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TxDOT's five goals: reduce congestion • enhance safety • expand economic opportunity  
• improve air quality • preserve the value of transportation assets.

For Immediate Release – October 7, 2009

## **TxDOT Responds to Citizen Comments on TTC-35**

*Department recommends No Action Alternative on TTC-35 environmental analysis*

AUSTIN – Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) officials announced Wednesday that, in response to citizen comments received during the environmental review of Trans-Texas Corridor-35, the department has recommended the No Action Alternative on the TTC-35 environmental study to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This recommendation by TxDOT will effectively end efforts to develop TTC-35 through the Trans-Texas Corridor concept.

It will take another three to six months to complete the TTC-35 Tier One Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Once the No Action Alternative is approved by FHWA, copies of the FEIS will be circulated throughout the study area for comment. After the required review and comment period is completed, and the comments are analyzed, the FHWA will issue a Record of Decision (ROD), which will officially conclude the environmental process for TTC-35.

“The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was signed into law for a reason: to make sure that proposed infrastructure development does not impose undue environmental stress on our citizens, our economy or our environment,” said Amadeo Saenz, TxDOT executive director. “Today’s announcement shows that the process works. Citizens all along the I-35 corridor did their civic duty by participating in public meetings and hearings, and by voicing their concerns. Now it’s our duty to respond to those concerns – by recommending the No Action Alternative for TTC-35.”

Once complete, the issuance of a ROD by FHWA reflecting the No Action Alternative will eliminate the corridor study area previously identified by the department and will cancel the planning comprehensive development agreement in effect for TTC-35. This will not impact ongoing construction of SH 130 segments five and six between Austin and Seguin. This recommendation also does not impact efforts to develop I-69 by focusing on improving existing infrastructure, as announced in 2008.

This announcement follows the retirement of the Trans-Texas Corridor concept, set forth in *Innovative Connectivity in Texas/Vision 2009* and announced in early 2009. *Innovative Connectivity* defined a new vision for TxDOT corridor development processes, but did not alter any existing environmental documents. The decision to recommend the No Action Alternative for the TTC-35 FEIS is in response to citizen comments received and information gathered during the environmental process. Future efforts to address mobility needs along the I-35 corridor will follow the principles set forth in the *Innovative Connectivity* document.

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“Congestion on I-35 is a serious transportation problem that must be addressed,” said Ted Houghton, Texas Transportation Commissioner. “The Commission and the department are committed to identifying and implementing the right congestion solutions for the I-35 corridor. Our future efforts to identify potential solutions will be led by citizens, ensure that each community's concerns are heard, and result in efforts to improve I-35 and other transportation assets that enhance safety and economic opportunity.”

When the TTC concept was introduced, the Texas Transportation Commission committed to widening I-35 to a minimum of six lanes from San Antonio to Hillsboro, and that commitment to “finish” I-35 stands today. In addition, TxDOT plans to reopen the public involvement process under the guidance of the I-35 Corridor Advisory Committee and the four I-35 segment committees. The Corridor Advisory Committee will present their public involvement plans to the Texas Transportation Commission at its regular meeting on October 29 in Fort Worth.

The funds invested in the study of TTC-35 remain a sound investment, as the analyses and citizen comments collected during the review may be used in the I-35 Corridor Advisory Committee's planning effort as well as other project-specific planning efforts.

Congestion on I-35 is a well-known problem, and is one that will certainly grow over time. I-35 appears on TxDOT's list of the 100 most congested roadways in the state 13 times – more than any other roadway. An estimated 45 percent of Texas' population resides along the I-35 corridor, with more people moving here each day.

For more information, visit [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov) or [www.keeptexasmoving.com](http://www.keeptexasmoving.com).

**The Texas Department of Transportation**

The Texas Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining nearly 80,000 miles of road and for supporting aviation, rail and public transportation across the state. TxDOT and its 15,000 employees strive to empower local leaders to solve local transportation problems, and to use new financial tools, including tolling and public-private partnerships, to reduce congestion and pave the way for future economic growth while enhancing safety, improving air quality and increasing the value of the state's transportation assets. Find out more at [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov).

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