an open-ended (d) CE. Projects requiring more than 30 acres of total new right-of-way, and/or 10 or more total displacements (residential and commercial), will be considered by ENV for processing as an open-ended (d) CE on a case-by-case basis if there are exceptional circumstances.

By requesting ENV's approval, district environmental staff is certifying that this project is expected to meet the requirements of 23 CFR 771.117 and 40 CFR 1508.4 (or, for a state project, 43 TAC 2.81), and that there is no potential for significant environmental impacts that would warrant preparation of an environmental impact statement.

If at any time during the environmental review it becomes apparent that this project is not expected to meet the requirements of 23 CFR 771.117 and 40 CFR 1508.4 (or, for a state project, 43 TAC 2.81), or that there is a potential for significant environmental impacts, district environmental staff will not proceed with a CE determination, and will instead prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement, as appropriate.

Prior to issuing a notice and opportunity to comment, notice of public meeting, notice affording an opportunity for a public hearing, or notice of public hearing, district environmental staff must email the draft notice to the ENV Project Delivery personnel assigned to their district for review. Additionally, prior to holding a public meeting or public hearing, district environmental staff must email the anticipated meeting or hearing presentation materials to the ENV Project Delivery personnel assigned to their district for review.

If the information provided in the Project Description or Proposed Facility sections of this form or the preliminary schematic for the project changes at any time, district environmental staff must submit an Amendment to Open-Ended (d) Categorical Exclusion Classification Request Form and receive ENV's approval before proceeding.

ENV's approval to proceed with an open-ended (d) CE classification is not the final CE determination. District environmental staff must proceed with conducting the CE analysis and any further public involvement or technical analyses detailed below, and then make a final CE determination in ECOS, if warranted.

Project Name: **Interstate Highway 35W**

Project Limits From: **County Road 604/County Road 707**

Project Limits To: **US Highway 67**

Control Section Job Number (CSJ): **CSJ 0014-03-087**

District(s): **Fort Worth District**



County(ies): **Johnson County**

Project Description:

Project activities would occur along Interstate Highway 35 West (IH 35W) from United States Highway 67 (US 67) to County Road 604 (CR 604)/CR 707, a distance of approximately 1.15 miles, within the city of Alvarado, Johnson County, Texas.

The existing right-of-way (ROW) width along IH 35W in this area varies from approximately 350 to 742 feet.

Proposed improvements (see proposed Facility Section of this form) would occur within existing ROW. Improvements to existing cross streets are not proposed. No new ROW and no permanent easements would be required for the proposed project.

A project location map and schematics are included with this form.

Existing Facility:

Existing IH 35W is the main north-south interstate for the western portion of the Dallas and Fort Worth Metroplex. IH 35W begins near Denton, Texas, where IH 35 splits into east (IH 35E) and west (IH 35W) segments and IH 35W continues south through Fort Worth, the city of Alvarado and ultimately reconnecting approximately 26 miles south of Alvarado with IH35E. In addition, US 67 (also called East Henderson Street) is a four-lane east-west rural highway connecting the region, from Dallas to the east, to Stephenville to the west.

Within the project limits previously referenced in the Project Description, existing IH 35W is a four-lane divided urban freeway with two, 12-foot general purpose travel lanes in each direction, 10-foot outside shoulders and 4-foot inside shoulders. The northbound and southbound lanes of IH-35W are separated by a vegetated median that varies in width from 40 to 160 feet. East of IH 35W mainlanes is a two-way frontage road with 12-foot-wide travel lanes and 2-foot shoulders. Off the west side of IH 35W is a one-way (southbound only) frontage road with the same widths.

IH 35W has several existing northbound and southbound access ramps connected to the frontage roads. At the south end of the project, IH 35W intersects US 67 via two overpass bridges; one northbound and one southbound. At the north end of the project, CR 604 crosses over IH 35W and becomes CR 707 to the west. Northbound IH 35W mainlanes extend over the closed southbound IH 35W exit ramp to BUS 35W. On the east side of the project, existing BUS 35W (called North Parkway Drive to the north) forms part of the existing eastside frontage road system between US 67 and CR 604.

Existing drainage features within the project site consist of: open ditches and roadside swales running with the roadways; a set of box culverts conveying an existing drainage under both the northbound and southbound mainlanes and frontage roads; and various concrete pipes convey water runoff into the swale system throughout.

Proposed Facility:

TxDOT is proposing to realign the IH 35W northbound main lanes and remove the closed left-hand exit from southbound IH 35W main lanes to BUS 35W. This project would add a northbound frontage road between US 67 and BUS 35W (North Parkway Drive) and the existing frontage road from BUS 35W



(North Parkway Drive) to CR 604/CR 707 would be converted from two-way to a one-way frontage road. This would provide a continuous one-way frontage road from US 67 to CR 604/CR 707 intersection.

Existing BUS 35W (North Parkway Drive) would be realigned to a T-intersection at the proposed northbound frontage road. Along the previously referenced frontage road, a 10-foot shared use path would be constructed from US 67 extending north through the T-intersection with BUS 35W to the shared use driveway of the Super 8 by Wyndham and Motor Home Specialist RV Dealer.

A 5-foot sidewalk would also be constructed along BUS 35W from the intersection with the IH 35W northbound frontage road terminating at the Village Park Drive existing driveway.

Additionally, the proposed project would include the reversal of the existing IH 35W entrance and exit ramps to increase mobility and enhance safety. The proposed project is approximately 1.15 miles long and would not require additional right-of-way or permanent easements.

Public Involvement Conducted To-Date and Outcome

One Technical Work Group (TWG) (non-public) meeting for this project was held in-person, pursuant to a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) that was prepared for the project to facilitate the involvement of the local community in project planning and decision making. The TWG meeting was held on February 25, 2020 at the Alvarado City Council Chambers.

The Mayor of Alvarado, an Alvarado councilmember, and, staff for Texas Representative Burns, attended the TWG along with representatives from the Alvarado ISD, emergency services and the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

Responses from attendees were positive about the project with no negative comments received. Three project-specific questions were received. Responses were e-mailed to them, and each attendee was offered follow up phone calls to discuss. The attendees who asked the questions were satisfied with the responses.

Public Involvement Planned:

Due to COVID-19 health safety concerns, a public meeting will be held virtually in fall 2020. A public hearing will be held in early 2021 and will be determined in consultation with TxDOT whether it will be an in-person hearing or virtual hearing with an in-person option based on the COVID-19 conditions at that time.

Project materials will be presented for public comment at TxDOT.gov via a virtual public meeting. Pursuant to the PIP, public notices in English and Spanish will be published prior to the meeting date. On the date of the meeting, a variety of information will be made publicly available via posting online, including a project fact sheet, exhibits and a pre-recorded PowerPoint presentation with accompanying audio. All of the printed materials will be available in English and Spanish. The Spanish version of the PowerPoint will include audio in Spanish as well. These materials will remain up for the duration of the public comment period, at minimum. Comments will be solicited and accepted in both English and Spanish from a variety of sources, including U.S. mail, email and verbally (voicemail). Comments received in Spanish will also be translated to English for inclusion in the project records.

For the public hearing, per the PIP, appropriate plans will be made once it is known if the hearing will be in-person or a virtual hearing with an in-person option.



Technical Analysis Conducted To-Date and Outcome:

Air Quality Analysis – The proposed project would not cause or worsen a violation of any NAAQS. There would be no adverse air quality impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed project.

Hazardous Materials ISA – The ISA identified one or more unresolved hazardous materials concerns requiring additional investigations or assessments. During the site survey, several pole mounted transformers were observed along the boundary of the project area. These transformers are part of the overhead transmission and distributions lines along the roadways servicing the businesses in the area. All transformers appeared to be in good working condition with no signs of spills or leaks.

An underground gas pipeline was also observed during the site survey. One gas pipeline was observed crossing into the project area from the west, then crossing under the interstate and exiting adjacent to the Motor Home Specialist facility along the northbound service road of IH 35W and continuing east.

Traffic Noise Analysis – The proposed project would not result in a traffic noise impact.

Community Impact Analysis – No EJ populations occur in any significant numbers or concentrations within the community study area. No specific analysis of impacts to EJ populations was required. The proposed project would not result in any displacement; therefore, a displacement analysis was not required.

Two churches are in the project area. The project would not affect access to the churches.

The project would add minor increases to travel times for vehicles including emergency responders, intending to travel south after leaving businesses on North Parkway Drive, north of BUS 35W.

Effects to human environment would be minor and limited employee and customers of the commercial and retail uses in and around the immediate project area.

Based on this Community Impact Analysis, the project is not expected to have significant adverse impacts to the community or human environment directly or indirectly.

Species Analysis Form – This project does not require consultation or authorization from the USFWS under the Endangered Species Act. This project does not consist solely of maintenance activities that are of a type covered by the Maintenance Program Environmental Assessment, thus, a Tier 1 Site Assessment was required.

This project is not within 660 feet of an active or inactive Bald or Golden Eagle nest. Therefore, no coordination with USFWS is required.

This project will comply with Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Texas Parks and Wildlife Code Title 5, Subtitle B, Chapter 64, Birds.

Tier 1 Assessment – It is not anticipated that the project would directly impact SGCN that could potentially occur within the project area. However, several of these species are not included in the BMP Programmatic Agreement; therefore, TPWD early coordination is required.



Surface Water Analysis – Some or all regulated activity in jurisdictional waters will be authorized under a non-reporting NWP 14. This project is federally funded and therefore is subject to EP 11990, Protection of Wetlands, and will not involve construction in any wetlands.

The following were found not to apply to the project and no project-specific analyses are required: Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act; Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act; General Bridge Act/Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Act; Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act; Section 401 of the Clean Water Act; Section 402 of the Clean Water Act; EO 11988, Floodplain Management; and, Drinking Water Systems.

Historical Studies PCR - No NHLs, NRHP historic properties, SALs, or RTHLs were identified within the APE (which is the project footprint) or the 1/4-mile Study Area. However, one OTHM (Site of Norman Springs & Norman Grove) and one HTC (Alvarado Glenwood Cemetery) are located within the 1/4-mile Study Area.

No NRHP-listed or NRHP-eligible bridges were identified within the APE or Study Area. The project does not require CHC consultation. No rock masonry features, or historic-age rest areas are located within the project area.

The project would not require relocation of historical markers.

A site visit to the project area found the built environment adjacent to the APE (which is the project footprint) consists primarily of modern construction constructed post 1982. One single-family residential building constructed in 1968 was identified adjacent to the APE and one bridge constructed 1963 was identified in the APE.

Archeology Background Study – Previous surveys have covered a sufficient proportion of the APE or adjacent areas to conclude that the APE and adjacent areas are unlikely to contain archeological sites or cemeteries. The APE contains no deposits with sufficient integrity that prehistoric archeological sites would have the potential to address important questions.

Review of historic maps show that historic-era archeological deposits or cemeteries are not likely to occur within or adjacent to the APE. There is a low potential for burial and preservation of archeological materials containing the appropriate integrity to be considered eligible for listing in the NRHP.

Recommendation: No further study needed.

Technical Analysis Planned:

To date, no additional technical analyses are planned.

Are the proposed improvements similar or nearly within the description of any specific (c)-list or (d)-list CE?

N/A