

# WICHITA FALLS DISTRICT

## I-35 Improvement Project | Cooke County

### Project Overview

TxDOT and ODOT are planning improvements for the widening of I-35 from FM 3002 in Cooke County, Texas to mile marker 3 in Love County, Oklahoma. Planned improvements include updating the roadway to current design standards and providing congestion relief for expected future traffic increases.

As part of the planning process, TxDOT is conducting an environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed widening and realignment of I-35 from FM 3002 in Cooke County, Texas, to mile marker 3 in Love County, Oklahoma. An EA is a report that documents the existing social, economic and environmental conditions, assesses effects of the proposed alternative and identifies potential mitigation. The EA will also evaluate the effects of a no-build alternative.

The 24-mile project extending from FM 3002 to mile marker 3 in Oklahoma proposes:

- One additional lane in each direction (interim configuration)
- Two additional lanes in each direction (ultimate configuration)
- Realignment of portions of the roadway
- Two new bridges over the Red River
- Removal of the northbound Red River bridge
- Conversion of the southbound Red River bridge to a frontage road
- Realignment of a rail corridor for approximately 6.5 miles
- Conversion of two-way frontage roads to one way
- New right of way



## Get Involved

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The most recent public meetings for this project occurred on Feb. 5, 2015, in Gainesville, Texas and Sept. 30, 2015, in Thackerville, Oklahoma. Attendees were invited to review the purpose and need for the project, review evaluation and screening of alternatives, review a preliminary schematic of the Preferred Build Alternative and to provide input. As a result of input received at the public meetings, TxDOT revised the schematic to accommodate requests and lessen impacts.

TxDOT is working with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Burlington North Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) and Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. to conduct the EA. Coordination with FHWA and USACE is required to minimize impacts to the Ray Roberts Fee Area and to analyze the proposed BNSF rail realignment. As a result, one preferred rail realignment is being carried forward for further analysis. TxDOT is currently working with Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and their consultant to determine the preferred route of the railroad relocation. A meeting to present to the public and collect comments on the proposed changes in the realignment of the BNSF rail line within the Valley View section of the I-35 improvements was held on Sept. 28, 2017. Comments were also collected on the proposed changes in access at 3rd Street in Valley View, Texas.

Once the FHWA approves the Draft EA, a public hearing will occur to solicit comments from the public. A Final EA addressing all comments will be prepared with an expected Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). This process is expected to be complete by 2019.

## Next Steps

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- Consider public comments
- Finalize environmental analysis
- Project decision from TxDOT/FHWA for the final approved Environmental Assessment
- Complete final design
- Continue right of way acquisition

TxDOT has property descriptions for the majority of the proposed right of way (ROW) along the corridor. TxDOT has hired a consultant to prepare detailed plans for the section from FM 3002 to 0.2 miles south of US 82. TxDOT has earmarked funding in 2021 for the portion of I-35 south of US 82/Gainesville, but the Wichita Falls District is working to have a stretch of I-35 from 0.2 miles south of US 82 to 1.4 miles South of Spring Creek Road ready before 2021 should funding become available. Dates and timing of construction are subject to change if environmental clearance, ROW acquisition, utility relocation, or railroad relocation are not completed on time or funding does not become available as anticipated.

## Project Contacts

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