



*Challenging the Wisdom of the Trans Texas Corridor*



## A Citizens' Guide to Participating at Public Hearings on the I-69/TTC Tier-I Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

You will be participating in a formal public hearing process that is designed to receive your comments on a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). This public hearing is required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

An environmental impact statement (EIS) is an in-depth evaluation of an area's natural and human environment, project alternatives, and the potential for the proposed project to adversely affect the environment. It also considers the social and economic impact of a project and alternatives.

It is important for you to understand how to use the process to share your opinions in a way that can make the greatest impact on the decision making process and outcome.

Arrive early. The meetings begin at 5pm with an open house period. Expect TxDOT employees to circulate and speak with attendees. The formal hearing begins at 6:30pm.

The public hearing is not adversarial and is not a forum for debate. You should not ask questions and if you do you cannot expect to receive answers. This is however your opportunity to place comments on the official record. If you have questions arrive early and ask them during the open house period.

If you speak, and we encourage everyone to do so, please direct your remarks to the TxDOT official and refrain from addressing the audience. If someone speaking before you raised the same points or issues that you intended to address it is very important that you speak and repeat those points or issues again. Encourage others to attend and add their own comments or show support for comments and concerns of others by repeating them. TxDOT officials need to know that these concerns and issues are shared by more than one or two of the hundreds that might be in attendance.

Your time will be limited. To ensure that you cover all of the points you wish to make we suggest that you make notes or prepare your comments in advance. Additional, or more detailed comments, can be submitted in writing.

We expect that many people will want to speak at these hearings. Each speaker must fill-out a speaker's card. Please pick up, complete, and return your speaker's card immediately upon your arrival. Speakers will be called in the order that the cards are returned. Elected officials may be called earlier.

Comments made, whether oral or written are considered testimony. A stenographer (court reporter) will record your oral statements and prepare a written transcript of your testimony. You may give both oral testimony and written testimony. Public oral testimony will be limited to three minutes. You also have the opportunity to give your testimony privately to a stenographer during the open house period.

You do not need to be an expert to testify. When you testify focus on TTC-69 and the impact that it will have on you, your family, and your community.

A few specific statements about the DEIS can have a tremendous impact on the process. Please do not feel intimidated by the reporter or the formal structure of the hearing.

It is helpful for TxDOT to hear comments on the following:

- ▶ A particular alternative or impact assessment in the DEIS.
- ▶ In addition to what you do not like about an alternative what you do like.
- ▶ How the project or an alternative would affect you, your family, and your community.
- ▶ Any incomplete or erroneous information in the DEIS.

**Important Issues:**

*These are among the important issues being raised by CorridorWatch.org. If you agree with any of these opinions please feel free to include them in your testimony.*

**The No Build Alternative is the only reasonable alternative until such time as the underlying plan and DEIS includes public participation in the decision-making process.**

The Purpose and Need presented in the DEIS incorporates a project description based on The Crossroads of the Americas: The Trans Texas Corridor Plan. Accordingly, The Crossroads of the Americas plan has defined the project and provides the public and public officials with the only combination of facilities considered. There has been no public or public agency involvement or public or public agency input in defining the project that is the subject of the DEIS. There has been no coordination or reasonable opportunity for interested citizens, public officials, or agencies to participate in the underlying decision-making process.

**The DEIS and underlying plan should be modified to include only those facilities (roads, rail & utilities) that are reasonably necessary today without the unqualified speculation of future needs.**

The multi-modal plan described in the DEIS combines facilities that reportedly require a right-of-way width of up to 1,200 feet. No need has been demonstrated for such combination of facilities. Additionally, that width is far in excess of what is required to accommodate all potential facilities proposed by the plan over the projected 50-year period. The excessive land taking has not been properly justified, nor the resulting impact fully assessed.

**The DEIS and underlying plan should be modified to reexamine the specific transportation needs of the I-69 corridor and those communities within the corridor’s area of impact.**

There is no reasonable justification for the New Location Corridor Alternative. The DEIS presents the New Location Corridor Alternative as the Recommended Preferred Alternative. The DEIS concludes that it provides the best opportunity to meet the Purpose and Need. However, the Purpose and Need set forth in the DEIS fails to fully consider the transportation needs of the I-69 corridor and those communities with the corridor. With proper consideration, the use of existing infrastructure, planned transportation facilities, and additional facility upgrades where required, could provide a better alternative than the New Location Corridor Alternative.

If the number of people attending exceeds the capacity of the facility, then the doors will be closed and a second meeting will be scheduled in your area. If this occurs, TxDOT will advise the location, time and date of the second meeting.

If you are a disabled individual who needs reasonable accommodation to attend or testify at a hearing please contact TxDOT at (512) 305-9536 at least three working days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.



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