



**Farwell - Texico
Railroad Bridge Project**
In-Person Public Meetings with Virtual Option
Thursday, February 15, 2024
or Thursday, February 22, 2024

Texas Department of Transportation
New Mexico DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

Farwell Railroad Bridge Project February 15, 2024

Welcome to the public meeting for the Farwell and Texico Railroad Bridge Project. This public meeting is moderated by the Texas Department of Transportation Lubbock District in partnership with the New Mexico Department of Transportation District 2.

This is a pre-recorded presentation. Both transportation agencies would like to welcome you and thank you for participating. The presentation is available for online viewing starting on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. Central Time and will remain available for viewing with an opportunity to provide comments until Friday, March 8, 2024.

The public is being provided with two opportunities for in-person events. Both public meetings will contain the same information and schematics for viewing. The first public meeting is today, Thursday, February 15, 2024 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Central Time at the Farwell ISD Administration Building, located at 805 Avenue G, Farwell, TX, 79325. The second public meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 22, 2024 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Mountain Time, at the Texico ISD Cafeteria, located at 520 N Griffin St, Texico, NM, 88135.

Materials being presented and on display at these in-person public meetings, along with project information and details can also be found at www.txdot.gov by searching "Farwell Railroad Bridge Project". During the video, you may pause the presentation and navigate forward or backward using your video player.

The slide features a title 'Table of contents' in teal at the top left. Below it is a list of seven items, each with a dark blue arrow-shaped icon containing a white number. The items are: 1 Introduction, 2 Project Overview, 3 Purpose and Need, 4 Previous route study results, 5 Proposed bridge structure, 6 Next steps and timeline, and 7 How to submit feedback. A small speaker icon is located in the bottom right corner of the slide area. A teal footer bar at the bottom contains the text 'Farwell Railroad Bridge Project' on the left and 'February 15, 2024' on the right.


Number	Topic
1	Introduction
2	Project Overview
3	Purpose and Need
4	Previous route study results
5	Proposed bridge structure
6	Next steps and timeline
7	How to submit feedback



The public meeting presentation will cover the project overview, purpose and need, and a brief review of the results from the previous route study conducted in Fall of 2023. We will then present the revisions prepared for the proposed bridge structure.

We will close out this presentation with the next steps, proposed timeline, and how to submit feedback to project staff.

Material location

Virtual Public Meeting materials are available at:
www.TxDOT.gov

On the website, you may access the public meeting page by selecting the magnifying glass  located on the top right corner of the webpage. The search bar will appear, and plug-in the keyword:
"Farwell Railroad Bridge Project"



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The materials and presentation for the public meetings are the same whether you are participating virtually or in-person. The materials online can be found by going to www.TxDOT.gov, clicking on the magnifying glass in the upper right-hand corner, and typing in "Farwell Railroad Bridge Project".

Project overview

Study Area: Includes both communities of Farwell, TX and Texico, NM.

Results from the previous study determined that the railroad bridge spanning the state line was the feasible option.


**Revisions to the previously presented design has allowed for the extension of the project limits on US 60/70/84.
In Texico, NM there has been an extension from the intersection of Wheeler Ave. and College St. to 0.10 miles west of Opal St. in Texico, NM
In Farwell, TX there has been an extension to 0.25 miles east of FM 292 and Avenue A intersection on US 70/84.*

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The proposed project being presented today would eliminate US 70/84 traffic from having to stop at the railroad crossing at the Texas and New Mexico State line. The two counties where the project would occur are Curry County, NM and Parmer County, TX.

The previous route study conducted has resulted in the determination that the feasible option to proceed with is a railroad bridge on US 60/70/84. This structure would span the Texas and New Mexico State line and would require construction in Farwell, TX and Texico, NM. It has been determined that both right-of-way acquisition and displacements in both states would be required.

Project purpose and need



The purpose of this project is to enhance accessibility for emergency response, provide a safe crossing for roadway users, and to eliminate an at-grade railroad crossing on the Texas and New Mexico state line.

Project Needs:

- Enhance traffic mobility for emergency responders in the communities.
- Reduce potential for train versus pedestrian and train versus vehicle crashes
- Eliminate train delays which will improve access on us 60/70/84.
- Reduce delayed traffic and congestion at streets attempting to enter US 60/70/84 in the communities of Texico, NM and Farwell, TX.

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The purpose of this project is to enhance accessibility for emergency response, provide a safe crossing for roadway users, and to eliminate an at-grade railroad crossing on the Texas and New Mexico state line.

The need of the Farwell and Texico Railroad Bridge project include:

- Enhance traffic mobility for emergency responders in the communities.
- Reduce delayed traffic and congestion at streets attempting to enter US 60/70/84 in the communities of Texico, NM and Farwell, TX.
- Reduce potential for train versus pedestrian and train versus vehicle crashes.
- Eliminate train delays which will improve access on US 60/70/84.

Previous study recap


The purpose of the route study was to identify route options in the community that would eliminate delays to emergency responders and the traveling public due to train delays.

There were over 10 alternatives examined by both agencies in the previous 10 years.

Public involvement conducted in June of 2023 has led TxDOT to conclude that Alternative # 2, the Train Bypass Route on FM 292 and US 60, is no longer feasible.

During the public meetings in June, we received information that eliminated the mobility and feasibility of Alternative # 2, due to the coal train blocking not only the crossing at US 60 but also FM 292 and US 70/84. These blockages are occurring simultaneously at both crossings several times a week.

Table 8. Fatal Flaw Screening for Design Alternatives



Route #	Connectivity	Safety	Mobility/ Feasibility	Environmental & Social Effects	Right-of-Way Needed	Displacements
1 <small>Figure 4</small>	▲	✓	✓	▲	▲	★★
2 <small>Figure 5</small>	✓	✓	✗	▲	▲	★

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The purpose of the route study was to identify route options in the community of Farwell, TX that would provide emergency responders and the traveling public with a alternative path during train delays. Through the development of the route study there was an identification that the project area would need to encompass the neighboring community of Texico, NM.

In the previous 10 years, there has been a examination of over 10 design alternatives that were screened for feasibility. The designs previously evaluated have been made available for viewing in the public meeting documentation for the June 2023 meeting, they are also available in-person along side other documents.

The previously presented route study has concluded and resulted in the determination that Alternative # 2, the train bypass route on US 60 and FM 292 is not feasible. During a route study, project staff screen alternatives for various items, one being mobility. During the public meetings in June, we received information that eliminated the mobility and feasibility of Alternative # 2, due to the coal train blocking not only the crossing at US 60 but also FM 292 and US 70/84. These blockages are occurring simultaneously at both crossings several times a week.

In person: I will now ask Michael Smelker, the New Mexico Department of Transportation Assistant Area Engineer overseeing construction for District 2, up to the up to the podium to present the next few slides.

Revisions in Texico, New Mexico

- Addition of a R-cut at the west end of the project limits past Opal Street on US 60/70/84.
- Addition of dedicated right turn bays at College Street intersection.
- Addition of a 2-lane frontage road on both north and south US 60/70/84 in New Mexico.
- Dedicated one way travel lanes for frontage roads.
- Raised concrete medians
- Opening of Turner Street.
- Relocation of turnaround to Garwood Street.
- Addition of underpass intersection for north to south movement of Garwood Street.
- Dedicated left turn for State Street from US 60.


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We have listened to your comments and have addressed various concerns brought to us in the previous public meetings. These comments and suggestions have led to revisions on the previously presented schematic, they include:

- Addition of a R-cut at the west end of the project limits past Opal Street on US 60/70/84.
 - A R-cut is a managed access point that reduces crashes by altering how road traffic crosses or turns left at a major roadway, such as US 60/70/84 and US 70/84. R-cuts are known to reduce the potential conflict between vehicles. We are aware that addition of signals or signage will still need to be investigated and will be done so in the finalization of the project design.
- Addition of dedicated right turn bays at College Street intersection.
- Addition of a 2-lane frontage road on both north and south US 60/70/84 in New Mexico.
- Dedicated one way travel lanes for frontage roads.
- Raised concrete medians
- Opening of Turner Street.
- Relocation of turnaround to Garwood Street.
- Addition of underpass intersection for north to south movement of Garwood Street.
- Dedicated left turn for State Street from US 60.

We welcome you to ask questions, leave comments, and review these changes on the provided schematics either in-person or online at the public meeting page.

New Mexico



- **Right of Way acquisitions and displacements would be required.**
- **Drainage detention ponds are proposed.**
- **Installation of sidewalk, ADA, and bicycle access are being evaluated.**

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During evaluation of this project, it was determined that both agencies would be required to purchase right-of-way and perform displacements. If you would like more information on this process, please visit the right-of-way section or table for the respective state to which you may have property in.

Project staff are aware that there are two businesses of main concern with this proposed bridge structures construction, the Stripes and Dollar General located in Texico, NM.

We would like to advise the public that with requirements and best practices for public involvement under the environmental document, project staff are speaking with stakeholders throughout the project development. Displaces and property owners are advised and offered the opportunity to meet with project staff to discuss any potential impacts.

Stripes and Dollar General representatives have been awarded and participated in stakeholder meetings to evaluate this project.

Also aware of other businesses and residential displacements, upon advancement of this project, right-of-way staff will contact those property owners or renters with supplemental information.

Additionally, project staff have located additional community factors that the proposed project would like to address, including drainage improvements. This would be in the form of installing drainage detention ponds along US 60/70/84 to have stormwater route to for the reduction of roadway flooding. With this improvement, there is also an ongoing examination of pedestrian access in the community along US 60/70/84.

In person: I would now like to welcome to the podium, Kylan Francis, P.E. the Director of Transportation Planning and Development for TxDOT's Lubbock District.

Revisions in Farwell, Texas


- Addition of a R-cut at the east end of the project limits past FM 292 on US 70/84.
- Addition of dedicated right turn bays at FM 292/9th Street intersection,
- Addition of a 2-lane frontage road on south US 70/84 in Texas.
- Dedicated one way travel lanes for frontage roads.
- Raised concrete medians

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Your comments are vital to us and have brought to our attention items that could use revision. Taking the information gathered at the previous public meetings we are proposing the following:

- Addition of a R-cut at the east end of the project limits past FM 292 on US 70/84.
- Addition of dedicated right turn bays at FM 292/9th Street intersection,
- Addition of a 2-lane frontage road on south US 70/84 in Texas.
- Dedicated one way travel lanes for frontage roads.
- Raised concrete medians

Texas



- Right of Way acquisitions and displacements would be required.
- Relocation of a historical marker may be necessary.
- Installation of sidewalk, ADA, and bicycle access are being evaluated.

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As mentioned before, during the evaluation of the project it was determined that there would be right of way acquisitions and displacements associated with the project construction. We would like to remind the public that in part of the design and environmental clearance portion of the project's development, we have performed stakeholder meetings with property owners that may be acquired and displaced.

We are also aware that there is a potential that residential properties would be displaced, and that several vacant properties would be acquired. Please speak with right-of-way agents for the representative state if you have any additional questions about the process.

Transportation agencies are continuously improving state roadways, and value improvements such as pedestrian access. Under a previous project in Farwell, TxDOT replaced the sidewalk and ADA on the south side of US 70/84. At this time those existing locations will remain in place, but there will be upgrades where necessary.

Planning and funding

With the partnership between the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), both agencies are seeking federal funding for this project. Federal grants are available annually.

Both agencies are partaking in the overall project schematic and design. This development of this partnership allows for both agencies to meet the expectation of the environmental assessment documentation and to allow for the overall progress of the project development to construction.

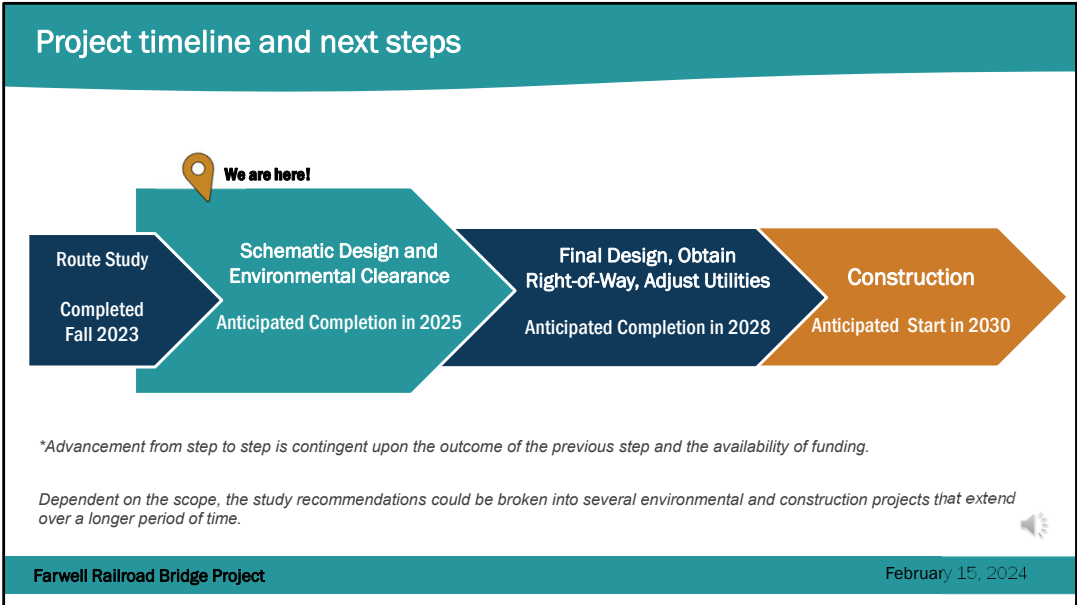


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Because of the interstate partnership between the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), both agencies are seeking federal funding for this project. Federal grants are available annually and are being sought after.

The agencies are collaborating in the overall project schematic and design. Working together enhances the likelihood for both agencies to meet federal expectations of the environmental assessment documentation and to allow for the overall progress of the project to move from development to construction.

At this time, project funding is preliminary and expected to be \$60 million. Should the project move forward, funding and funding sources will be presented in the fall of 2024 at a public hearing.



We have completed the route study phase of project development, which allowed the agencies to move forward with the development of a schematic design. We have two public meetings scheduled this month. Following the closure of the comment period, both NMDOT and TxDOT will gather to review the feedback and comments delivered. Once the comment review process is completed, both agencies will decide on the next steps.

We do anticipate to move forward and begin the environmental documentation and technical analysis for the Farwell and Texico Railroad Bridge Project. The environmental study phase and completed schematic design is estimated to be completed in 24 months. Results from the environmental study are required before we can move forward to complete the schematic design.

The next project phase would involve right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation and final design. This phase typically takes an additional 1 to 3 years to complete. This is where offers and negotiations would occur with property owners to acquire needed right of way. Once this phase is completed, the project can move into construction, if construction funding is available.

The project development process consists of four phases, each involving stakeholder and public engagement. The timeline of each phase noted here are only estimates. The combined project development phases may take anywhere from 8 to 12 years, which is all dependent on the availability of funding and agreements with primary stakeholders. Advancement from phase to phase is contingent upon the outcome of the previous phase, and the availability of funding.

The diagram is titled "Environmental analysis" and is contained within a rectangular frame. It features a light tan header bar at the top. Below the header, eight circular icons are arranged in two rows. Each icon is centered above its corresponding category name. The first row includes: an owl icon for "BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES", three stylized human figures for "COMMUNITY IMPACTS", a tree icon for "ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE", a water drop icon for "WATER REOSOURCES", and a flask icon for "HAZARDOUS MATERIALS". The second row includes: crossed hammers for "ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES", a stack of books for "HISTORIC RESOURCES", and a speaker icon for "TRAFFIC NOISE". A small speaker icon is also present in the bottom right corner of the diagram area. At the bottom of the frame, a teal bar contains the text "Farwell Railroad Bridge Project" on the left and "February 15, 2024" on the right.

Project staff have identified and evaluated potential environmental impacts that could occur as a result of constructing the proposed railroad bridge project. The environmental constraints identified have been labeled on a preliminary environmental constraint's map. This map has been made accessible on the public meeting page, and was the same document provided in the Route Study public involvement.

Areas reviewed include biological resources, community impacts, environmental justice, water resources, hazardous materials, archaeological resources, historic resources, and traffic noise.

Findings of the analyses indicate no significant impacts are anticipated to these resource areas. Additional documentation and technical reports will be prepared as the project evolves and will become accessible at such completion of the environmental assessment document.

Contact us with questions through the contacts found below:

<p>Kylan Francis, P.E. TxDOT - Director of Transportation Planning and Development 135 Slaton Rd. Lubbock, TX 79404-5201 (806) 748-4490</p>	<p>Michael Smelker, P.E. NMDOT - Assistant District Engineer-Construction P.O. Box 1457 Roswell, NM 88202 (575) 202-3339</p>
<p>Julia Perschnick, P.E. TxDOT - District Advanced Planning Engineer 135 Slaton Rd. Lubbock, TX 79404-5201 (806) 748-4518</p>	<p>Louis Matta, P.E. NMDOT - Assistant District Engineer-Engineering P.O. Box 1457 Roswell, NM 88202 (575) 291-9005</p>

You may also submit questions by email to:
lbb_projects@txdot.gov

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Please don't hesitate to contact either of the listed project contacts with any questions about the proposed project. Comments on the project must be submitted in writing at the public meetings or by email or mail to be included in the public meeting documentation after March 8, 2024.

You may call or email these project contacts Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. with any questions at any time in the project development process, and please be aware of time zones. TxDOT Project contacts follow the central time zone and NMDOT project contacts follow mountain time zone.

How to submit comments?

All comments must be received, or post marked by Friday, March 8, 2024 to be addressed in the Public Meeting Document.

 **MAIL COMMENT CARD TO:**
 TxDOT Lubbock District
 Attn: ENV Office
 135 Slaton Rd.
 Lubbock, TX 79404

 **EMAIL COMMENT TO:**
 LBB_projects@txdot.gov

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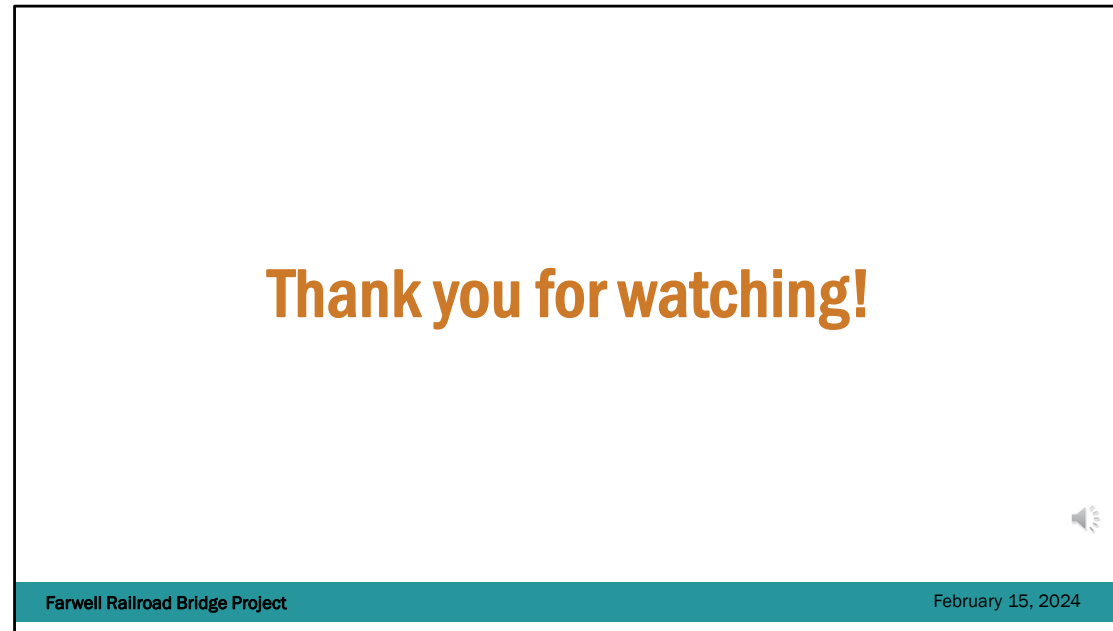
Your comments are very important to both agencies and will contribute greatly to the success of this railroad bridge design. Comments and feedback may be provided at one of the available in-person public meetings. Comments may be made throughout the comment period and will be included in the public meeting summary documentation.

We are asking that the public provide their comments in one of the following ways:

- You may email your comments to: LBB_projects@txdot.gov
- Download, print, and fill out a comment card and mail it to the Texas Department of Transportation, Lubbock District, Attention ENV Office at 135 Slaton Road, Lubbock, TX 79404

You may find the comment card in meeting materials at the TxDOT website. Please go to www.TxDOT.gov. Type in “Farwell Railroad Bridge Project” in the keyword search at the top right of the TxDOT homepage. All your feedback, comments, and questions will be given careful consideration and responded to in a summary report that will be posted on the project website once the comment and review period is completed.

The public comment period for the public meetings will close on Friday, March 8, 2024. Please ensure that your comment is received or postmarked by this date. The public may also email or call project staff during regular office hours to ask questions about the project at any time in the project development process.



Thank you for joining the public meeting for the Farwell and Texico Railroad Bridge Project. We appreciate you attending. Please take the opportunity to review the project materials and remember to submit your comments on or before Friday, March 8, 2024, to be a part of the official meeting documentation.

This concludes our presentation.

Open floor

- If you would like to ask representatives a question at this time in front of the audience, you may approach the microphone.
- We will we ask members of the audience approaching the microphone to write their question on the card provided so that we may make the question accessible to those attending virtually. Please provide your name and address in the public meeting documentation.
- We will have staff available to answer questions at the designated tables displaying schematics.
- If you choose to solely submit a question or comment discreetly, we have forms available throughout the room for your convenience.

In person: If you would like to ask NMDOT and TxDOT representatives a question in front of the audience, you may approach the microphone.

We will we ask members of the audience approaching the microphone to write their question on the card provided so that we may make the question accessible to those attending virtually. Please provide your name and address in the public meeting documentation.

We will have staff available to answer questions at the designated tables displaying schematics.

If you choose to solely submit a question or comment discreetly, we have forms available throughout the room for your convenience.