



Texas Department of Transportation

DEWITT C. GREER STATE HIGHWAY BLDG. • 125 E. 11TH STREET • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-2483 • (512) 463-8585

October 6, 2009

Ms. Janice W. Brown
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
300 East 8th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

RE: TTC-35 Tier One Final Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Ms. Brown:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) intends to recommend the No Action Alternative as the preferred alternative in the Trans-Texas Corridor 35 (TTC-35) Tier One Final Environmental Impact Statement.

This recommendation is based on the following reasons. First, critical issues with the TTC concept, including citizen and elected official comments collected during the environmental process have demonstrated a degree of dissatisfaction with the TTC idea as a means of addressing future transportation challenges in the State of Texas. Specifically, work performed for the TTC-35 EIS and input from public and elected officials have led TxDOT to re-focus I-35 corridor planning efforts on identifying and addressing specific local or regional needs prior to developing a corridor-wide plan. This is evidenced in comments received within and outside the context of the two ongoing TTC environmental studies. Second, TxDOT, based on input and information gathered during the environmental process, has retired the TTC concept as a solution to addressing transportation needs in the I-35 travel corridor. Finally, TxDOT considers it appropriate to bring closure to the NEPA process by taking "No Action" on the TTC-35 Tier One action as will be disclosed in the Tier One FEIS.

For these reasons, TxDOT recommends that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) select the No Action Alternative in the TTC-35 Tier One Record of Decision. If, after circulation and public review of the document, the FHWA ultimately selects the No Action Alternative as the Tier One decision, TxDOT will continue to plan and develop projects in the I-35 travel corridor. TxDOT has initiated a citizens' planning process to identify and address existing and future transportation needs in the I-35 travel corridor. This planning process includes an I-35 Corridor Advisory Committee, I-35 Corridor Segment Committees, and public outreach. Projects identified through this planning process would be local or regional in nature and developed with their own need, purpose, and environmental processes.

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Please feel free to contact Mark E. Tomlinson, P.E., Director, Texas Turnpike Authority Division, at (512) 936-0903 if you have any questions regarding this recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amadeo Saenz Jr". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and a trailing flourish.

Amadeo Saenz, Jr., P.E.
Executive Director

cc: Mark E. Tomlinson, P.E., Director, Texas Turnpike Authority Division, P.E.