

T

hank you for joining us and participating in the decision-making process on TTC-35, a proposed project from Oklahoma to Mexico/Gulf Coast. Public input is an important part of the environmental study. Between July 10 and August 10, 2006, the Texas Department of Transportation will hold 54 public hearings throughout the study area.

#### ■ WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING?

The public hearing is for TxDOT to listen to Texans comment on the draft environmental study for TTC-35. At the hearings, the public will learn more about the narrowed study area and the other alternatives, find out why TTC-35 is needed, review the project maps and submit official comments.

Before the hearing, the public will have an opportunity during the open house to get their questions answered by TxDOT staff and review project maps and other materials.

#### ■ HOW DO I SUBMIT COMMENTS?

There are several ways to provide comments on the draft environmental impact statement for TTC-35. Most importantly, all comments must be received by TxDOT no later than **August 21, 2006**.

At the public hearing, transcribers, comment boxes and computer stations will be available beginning at 5 pm in the meeting room. The public can also sign up to give oral comments during the hearing. In an effort to give everyone a chance to speak, oral comments should be limited to three minutes.

After the public hearing, comments can be sent in through the project website, [www.keeptexasmoving.org](http://www.keeptexasmoving.org), or can be mailed to TTC-35, P.O. Box 14707, Austin, TX 78761-4707.

## PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULE

NORTH	CENTRAL	SOUTH
<b>Bonham</b> — Bonham High School Cafeteria 1002 Warpath Dr. <b>July 11</b>	<b>Bastrop</b> — Bastrop Middle School Cafeteria 709 Old Austin Hwy. <b>Aug. 2</b>	<b>Alice</b> — Knights of Columbus Hall 1050 Cecilia St. <b>Aug. 8</b>
<b>Cleburne</b> — Cleburne Civic Center 1501 W. Henderson St. <b>July 12</b>	<b>Caldwell</b> — Caldwell High School Auditorium 550 County Road 307 <b>July 20</b>	<b>Beeville</b> — Beeville Community Center 111 E. Corpus Christi St. <b>July 31</b>
<b>Corsicana</b> — Drane Intermediate School Auditorium, 100 S. 18th St. <b>July 20</b>	<b>Cameron</b> — Cameron ISD Performing Arts Center, 303 E. 12th St. <b>July 18</b>	<b>Brownsville</b> — City of Brownsville Events Center 1 Event Ctr. Blvd. <b>Aug. 10</b>
<b>Dallas</b> — Grauwlyer Community Center 7780 Harry Hines Blvd. <b>July 27</b>	<b>Clifton</b> — Clifton High School Cafeteria 1101 N. Avenue Q <b>July 19</b>	<b>Calallen</b> — Calallen High School Cafeteria 4001 Wildcat Dr. <b>Aug. 2</b>
<b>Decatur</b> — Decatur Civic Center 2010 W. US 380 <b>July 11</b>	<b>Georgetown</b> — Georgetown ISD Klett Center for the Performing Arts, 2211 N. Austin Ave. <b>July 24</b>	<b>Falfurrias</b> — Sacred Heart Parish Hall 201 W. Blucher <b>Aug. 7</b>
<b>Denton</b> — Univ. of North Texas Gateway Ctr. Ballroom, 801 N. Texas Blvd. <b>July 11</b>	<b>Giddings</b> — Sons of Hermann Hall 1031 County Road 223 <b>July 26</b>	<b>Flatonina</b> — Flatonia ISD Cafetorium 400 E. 4th St. <b>July 31</b>
<b>Ennis</b> — Knights of Columbus Hall 850 S. Interstate 45 <b>July 10</b>	<b>Groesbeck</b> — Groesbeck High School Auditorium 1202 N. Ellis St. <b>July 20</b>	<b>Floresville</b> — Floresville High School Gymnasium 1832 Highway 97 East <b>Aug. 3</b>
<b>Fort Worth</b> — Will Rogers Memorial Center, Exhibits Hall, Round Up Inn, 3400 Burnett-Tandy Dr. <b>July 17</b>	<b>Hearne</b> — Hearne Junior High School Auditorium 401 Wheelock St. <b>July 19</b>	<b>George West</b> — George West High School Cafetorium, 913 Houston St. <b>Aug. 9</b>
<b>Gainesville</b> — Gainesville Civic Center 311 S. Weaver St. <b>July 10</b>	<b>Hillsboro</b> — Hill College Performing Arts Center Auditorium, 112 Lamar Dr. <b>July 13</b>	<b>Gonzales</b> — Gonzales High School Cafeteria 1801 Sarah DeWitt Dr. <b>Aug. 1</b>
<b>Granbury</b> — GISD Pearl Street Conference Center 205 E. Pearl St. <b>July 18</b>	<b>Lockhart</b> — Lockhart High School Cafetorium #1 Lion Country Dr. <b>July 31</b>	<b>Harlingen</b> — Casa de Amistad 1204 Fair Park Blvd. <b>Aug. 9</b>
<b>Greenville</b> — Fletcher Warren Civic Center 5501 S. Bus. Hwy. 69 <b>July 17</b>	<b>Manor</b> — Manor High School Cafeteria 12700 Gregg Manor Rd. <b>Aug. 1</b>	<b>Kingsville</b> — King Ranch Museum 405 N. 6th St. <b>Aug. 1</b>
<b>McKinney</b> — McKinney High School Cafeteria 1400 Wilson Creek Pkwy. <b>July 13</b>	<b>Marlin</b> — Marlin High School Auditorium 1400 Capps <b>July 25</b>	<b>Laredo</b> — TAMU Western Hemispheric Trade Ctr., Rm. 111, 5201 University Blvd. <b>Aug. 7</b>
<b>Mesquite</b> — Poteet High School Auditorium 3300 Poteet Dr. <b>July 18</b>	<b>McGregor</b> — McGregor High School Auditorium 903 Bluebonnet Pkwy. <b>July 17</b>	<b>McAllen</b> — McAllen Convention Center 1300 S. 10th St. <b>Aug. 8</b>
<b>Paris</b> — Love Civic Center 2025 S. Collegiate Dr. <b>July 12</b>	<b>Rockdale</b> — Knights of Columbus Hall 655 US Highway 79 E <b>July 27</b>	<b>Pearsall</b> — Pearsall High School Cafeteria 1990 Maverick Dr. <b>Aug. 7</b>
<b>Sherman</b> — Sherman Municipal Ballroom 405 N. Rusk St. <b>July 10</b>	<b>Seguin</b> — Seguin-Guadalupe County Coliseum 810 S. Guadalupe St. <b>Aug. 9</b>	<b>Pleasanton</b> — Pleasanton High School Cafeteria 1100 W. Adams St. <b>Aug. 2</b>
<b>Terrell</b> — Terrell ISD Performing Arts Center 400 Poetry Rd. <b>July 19</b>	<b>Smithville</b> — Smithville High School Cafeteria 285 State Highway 95 <b>Aug. 3</b>	<b>San Antonio</b> — East Central High School Cafetorium, 7173 FM 1628 <b>Aug. 8</b>
<b>Waxahachie</b> — Waxahachie Civic Center Ballroom 2000 Civic Center Ln. <b>July 12</b>	<b>Taylor</b> — Taylor High School Auditorium 3101 N. Main St. <b>July 25</b>	<b>Yorktown</b> — Yorktown Community Mess Hall 60 Community Hall Rd. <b>Aug. 10</b>
<b>Weatherford</b> — Weatherford College, Alkek Fine Arts Center, 225 College Park Dr. <b>July 13</b>	<b>Temple</b> — Frank W. Mayborn Civic & Convention Center Main Hall, 3303 N. 3rd St. <b>July 26</b>	
	<b>Waco</b> — Waco Convention Center, Brazos Room 100 Washington Ave. <b>July 24</b>	

## ■ WHAT IS TTC-35?

TTC-35 is a proposed multi-use, transportation project that could incorporate existing and new highways, railways and utility right of ways.

As envisioned, it may include separate lanes for passenger vehicles and large trucks, freight railways, high-speed commuter railways, and infrastructure for utilities including water lines, oil and gas pipelines, and transmission lines for electricity, broadband and other telecommunications services.

## ■ WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF TTC-35?

The purpose of TTC-35 is: *To improve international, interstate and intrastate movement of goods and people; address the anticipated transportation needs of Texas from the Texas/Oklahoma state line to the Texas/Mexico border and /or Texas Gulf Coast along the I-35 corridor for the next 20 to 50 years; and, sustain and enhance the economic vitality of the State of Texas.*

## ■ WHAT IS THE NEED FOR TTC-35?

Based on analysis included in the draft environmental impact statement, TTC-35 is needed to meet the state's long-term transportation demands. It will compliment the existing highway system by providing alternatives to I-35. Some of the findings in the DEIS are:

- Nearly 45 percent of 21 million Texans live within 50 miles of I-35.
- Current traffic volumes for most segments of I-35 exceed design capacity.
- By 2025, I-35 would need to be expanded to 16 lanes in the metro areas and 12 through Central Texas, according to previous studies.
- Commercial trucks on Texas roads are projected to increase by 403 percent from 1998 to 2060.

TTC-35 is intended to relieve congestion on Interstate 35. Rapid population growth and a substantial increase in the number of vehicles using I-35 have left many segments of the interstate overloaded, particularly through Central and North Texas. Sizable growth in both population and traffic are expected to continue indefinitely.

## ■ WHERE WILL TTC-35 BE LOCATED?

A final route location will be determined through the ongoing environmental process, which includes public input.

Generally, TTC-35 will parallel I-35 and extend from

Oklahoma to Mexico with possible connections to the Gulf Coast. The first step is to focus on narrowing the study area. Final project routes will be determined in the next set of environmental studies.

## ■ WHEN WILL TTC-35 BE CONSTRUCTED?

Plans call for TTC-35 to be built in phases over the next 50 years with the development of specific projects to be prioritized according to Texas' transportation needs.

Before right of way and construction can begin, TTC-35 must first gain federal environmental approval for a final route alignment. The first step is to complete the ongoing environmental study that focuses on narrowing the study area. A decision from the Federal Highway Administration is expected as early as Summer 2007.

After that, additional studies will further refine the narrowed study area into the final route alignment for roads, rail and utilities. It is not until a final route alignment has been federally approved that right of way and construction could begin.

## ■ DESCRIBE THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS USED TO STUDY TTC-35.

The environmental studies for TTC-35 follow the stringent federal rules of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The process is the same as for any other transportation project. However, the only difference is that the studies for TTC-35 are being conducted in two tiers.

The goal of Tier One, which is currently ongoing and began in February 2004, is simply to narrow the broad study area from 50-60 miles wide to approximately 10 miles wide. This is considered a corridor-level decision rather than a route-alignment decision.

To identify a narrowed study area, a detailed environmental analysis is being conducted in Tier One. This started with a thorough documentation establishing the project's need and purpose. Subsequent analysis focused on land use, engineering and design, traffic flow, public input and potential impacts on environmental factors (such as wetlands, farmland soils, cultural resources and socio-economic issues.) Throughout the environmental study, a no-action alternative is always considered.

The analysis was completed and a draft environmental impact statement was prepared, which identified the narrowed study area (technically called a preferred alternative.) The draft report was approved by the Federal Highway Administration and hearings are scheduled to give the public a chance to review the draft report and all the alternatives so that they can provide comments before a final report is submitted.

Should the result of Tier One be a narrowed study area, then Tier Two studies would be initiated to determine a final route alignment. Tier Two studies would address



ABOVE: Trans-Texas Corridor Public Meeting.

site-specific details, potential project impacts, costs and mitigation for alternatives.

Tier Two studies can take the form of categorical exclusions, environmental assessments or environmental impact statements (EIS). On average, an EIS can take between 3 – 5 years to complete.

#### ■ **WHAT DECISION WILL BE MADE IN THE TIER ONE STUDY?**

The goal of Tier One is to identify a preferred alternative by comparing the corridor alternatives including the no-action alternative. Approval of Tier One would not establish final route alignments or result in right of way or construction-related activities.

#### ■ **HOW IS THE NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE DEFINED?**

The no-action alternative simply means that a narrowed study area would not be identified and the TTC-35 project as envisioned would not proceed.

#### ■ **HOW WAS THE NARROWED STUDY AREA (PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE) SELECTED?**

The analysis is based on 12 Reasonable Corridor Alternatives (RCAs) that were identified and reviewed for potential environmental impacts. None of the 12 RCAs were eliminated based on potential environmental impacts. Next, the 12 RCAs were reviewed for how well each met TTC-35's need and purpose. Two RCAs made this cut. These two were then reviewed for planning and engineering criteria, such as length, area, slope and existing infrastructure. Of the two RCAs, one scored substantially higher because it contained 195 miles of existing highway and 214 miles of existing rail. There was strong public input that existing highways and rail should be used where possible. Cumulatively, this resulted in RCA 5 being recommended as the narrowed study area.

#### ■ **WHAT DID THE DEIS RECOMMEND AS THE NARROWED STUDY AREA (PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE)?**

On April 4, 2006, the FHWA approved the DEIS which recommended RCA 5 as the narrowed study area for TTC-35. The narrowed study area extends from Gainesville to Laredo, generally 10 miles wide and within close proximity to I-35 and metropolitan centers, except where it is centered on I-35 south of San Antonio to Laredo.

#### ■ **WHY WAS THE REASONABLE CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVE 5 RECOMMENDED AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE?**

This narrowed study area was recommended because it best meets the need and purpose of TTC-35, which is to improve the flow of traffic on I-35 over the next 50 years.

Based on the traffic analysis, RCA 5 was identified as the

best performing alternative at relieving congestion on I-35 and within the study area. The traffic analysis demonstrated that under a tolled scenario RCA 5 and RCA 7 had the two highest scores compared to other alternatives, 40 and 47 percent respectively. RCA 5 and RCA 7 also had the highest scores under the non-tolled scenario, 44 and 30 percent respectively.

Based on the environmental criteria, RCA 5 was comparable to other RCAs.

Another factor considered was the incorporation of existing highways and railways, a comment frequently made during the environmental process. Based on this data, RCA 5 was selected because it contained the most existing highways and rail — 195 miles and 214 miles respectively.

Therefore, RCA 5 was recommended as the preferred alternative.

#### ■ **WHY WAS THE NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE NOT RECOMMENDED AS THE PREFERRED CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVE?**

The analysis of the no action alternative showed that the planned transportation projects within the study area are not expected to reduce congestion levels projected for 2030. In addition, expanding existing transportation facilities alone would not relieve congestion on I-35 and meet the state's long-term transportation needs for the next 20 to 50 years along the I-35 corridor.

#### ■ **WHAT PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED FOR TTC-35?**

The environmental process began in February 2004 and thus far three series of public meetings were held, totaling more than 117 public meetings and more than 4,000 comments. To inform the public of these meetings, display ads were published in local newspapers in addition to the required legal notices. In addition, meeting flyers were mailed to more than 34,000 businesses, property owners, civic organizations, schools, regional planning groups and local, state and federal officials.

By the end of this summer, 54 public hearings will be held.

Also, project updates on the environmental process and project milestones are posted on the website ([www.keeptexasmoving.org](http://www.keeptexasmoving.org)), and project information has been provided to numerous media inquiries.



*ABOVE: Trans-Texas Corridor Public Meeting.*

*Continued on reverse.*



*Continued from previous page.*

#### ■ WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS FOR TTC-35?

After the 54 public hearings are completed, TxDOT staff will review the comments and make any necessary adjustments to the narrowed study area. This will be compiled into the Tier One Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) which will be made available to the public for at least 30 days. Notice of the FEIS availability will be listed in the Federal and Texas Registers and will be posted on the TTC website.

The Tier One FEIS is expected to be completed by Winter 2006.

Next, the Tier One FEIS will be submitted to FHWA for a decision. The FHWA may issue a Record of Decision on the narrowed study area as early as Summer 2007. Since Tier One does not authorize right of way or construction activities, federal approval of Tier One would only allow Tier Two studies to be initiated.

Tier Two environmental studies could begin as TTC-35 projects for roads, rail and utilities are identified based on transportation need.

#### ■ WHAT IS THE RIGHT OF WAY PROCESS FOR TTC-35?

Right of way for TTC-35 will be acquired in the same way it's acquired for all other roads. There will be an

independent appraisal, an offer and opportunity for negotiation, and the same due process rights to a jury trial if the property owner is not satisfied with the TxDOT offer.

Since the completion of the Tier One study does not identify a final route alignment, right of way acquisition nor condemnation can be authorized. The only form of property acquisition available at the conclusion of Tier One is a purchase option. TxDOT may only enter into a purchase option with a willing landowner.

#### ■ WHAT IS A PURCHASE OPTION?

To preserve future transportation corridors, TxDOT may enter into an agreement with a willing landowner for an option to purchase the property at a future

date. For this option, the landowner will be paid a fee and forgo additional development on the property. If TxDOT chooses to buy the land, the landowner would be paid an additional sum based on the fair market value of the property.

### — TTC-35 TERMINOLOGY —

**TIERING** — A two-phased environmental process allowed under the National Environmental Policy Act that is typically used for large-scale projects. The Tier One study addressed broad issues. Tier Two studies focus on individual projects and the site-specific environmental impacts.

**STUDY AREA** — Established in 2004, the 77-county area delineated for the DEIS to evaluate and determine the most Reasonable Corridor Alternatives that met the TTC-35 need and purpose.

**MODAL TRANSITION ZONES** — Areas to be studied in Tier Two that will focus on how locally-developed transportation facilities within these zones could be incorporated into a TTC-35 facility(ies) in cooperation with elected officials and planning organizations.

**POTENTIAL CONNECTION ZONES** — Areas to be studied in Tier Two that will focus on the best way to connect to existing or future border facilities should TTC-35 advance to Tier Two environmental processes. In the DEIS, the connections zones are in Gainesville, Sherman-Denison and Laredo.

**REASONABLE CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES (RCA)** — For TTC-35, there are 12 reasonable alternatives that were developed from 180 preliminary corridor alternatives that could best meet the need and purpose of the project. These 12 RCAs and the No Action Alternative were evaluated in detail in the DEIS.

**RECOMMENDED PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE** — The alternative recommended in the DEIS as the preferred corridor (narrowed study area) for future study for TTC-35 that outperformed all other alternatives based on the environmental, planning and engineering, and traffic analyses.

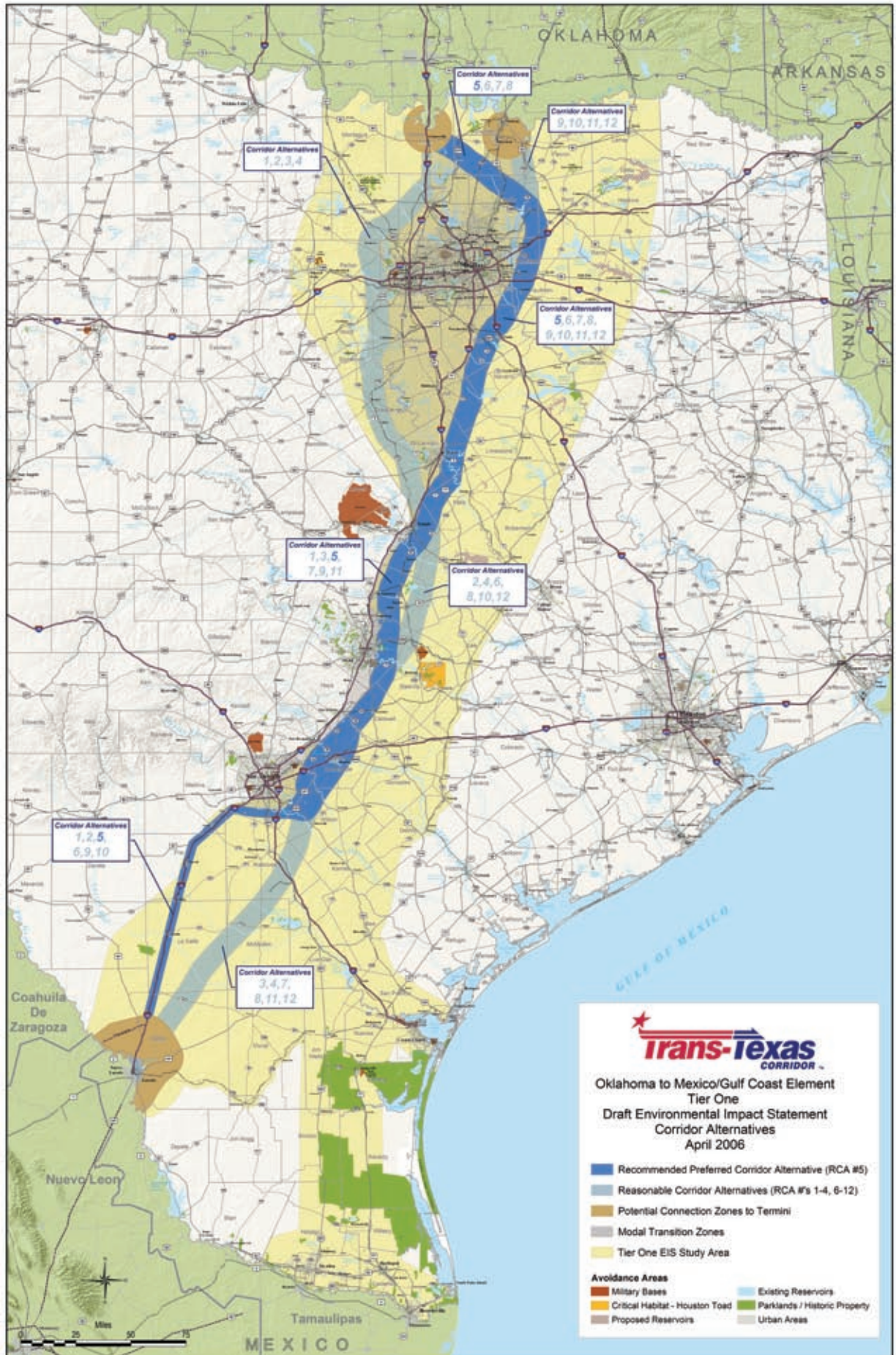


ABOVE: Trans-Texas Corridor Public Meeting.

## Contact the TTC-35 Project

**Toll-Free:** 1-877-872-6789  
**Website:** [www.keeptexasmoving.org](http://www.keeptexasmoving.org)  
**U.S. Mail:** TTC-35  
P.O. Box 14707  
Austin, TX 78761-4707

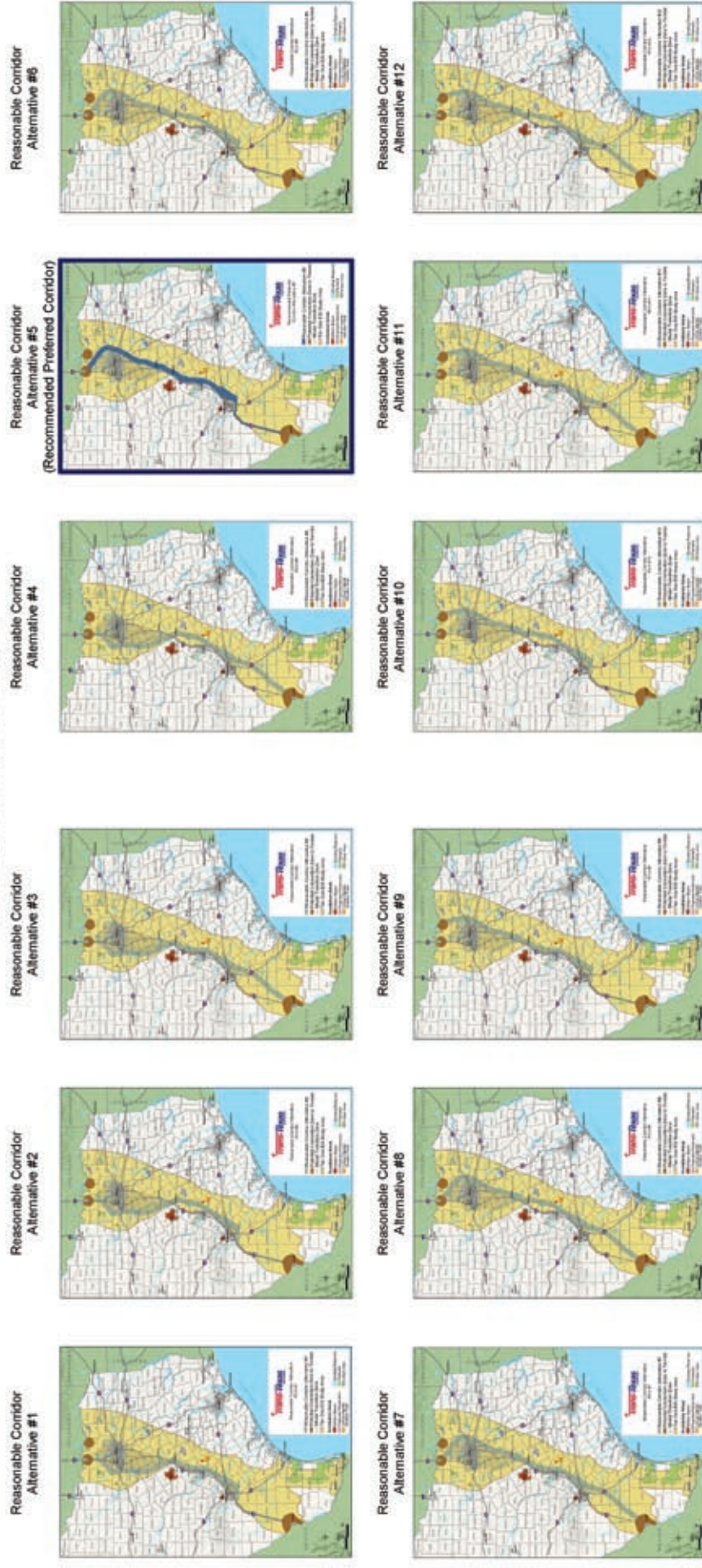
*To be included in the official record of the public meeting process, comments must be received by **August 21, 2006.***





# Reasonable corridor alternatives 1 through 12

## Oklahoma to Mexico/Gulf Coast Element Tier One Draft Environmental Impact Statement Reasonable Corridor Alternatives 1 through 12



### Map Element Definitions:

**Study Area** – The 77-county area delineated for the DEIS to evaluate and determine the most reasonable corridor alternatives that met the TTC-35 need and purpose.

**Reasonable Corridor Alternatives (RCA)** – The 12 reasonable corridor alternatives (labeled RCA 1 through RCA 12) that are the most reasonable alternatives out of the 180 preliminary corridor alternatives developed and shown to the public during the TTC-35 Spring 2005 public meetings. These 12 RCAs and the No Action Alternative were evaluated in detail in the DEIS.

**Recommended Preferred Corridor Alternative** – The alternative recommended in the DEIS as the preferred corridor for future study for TTC-35 because it outperformed all other alternatives based on the environmental, planning and engineering, and traffic analyses conducted and described in the DEIS.

**Modal Transition Zones** – Zones for future study during Tier Two environmental processes within which the various transportation facilities within these zones could be incorporated into a TTC-35 facility(ies) in cooperation with local elected officials and planning organizations.

**Potential Connection Zones** – Zones at Gainesville and Sherman-Denison (northern end) and at Laredo (southern end), which are common to all preliminary corridor alternatives approaching these termini. Because an alignment is not being proposed during the Tier One environmental process, it is not possible to identify alignment-specific logical endpoints (or termini) or connections to infrastructure at the northern and southern ends of proposed TTC-35. Therefore, these zones were established to allow for the identification of the best connection to existing or future border facilities should TTC-35 advance to Tier Two environmental processes.