



**VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING WITH IN-PERSON OPTION
US 377 IN HOOD COUNTY PROJECT
FROM HOLMES DRIVE TO 3,000 FEET NORTH OF FM 167 (FALL CREEK HIGHWAY)
CSJs: 0080-04-081, 0080-03-049, 0080-04-094 AND 0080-03-060
TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2023**

RICARDO GONZALEZ, PE

SLIDE 1 – Introduction/Title Slide

Welcome to the Texas Department of Transportation’s pre-recorded virtual public involvement presentation. We appreciate your interest in the project and welcome each of you. Please note that you may pause this presentation at any point to allow more time to view the slides; and you may also pause the presentation and navigate forward or backward as needed. In this presentation, we will cover the public involvement purpose, project overview, environmental, and right of way considerations. This is followed by an explanation of how to provide comments for the proposed project and the adjournment.

SLIDE 2 – Welcome

My name is Ricardo Gonzalez, and I serve as the Director of Transportation, planning and development for the Fort Worth District of the Texas Department of Transportation, better known as TXDOT. Your input on the proposed improvements is valuable and will help benefit the community and shape the final project recommendations. The virtual public materials and project information can be found at www.txdot.gov by typing the project keyword in the search box in the upper right-hand corner. After the project information is presented, we would appreciate your feedback.

SLIDE 3 – End the Streak

November 7, 2000 was the last deathless day on roadways in Texas. That means for nearly 22 years, at least one person has died every single day. We all have a part to play to change that. This message is that reminder – to End the Streak of deaths on Texas highways. We need drivers and passengers to act more responsibly and help us reach our goal of zero deaths by 2050. Texans can play a major role in ending fatal crashes with a few simple driving habits: wear seatbelts, drive the speed limit, put away the phone and other distractions, and never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs. So, please do your part and share this message with your friends and family. Thank you and please enjoy the rest of this presentation.

[LAUREN BARTSCH]

SLIDE 4 – Virtual Public Hearing with In-Person Option

Hello, I am Lauren, a consultant on this project for which we are under contract with the TxDOT Fort Worth District. On behalf of TxDOT, I would like to welcome you to the virtual public hearing with in-person option for the US 377 in Hood County Project.

The virtual public hearing is being held in conjunction with an in-person option. This virtual public hearing with in-person option will present audio and visual information on the proposed US 377 in Hood County Project from Holmes Drive to approximately 3,000 feet north of FM 167, or Fall Creek Highway, in the City of Granbury, Hood County. The virtual public hearing with in-person option materials are available online at the website <https://www.txdot.gov>. In the “Search TxDOT” box in the upper-right hand corner, enter “US 377 in Hood County”. After the project information is presented, please provide us with comments on the proposed improvements from Tuesday, June 13 through

Wednesday, June 28, 2023. Your valuable input into these proposed improvements will benefit the community and help shape the final project recommendation.

The in-person option will be held on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Lake Granbury Conference Center located at 621 East Pearl Street, Granbury, Texas. The information presented in the virtual public hearing and the in-person option is identical, and the opportunities to comment do not differ.

SLIDE 5 – Virtual Public Hearing with In-Person Option

As part of the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA process, TxDOT is hosting a virtual public hearing with an in-person option to provide the public with an update on the project and present audio and visual information on the proposed improvements along US 377 from Holmes Drive to approximately 3,000 feet north of FM 167, or Fall Creek Highway. This virtual hearing provides a status of the project design, environmental overview and seeks public comments so that we can develop a record of public engagement.

SLIDE 6 – Virtual Public Hearing with In-Person Option Agenda

In this presentation, the following topics will be covered: Project Location and Need and Purpose; the Existing and Proposed Roadway Design; Environmental Process; Right of Way; Estimated Project Schedule and Cost; TxDOT Project Contact Information.

SLIDE 7 – Project Location

The project limits along US 377 are from Holmes Drive to 3,000 feet north of FM 167, or Fall Creek Highway, in the City of Granbury, Hood County, Texas. The project is

approximately 9 miles long. Proposed improvements include adding capacity to the existing US 377 roadway, reconstructing the existing roadway to an urban typical section, and improving and reconfiguring cross street interchanges, ramps and driveway connections. The project also includes the addition of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations and drainage improvements along the corridor.

SLIDE 8 – Breakout Project Limits

The Breakout Project, likely to be constructed first, would involve reworking the US 377-SH 144 interchange and added capacity improvements along US 377 from Pirate Drive just west of FM 51, or Paluxy Road, to Overstreet Boulevard just east of the Brazos River Bridge, and SH 144 from Autumn Ridge Road to FM 51, or Paluxy Road.

SLIDE 9 – Project Need and Purpose

The proposed project is needed because the capacity of the roadway is inadequate to meet current and projected traffic volumes, and because the roadway does not meet current design standards.

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve mobility and enhance safety. To accomplish this, we are proposing improvements that add capacity, manage congestion, and improve operational efficiency of the roadway.

SLIDE 10 – Project Objectives

Some specific objectives of the project include:

- Improving the interchange of US 377 and SH 144,
- Adding capacity with an additional through-lane in each direction,

- Improving the interchanges at Business US 377 (both North and South),
- Addressing drainage issues,
- Providing pedestrian and bicycle accommodations,
- Evaluating access management for improvements to operational efficiency and safety, and
- Accommodating the North Central Texas Council of Governments or NCTCOG's Mobility 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the City of Granbury Thoroughfare Plan.

SLIDE 11 – Updates Since the November 2022 Public Meeting

As previously mentioned, one of the purposes of the virtual public hearing with an in-person option is for TxDOT to provide the public with updates about the project.

A virtual public meeting with in-person option was conducted for the project in November 2022. As a result of feedback received during the public meeting comment period and design considerations, the following design changes have been made and are included in the 90% design schematic available for viewing:

- Various driveways were modified to address access concerns.
- The US 377/FM 51 (Paluxy Road) interchange was modified to reduce right of way needs.
- A left/U-turn lane for northbound SH 144 (Morgan Street) at Wright Court was added to improve access to the west side of the road.
- The pavement on SH 144 (Morgan Street) at Autumn Ridge Drive was widened to accommodate U-turn movements for southbound traffic to better access the east side of the road.

- A median opening at the US 377/Shady Grove Drive intersection was added.
- The US 377 southbound lanes west of East Pearl Street were realigned to avoid impacts to shopping center parking and sewer lift station.
- And the southbound exit ramp at FM 167 (Fall Creek Highway) was relocated to allow direct access to Gateway Hills Lane.

SLIDE 12 – Existing US 377 Roadway – Typical Section with Depressed Median

Within our project limits, the existing US 377 roadway is a four-lane highway with 12-foot-wide travel lanes (two in each direction). The existing right of way throughout the corridor varies from 120 feet to 371 feet.

There are sections of the roadway with either a depressed median, raised median or a center two-way left turn lane within the corridor. Depicted here is a cross section layout of the existing four-lane roadway with a depressed median. The section of US 377 from Holmes Drive to the east end of the US 377 bridge over the Brazos River, and from FM 167, or Fall Creek Highway, to 3,000 feet north of FM 167, has a depressed median.

SLIDE 13 – Existing US 377 Roadway – Typical Section with Raised Median

Depicted here is a cross section layout of the existing four-lane roadway with a raised median, typifying the section of US 377 from the east end of the US 377 bridge over the Brazos River to east of Whitehead Drive.

SLIDE 14 – Existing US 377 Roadway – Typical Section with Two-Way Left Turn Lane

Depicted here is a cross section layout of the existing four-lane roadway with a center two-way left turn lane, typifying the section of US 377 from east of Whitehead Drive to FM 167, or Fall Creek Highway.

SLIDE 15 – Proposed US 377 Roadway – Typical Section

The US 377 in Hood County Project would increase the existing four-lane roadway to a six-lane divided urban highway with three lanes in each direction. Shown here is an example of a typical cross section of the proposed improvements. However, US 377 between FM 51 (Paluxy Road) and Holmes Drive would remain a four-lane highway and would be converted from a rural highway to an urban highway by adding enclosed drainage, curbs as appropriate, and bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. The project also includes improvements to cross street intersections, ramps and driveway connections, as well as accommodations for bicycles and pedestrians.

SLIDE 16 – Proposed US 377/SH 144 Interchange – Breakout Project

The interchange at SH 144 is proposed as a diverging diamond interchange, or DD, in order to meet current and future traffic demands. A DDI is an interchange configuration that is designed to handle both heavy through movements and a large volume of left-turning traffic on the cross street. While DDIs are a relatively new design, several DDIs have been constructed and operate successfully in Texas, with the closest examples being in The Colony on SH 121, or Sam Rayburn Tollway, at South Colony Boulevard and on I-35 at RM 1431 and University Boulevard in Round Rock.

The video you see here is a simulation of the proposed DDI at US 377 and SH 144. The key feature of this type of interchange, which you'll notice in this simulation, is that the traffic moving north and south along SH 144 through the interchange crosses over to the opposite side of the highway as it approaches the interchange. After crossing over US 377, the traffic moves back over to the right side of the road. This is accomplished with signalized intersections at either end and by use of raised medians, pavement markings, and signage that clearly directs traffic. The benefit to this configuration is that left-turning traffic to and from SH 144 only merges and diverges with the through movements, which reduces the need for left-turning traffic to cross through traffic. This has several operational and safety benefits. A link to the DDI simulation is included on the TxDOT project and notice web pages.

SLIDE 17 – Drainage Improvements

One of the objectives of this project is to improve drainage on US 377 throughout the project limits, most notably the area between Old Acton Highway and Old Granbury Road which regularly experiences heavy flooding. The drainage system would be converted from open drainage ditches to an enclosed urban storm drain system through most of the corridor, and that system would be designed to current TxDOT design criteria. Multiple proposed culverts and relief lines would be constructed along the corridor as circled in the slide shown.

These improvements would minimize roadway flooding for storm events while not adversely affecting areas upstream or downstream of the improvements.

SLIDE 18 – Utility Adjustments

Utility adjustments and relocations throughout the corridor would be required prior to construction. The adjustments and relocation of any utilities would be managed so that no substantial interruptions would occur.

SLIDE 19 – NEPA Assignment to TxDOT

The US 377 in Hood County Project is anticipated to receive federal funding. Due to the project receiving federal funds, TxDOT is required to assess the potential environmental effects of the proposed project. The National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA process, provides analyses of the potential impacts to the natural and manmade environment and helps the decision maker to make an informed decision on whether or not to proceed with the project. On December 9, 2019, TxDOT received a signed Memorandum of Understanding from the Federal Highway Administration, or FHWA, that permits TxDOT to assume responsibility from the FHWA for reviewing and approving certain NEPA projects. This review and approval process applies to this project.

SLIDE 20 – Environmental Process – Overview

As part of the project scope, TxDOT tasked the environmental consultant to determine the environmental resources to be analyzed, to conduct field work to determine potential impacts to environmental resources and to document those findings in preparation of the NEPA documents. The environmental documentation for the US 377 in Hood County Project was evaluated through a Categorical Exclusion, or CE. The technical documentation for this project addressed the potential impacts identified during the engineering and design phase of the projects. These areas of potential impacts include

natural, social, and cultural resources as well as potential impacts to adjacent and surrounding land use. This slide shows a list of resources and issues that were evaluated during the environmental analyses. As part of the NEPA process, a virtual public meeting was conducted on May 4, 2021, and a virtual public meeting with in person option was conducted on November 17, 2022.

SLIDE 21 – Environmental Process – Resource Impacts Summary (Biological Resources)

The proposed project would have direct impacts on the following land cover types:

- 0.15 acre of Agriculture
- 9.09 acres of Crosstimbers Woodland and Forest
- 1.76 acres of Disturbed Prairie
- 3.43 acres of Floodplain
- And 4.3 acres of Riparian.

The project may affect the Monarch Butterfly which is a Federally listed candidate species. It is anticipated that the Monarch Butterfly would be formally listed as a Federally threatened species by the time the project is let for construction in 2026. The project may impact the following state threatened species: the Brazos Heelsplitter; Brazos Water Snake; and Texas Horned Lizard. The project may also impact 21 species of Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Best management practices and/or additional surveys are proposed to ensure that impacts to wildlife are minimized.

SLIDE 22 – Environmental Process – Resource Impacts Summary (Hazardous Materials)

It was determined that there are 36 hazardous material sites that are of low to moderate risk to the proposed project, with only one being considered a moderate risk. These include gas stations, automotive dealerships and facilities, dry cleaning facilities, petroleum storage tanks, stockpiles, and previous spills. A Phase II Environmental Site Assessment will be conducted on the moderate risk site prior to construction

SLIDE 23 – Environmental Process – Resource Impacts Summary (Water Resources)

Water resources throughout the project area were considered, and approximately 0.25 acres of streams are anticipated to be permanently impacted. Impacts to water resources are anticipated to be permitted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit 14 - Linear Transportation Projects without a Pre-Construction Notification. Final impacts to streams and wetland features will be determined during the plans, specifications, and estimates phase.

SLIDE 24 – Environmental Process – Resource Impacts Summary (Historic Resources)

A reconnaissance-level survey for historic-age above-ground resources was completed in accordance with TxDOT and FHWA guidelines. Seventy-nine historic-age resources were identified in the project's Area of Potential Effects, or APE, and all but one were determined not to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, or NRHP. The Elizabeth Crockett Centennial Marker is an NHRP-eligible structure that would be relocated as a result of the proposed project. Because the marker would be

relocated to a location similar in character and function to its original location, and the marker would retain its physical integrity, the NRHP-eligibility of the marker would be maintained. Therefore, no effects to historic resources are anticipated.

SLIDE 25 – Environmental Process – Resource Impacts Summary (Traffic Noise)

A Traffic Noise Analysis was completed in accordance with TxDOT and FHWA guidelines. 194 receiver locations were modeled, and 22 noise receiver locations are expected to be impacted in accordance with FHWA criterion. Noise abatement, in the form of traffic noise walls, was evaluated for noise reduction effectiveness to impacted receptors. One traffic noise barrier was determined to be both feasible and reasonable; therefore, this traffic noise barrier is proposed for incorporation into the proposed project. Final approval is subject to a traffic noise workshop.

SLIDE 26 – Environmental Process – Resource Impacts Summary (No Impacts)

There would be no negative impacts to air quality, archeological resources, community cohesion, or environmental justice and limited English proficiency communities.

SLIDE 27 – Environmental Process – Right of Way

The US 377 in Hood County Project would require approximately 25.2 acres of new right of way and 3.7 acres of drainage easements. The proposed project would potentially displace five commercial structures, and one historical marker is proposed to be relocated within TxDOT right-of-way. Please note that right of way needs are subject to change pending further design refinements and that all right of way acquisition would be completed in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act.

SLIDE 28 – Environmental Process – Right of Way

The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act is a law passed in 1970 that was designed to ensure that anyone who owned property needed for a public purpose would be treated fairly. The law establishes guidelines for the acquisition of property and the relocation of displaced individuals and businesses. Additionally, it is the policy of TxDOT that individuals impacted by transportation systems expansion shall not be denied benefits, excluded from participation, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination based on the grounds of race, color, sex, age, handicaps or national origin.

SLIDE 29 – Environmental Process – Right of Way

Each impacted property owner is offered “just compensation” for the property needed for the project. To arrive at this value, independent appraisers are hired to prepare detailed appraisals and establish value. After that, a written offer to the property owners is made based on the value determined in the appraisals. Property owners are then given a minimum of 30 days to consider the offer. For further information, TxDOT right of way brochures can be found at the link provided on the screen. The brochures, including two booklets titled "The Purchase of Right of Way," and "Relocation Assistance," are also available upon request. These booklets contain detailed information to inform you of your rights and provide information about TxDOT’s right of way acquisition procedures.

SLIDE 30 – Estimated Cost and Schedule

The US 377 in Hood County Project is estimated to cost \$365 million to construct. Provided here is an estimated schedule for the remainder of the proposed project. Our next steps include schematic design approval, which is expected in Fall 2023, followed by environmental clearance in Fall 2023. In preparation for construction, right of way

acquisition and utility adjustments would be completed by Spring 2026. Barring major setbacks, the breakout project should let for construction by Fall 2026, as the project would be constructed in phases based on the availability of funding. Please note that the schedule is tentative and is subject to change.

SLIDE 31 – Public Hearing Materials

For your convenience, we invite you to view all of the information developed for this project online at www.TxDOT.gov, keyword search “US 377 in Hood County” until Wednesday, June 28, 2023, at 11:59 p.m.

Project questions are welcomed throughout the project development process. If you have questions or comments throughout project development, please contact the TxDOT Project Manager with your questions or comments during regular office hours:

Dr. Francis Smith, PE

Phone: (817) 370-6708

Email Address: Francis.Smith@txdot.gov

All substantive comments and questions will be fully considered and responded to in the project record and made part of the final environmental documentation for this proposed project.

SLIDE 32 – How to Submit Comments

Your comments about this project are very important to TxDOT and will contribute greatly to the success of this project. TxDOT is committed to continuing our efforts to gain public feedback about this project. We understand that this virtual public hearing format is

slightly different from the in-person. So, let's take a few minutes and explain the comment process. Please note that comments can be made throughout the comment period and will be included in the hearing documentation.

The Fort Worth District is asking the public to provide their comments in the following ways:

1. If you are attending the in-person option, you may leave your comment form in the designated comment boxes.
2. You may submit your comments online by visiting the website www.txdot.gov. Type in "US 377 in Hood County" in the keyword search at the top right of the TxDOT homepage, then click on the "Submit Your Comment" link on the project webpage.
3. You may email your comments to: Francis.Smith@txdot.gov
4. You can mail your comments to the Texas Department of Transportation, Attention: Dr. Francis Smith, PE, 2501 SW Loop 820, Fort Worth, TX 76133
5. And you may leave a voicemail comment by calling (512) 593-2272

All of your statements, comments and questions will be given careful consideration before final design features are determined.

The public comment period closes on Wednesday, June 28, 2023, which is 15 days from this virtual public hearing with in-person option. Please ensure that your comment is received or postmarked by this date. The public may also email or call Dr. Francis Smith during regular office hours to ask questions about the project at any time in the project development process.

SLIDE 33 – Conclusion – Thank You!

In conclusion, thank you for joining TxDOT's online virtual public hearing with in-person option for the US 377 in Hood County Project. We sincerely appreciate your attendance and interest. Please take a moment to review project materials online and in-person. And remember to submit your comments on or before Wednesday, June 28, 2023. Your questions, comments and concerns will receive careful consideration. Thank you very much for your continued interest in the project. This concludes the virtual public hearing with in-person option presentation.