



Finding of No Significant Impact for a FHWA Project

Proposed Action: International Bridge Trade Corridor (IBTC)

Project Limits: From 365 Tollway and FM 493 to I-2

City: Pharr, Alamo, Donna **County:** Hidalgo

State: Texas

TxDOT CSJ(s): 0921-02-142, 0921-02-202

In accordance with 23 CFR Section 771.119 and Section 771.121, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has determined that the IBTC Project will not have a significant impact on the human or natural environment.

This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Preferred Alternative is based on the final Environmental Assessment (EA) dated May 2023 and the entire project record. This decision documents the selection of Build Alternative, presented in the final EA as the Preferred Alternative, which is described as:

The Build Alternative is to construct a controlled access six-lane divided non-tolled roadway with four-lane frontage roads (two lanes in each direction), primarily on new location for approximately 13.15 miles, from the 365 Tollway and FM 493 intersection to I-2 in Hidalgo County, Texas. The Build Alternative consists of two design phases: Phase I (Interim) and Phase II (Ultimate). Phase I would primarily construct the four-lane, 12-foot-wide frontage roads (two lanes in each direction) with 10-foot-wide outside shoulders, and inside shoulders that vary from four to 10-foot-wide, from the 365 Tollway to FM 493. Phase I would also construct the mainlanes from the future Valley View Interchange to I-2. Phase II would consist of six 12-foot-wide mainlanes (three lanes in each direction), with 10-foot-wide inside and outside shoulders, divided by a concrete traffic barrier. The ultimate design would also provide for overpasses and ramps at major intersections. The project could include accommodations for bicycles and pedestrians in some locations. The inclusion of those facilities will be revisited in the detailed design phase when funding becomes available. The project would require the use of 59.16 acres of existing transportation right-of-way (ROW), the acquisition of an additional 678.0 acres of proposed ROW, and 28.3 acres of permanent easements.

A Notice of Availability of the draft EA was issued on February 15, 2022.

A public hearing for this project was held on March 17, 2022.

No changes to the draft EA were made as a result of comments made at the public hearing. The final EA reflects a comment received from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality received regarding the draft EA, and the schematic was revised to include new aerial background imagery and a minor notation revision.

Public Hearing Documentation has been prepared and is available for review on request.

The final EA and reports contained in the file of record have been independently evaluated by TxDOT and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the need, purpose, alternatives, environmental issues, impacts of the proposed project, and appropriate mitigation measures. These documents provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. These documents are incorporated by reference into this decisional document.

Based upon TxDOT's review and consideration of the analysis and evaluation contained in the EA for this project, and after careful consideration of all social, economic, and environmental factors, including input



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from the public involvement process, TxDOT hereby issues this Finding of No Significant Impact for the IBTC project from 365 Tollway and FM 493 to I-2.

TxDOT will ensure adherence and completion of all project commitments described in the final EA (May 2023), Section 8.0. TxDOT will ensure that any and all local, state, or federal permit requirements and conditions are met and otherwise complied with.

Mitigation required by the following environmental laws will be implemented for this project: Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, 23 CFR 772 – Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise (pending the results of the noise workshop and potential design considerations), Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and 42 U.S.C. Section 9601, *et seq.* (CERCLA/Superfund). The project will use Nationwide Permits for Section 404 authorization, and possibly Individual Permits. If impacts exceed threshold for requiring compensatory mitigation, then Section 404 compensatory mitigation will be undertaken.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated December 9, 2019, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

DocuSigned by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Booher".

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TxDOT Environmental Affairs Division Director

9/1/2023

Date