



## **US 277 SONORA SAFETY ROUTE STUDY FACT SHEET**

### **Project Background**

US 277 is part of the Texas Highway Freight Network and the Ports-to-Plains Corridor (a Congressional-designated High Priority Corridor on the National Highway System). This section of US 277 is also on the Texas Highway Trunk system of roadways. These designations collectively point to US 277's strategic importance and viability as a major economic driver in the region.

In March 2010, TxDOT published the final report "Sonora Relief Route Investigative Study," which documented the planning process for a possible relief route for Sonora that was conducted in the late 2000s. TxDOT initiated this US 277 Sonora Safety Route Study in the Spring of 2019. This study builds upon that previous investigative study.

### **Summary of Public Meeting on July 18, 2019**

On July 18, 2019, TxDOT held a Public Meeting for the US 277 Sonora Safety Route Study. The meeting included an open house starting at 6 p.m. with a formal presentation at 6:30 p.m. At the public meeting, TxDOT presented the study purpose and need, crash rate data, environmental constraints, and the process they would use for conducting the study. Maps were also on display and attendees could provide their input about the proposed study area boundary, potential constraints in the study area, and provide suggestions of where a future Safety Route for US 277 could be located.

### **Feedback from Public Meeting**

Thirty-three citizens and four elected officials attended the public meeting on July 18, 2019. TxDOT received five formal comments during the comment period. Attendees also provided their input during the meeting. Feedback received from the public at the meeting and during the comment period included:

- Maintain potential future interstate compatibility
- Expand the study area to the north
- Consider oil/gas wells within the study area
- Limit the study area to the east
- Preserve the gas station on the east side of Sonora and its economic impact
- Consider corridor placement in relation to downtown Sonora

### **Summary of Public Meeting on October 22, 2019**

The second US 277 Sonora Safety Route Public Meeting was held on October 22, 2019. The meeting included an open house starting at 5 p.m. with a formal presentation at 5:30 p.m. TxDOT presented historic traffic data and population forecasts. Next, the preliminary alternatives were presented along with the Phase I Screening Matrix that was used to determine which alternatives would advance. Maps of each alternative were displayed for attendees to view. The public was asked on the comment form to choose their preferred alternative on the comment form.

### **Feedback from Public Meeting**

Thirty-five citizens and four elected officials attended the October 22, 2019 Public Meeting. TxDOT received 64 formal comments during the comment period. Attendees were asked to report their preference for an alternative on the comment form. Of the comments received, the majority preferred the purple alternative, followed by the green alternative. General comments included:

- Avoid residences
- Keep the corridor close to Sonora

### **Purpose of Today's Meeting**

The purpose of today's final public meeting on the Safety Route Study is to present the Advancing Alternatives and receive input on the Recommended Alternative for the US 277 Sonora Safety Route Study. The Advancing Alternatives are shown on the next page, and the Phase II Evaluation Matrix along with the Recommended Alternative are located on the back. Following this meeting, TxDOT will review the public input on the Recommended Alternative and prepare technical and feasibility reports.



Phase II Evaluation Matrix

CRITERIA	ALTERNATIVES			
	Green (8.08 miles)	Purple (7.74 miles)	Red (7.46 miles)	Teal (7.23 miles)
<b>Safety</b>				
Provides separate safety route for through traffic (yes/no)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Improves access of emergency services to emergency facilities (yes/no)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Improves access of motorists to emergency services (yes/no)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reduces crashes (estimated change in 2050 crashes per year versus no build)	-23	-23	-20	-17
<b>Mobility</b>				
Reduces oversized traffic through downtown Sonora (yes/no)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Travel time savings (minutes)	6.6	6.6	6.8	5.5
Interstate compatibility (yes/ no)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Modifications to local connectivity and access (yes/no)	No	No	Yes	No
<b>Cost*</b>				
Right-of-way cost (dollars)	500,000	451,000	446,000	563,000
Construction Cost (dollars)	510,400,000	451,900,000	476,300,000	610,800,000
<b>Environmental (within a 1,000-foot corridor) **</b>				
Streams (linear feet)	20,664	19,491	18,565	22,423
Oil and gas wells (counts)	37	31	28	31
Pipeline crossings (feet)	87,187	78,293	80,301	75,681
Residences (count)	0	0	1	4
Businesses (count)	1	2	3	1
Environmental Justice -low income and/or minority populations (within one mile)	yes	yes	yes	yes
Parks and Recreational areas (count)	0	0	0	0
<b>Stakeholder Involvement</b>				
Stakeholder Responses	17	29	7	6

\*All costs are for planning purposes only. They are escalated to 2021 dollars and are not separated by funding source. Costs shown are not a guarantee that all project related costs will be funded by TxDOT.

\*\*The width of each corridor alternative is 1,000 feet. Based on the typical section, an alignment would only require 400 feet of right-of-way within in the 1,000-foot corridor.

**Recommended Alternative: Purple**

After applying the Phase II Matrix to the Advancing Alternatives, the purple alternative was determined to best meet the criteria and the purpose and need of the project.

The Purple Alternative starts at US 277 south of Sonora. It travels north on the west side of Sonora (on the east side of the Green Alternative). Just south of I-10, the Purple Alternative follows the same path north as the Green Alternative. The Purple Alternative has potential floodplain impacts and potential impacts to an archeological site associated with it. This alternative is 7.74 miles in length. One new interchange would be required at I-10 (interim phase) and it would require two new interchanges, one at US 277 south of Sonora and one at US 277 north of Sonora (ultimate phase).



