

## Summary of the US 380 September 23, 2020 Public Information Meeting

The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) held the first public information meeting for the **US 380 Phase A/B Corridor Study** from MP 158 to MP 242 (Texas State Line) (CN 2100740) on Wednesday, September 23, 2020. Due to current pandemic restrictions, the meeting was held as a Zoom meeting. Fourteen individuals attended the meeting, including representatives from local agencies, elected officials, and representatives from the NMDOT. Several representatives from the study team were also present but are not included in the number of meeting participants. The meeting began at 5:30 PM and ended at 6:30 PM. The purpose of the meeting was to provide information about the study, review the study's existing conditions, explain how to provide input to the study team, and describe the study's next steps.

Notification of the meeting occurred through:

- Placement of newspaper advertisements in the *Roswell Daily Record*, both on Sunday, September 13, 2020 and on Sunday, September 20, 2020.
- Distribution of a flyer via email to organizations, community facilities, government agencies and departments, school districts, etc.

The meeting included a PowerPoint presentation followed by a question and answer period before being concluded. The presentation included the following:

- An introduction to the study
- An introduction to the study team
- An overview of the study
- Review of existing conditions within the study corridor
- Review of the study process
- An explanation of how to provide input to the study

Comments and input to the study were collected through the:

- Study website: <https://bhi.mysocialpinpoint.com/us-380-corridor-study> (now shortened to <http://project.bhinc.com/US380>), which includes an interactive map where one can leave comments; a QR code included on meeting flyers also directs people to the website (website pages attached)
- Email: [US380@bhinc.com](mailto:US380@bhinc.com)
- Phone: 505.798.7857
- Mail: US 380 Study, Bohannon Huston, Inc., 7500 Jefferson Street NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109

Comments were encouraged to be received by the study team by Friday, November 20, 2021; however, comments would be collected, reviewed, and considered throughout the study.

Twenty-four questions and comments were received during and after the meeting via email, voicemail, telephone, website interactive map, and U.S. mail. These are summarized and ranked below by issues/concerns and recommendations:

## Issues/Concerns

- Traffic backs up behind a slower-moving vehicle (usually a semi). One car will get impatient and decide to pass all of the vehicles at once but will not have the time and room to safely pass everyone, therefore, forcing oncoming and/or same-direction traffic off of the road to get out of the way. (10 comments)
- Traffic is heavy and dangerous. Too many fatalities. Traffic statistics do not include “near crashes.” (7 comments)
- Need to make sure traffic counts are accurate. (2 comments)
- The highway is noisy. (1 comment)
- Chip and seal patch job is not effective. (1 comment)
- Fire danger is high along the sides of the highway. (1 comment)

## Recommendations

- Add passing lanes. (10 comments)
- Make the highway 4-lanes. (8 comments)
- Increase the speed of the highway. (4 comments)
- Pave/resurface the highway correctly. (3 comments)
- Add shoulders. (3 comments)
- Make the corridor a Safety Corridor. (2 comments)
- Mow/maintain the sides of the road to prevent fire danger. (1 comment)
- Add lights along the corridor. (1 comment)
- Add additional improvements (additional turn and travel lane length) to the turn into Gandy Marley, Inc. (1 comment)
- Add a second rest area on the north side of the highway to avoid crossing traffic. (1 comment)

## Summary of the US 380 March 24, 2021 Public Information Meeting

The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) held its second public information meeting for the **US 380 Phase A/B Corridor Study** from MP 158 to MP 242 (Texas State Line) (CN 2100740) on Wednesday, March 24, 2021. Due to current pandemic restrictions, the meeting was held as a Zoom meeting. Thirty-one individuals attended the meeting, including representatives from local agencies, elected officials, and representatives from the NMDOT. Several representatives from the study team were also present but are not included in the number of meeting participants. The meeting began at 5:30 PM and ended at 6:30 PM. The purpose of the meeting was to share the proposed alternatives for the study area and to answer questions and gather comments about the alternatives.

Notification of the meeting occurred through:

- Placement of newspaper advertisements in the *Roswell Daily Record*, both on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 and on Sunday, March 21, 2021.
- Distribution of a flyer via email to organizations, community facilities, government agencies and departments, school districts, etc.
- A Facebook ad featuring the flyer information.

The newspaper advertisement, tear sheets of the advertisements in the newspaper, flyer, and Facebook advertisement and statistics are attached to this summary.

The meeting included a PowerPoint presentation (attached) followed by a question-and-answer period before being concluded. The presentation included the following:

- An introduction to the study team
- An overview of the study
- Review of study alternatives
- Review of the preferred alternatives
- An explanation of next steps
- An explanation of how to provide input to the study

Comments and input to the study were collected through the:

- Study website: <http://project.bhinc.com/US380>, which includes an interactive map where one can leave comments; a QR code included on meeting flyers also directs people to the website (website pages attached)
- Email: [US380@bhinc.com](mailto:US380@bhinc.com)
- Phone: 505.798.7857
- Mail: US 380 Study, Bohannon Huston, Inc., 7500 Jefferson Street NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109

Comments were encouraged to be received by the study team by Friday, April 2, 2021; however, comments would be collected, reviewed, and considered throughout the study.

Thirty-three questions and comments were received during and after the meeting via email, voicemail, telephone, and website interactive map. These are summarized and ranked below by issues/concerns and recommendations:

### Issues/Concerns

- The roadway is unsafe, i.e. passing, asphalt condition, accidents. (10 comments)
- Many wrecks and near-wrecks occur. (3 comments)
- Speed limit too high in certain areas. (3 comments)
- Access to property. (3 comments)
- Don't widen the roadway close to residential areas. (2 comments)
- Additional fatalities have occurred since September of 2020. (1 comment)
- Hills obstruct vision. (1 comment)
- Timeframe for construction. (1 comment)
- Change in posted speed limit. (1 comment)

### Recommendations

- Add passing lanes. (11 comments)
- Make the highway 4-lanes. (9 comments)
- Add rest areas; add one on the north side. (2 comments)
- Pave/resurface the highway. (1 comment)
- Add turn and travel lane length at the turn into Gandey Marley, Inc. (1 comment)
- Keep the highway at 65 during construction. (1 comment)
- Spend public funds on this roadway. (1 comment)
- Ask for the entire \$300 million. (1 comment)
- Make the corridor a Safety Corridor. (1 comment)

## Summary of the US 380 March 24, 2021 Stakeholder Meeting

The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) held its first stakeholder meeting for the **US 380 Phase A/B Corridor Study** from MP 158 to MP 242 (Texas State Line) (CN 2100740) on Wednesday, March 24, 2021. Due to current pandemic restrictions, the meeting was held as a Zoom meeting. Twenty-two individuals attended the meeting, including representatives from local agencies, elected officials, and representatives from the NMDOT and the study team. The meeting began at 2:30 PM and ended at 5:00 PM. The purpose of the meeting was to share the proposed alternatives for the study area and to answer questions and gather comments about the alternatives.

Notification of the meeting occurred through email.

The meeting included a PowerPoint presentation (same as the March 24, 2021 Public Involvement Meeting) followed by a question-and-answer period before being concluded. The presentation included the following:

- An introduction to the study team
- An overview of the study
- Review of study alternatives
- Review of the preferred alternatives
- An explanation of next steps
- An explanation of how to provide input to the study

Comments and input to the study were collected during the meeting. None were received after the meeting.

Questions and comments provided during the meeting are summarized below. Questions/comments are depicted in italics, while answers/responses from study team members are depicted in plain text.

- *C: Seems like most crash details are close to Roswell. Most crashes occur around Atkinson Ave. and Red Bridge Rd. What about taking the 4-lane roadway from Atkinson to Red Bridge? Several farms are located in the area. I always look in my rearview mirror to see who is behind me. I pull over to the right to let cars pass before I make my turn. A lot of cars from TX use the righthand lane and then must move over quickly at Atkinson; this needs to be re-engineered.*  
R: The team looked at passing lanes between the intersections. Most likely would improve the intersections themselves so traffic has its own turning lanes. This is outside of the study area, but it is something NMDOT might look at in the future. We will look at better passing opportunities.
- *C: I concur with the previous comment. Red Bridge Rd. is used by NMDOT and other oversized vehicles to bypass Roswell. It is used by a lot of wide load vehicles.*  
R: Good point. We will take this into consideration while looking at preliminary design in that area.
- *Q: How long is the 4-lane passing section? I travel this roadway all the time. It seems short with so many cars on this corridor. There are a lot of near misses. A mile section doesn't seem to be long enough.*  
A: The passing section is about a mile long, then it transitions back to 2-lane section. We looked at how many cars would queue. A 1-mile section allows cars to pass and get back into their lane around a slow-moving car. If these sections are spaced out, then passing lanes can be longer. For Alt. 1, we looked at 7-10 miles between passing lanes; the passing lane would be 1.5 miles.

- *Q: Was an offset alignment ever considered? An old roadbed is located adjacent to the current roadway.*

A: An old roadbed is there. This could be used for the 4-lane option. But the cost is prohibitive; it ended up with a \$300M cost. The Preferred Alt. is \$100M to \$150m. The 20-year projection only shows 4k vehicles travelling on the corridor; this doesn't warrant a 4-lane roadway.

- *Q: With any of these proposed alternatives, does the speed limit change from its current conditions?*

A: The Preferred Alt. will address this. We wondered if improvements would cause some to go even faster. The Preferred Alt: adds passing lanes, improves the pavement section, includes identified maintenance and rehab conditions. Some vertical curves will be mitigated for adequate sight distance. The vertical curve by TX will be straightened out to meet the current design speed. Guardrails will be upgraded to meet current criteria. Intersections would get turn lanes. We are looking at guidelines to see where these are needed. We will add left turn and right turn lanes. We might also add acceleration lanes. The current speed limit will remain the same and not increase. Everything would be improved to safely get to the posted speed limit. Some types of vehicles cause slower traffic; keeping everything at the design criteria speed should help with speed.

- *C: I'm not sure people pay attention to the speed limit along that section. People driving from Plains to the state line are used to the TX passing lane system. Their passing lanes are more than 1 mile long and are more frequent. The speed limit is also higher in TX. Travelers continue this speed when they enter NM. We need to consider this traffic and those entering NM from TX. They are expecting a similar type of roadway. Not considering this might cause some problems. Please relook at that 1-mile passing lane and compare it to TX, because people are already used to longer ones in TX. We need to construct something on the east of the state line like what's on the west of the state line. We don't have the same resources but still consider what they did in TX. We might need to lengthen that 1-mile passing lane.*

R: I have travelled that road many times and have measured those passing lanes myself. Most are 1.5 miles; one is 2 miles. The majority of our passing lanes will be 1.5 miles, along with the transition lane. The 1.5 miles is the minimum we want to do because of slower traffic and queues. We are looking at 1.5-mile passing lanes from the TX state line to about Roswell. We want to tighten passing lane spacing so we have more within the corridor. A couple of things about the Preferred Alt.: We tried to place passing lanes to avoid major drainage structures, so we would only be replacing minor structures and this would keep costs down. We also looked at constructability to keep traffic moving during construction. We also tried to place these passing lanes where pavement is bad so the poor pavement can be upgraded while we do a complete reconstruction to "kill 2 birds with one stone." We developed the following criteria: safety, traffic, constructability, drainage, adjacent property, environmental issues, utilities, construction cost, implementation phasing. We ranked each alternative from 1 to 4 with 1 being the best. Alt. 1 ended up with the best score. We tried to identify 1.5 mile passing lanes. We will look at possible adjustments during design. We are trying to keep it around 7-miles between passing lanes. Each intersection would be improved with lanes for turning vehicles and deceleration and acceleration lanes. We could also add rumble stripes to the center line to improve safety.

- *Q: On the scoring sheet, for the No-Build Alternative, why is constructability ranked so low?*

A: Maintenance and rehabilitation would still have to be done. Because of this, it is ranked bad. Lanes would have to be closed for maintenance. Other alternatives can use other lanes while providing maintenance.

- *C: This issue occurs near Roswell. The 4-lane roadway terminates on top of a hill. A passing lane should never terminate at the top of a hill. Slower traffic should be able to get back up to a correct speed, but now they're in the passing lane. The passing lane needs to be extended well beyond the hill. There are two areas where the passing lane should not terminate at the top of a hill. 2. In the area around oil and gas production, there may need to be some 4-lane stretches near the turnouts so there are passing lanes where large vehicles are slower and are turning. There needs to be the ability to pass. At the Bottomless Lakes turnoff, I recommend 4 lanes there. No slide during the presentation said anything about Red Bridge Rd. If this is in the study area, the design of intersection should be included and extended about 1 mile past the intersection. White Mill Rd. goes south. Make sure this issue is dealt with, because there is a lot of traffic that turns onto Red Bridge Rd. running west, and cars often must slam on their breaks to make sure they don't rear end vehicles that are turning.*

R: A 4-lane section will be near Bottomless Lake so vehicles can turn; turning vehicles would have their own lane. Acceleration lanes will be implemented so traffic can speed up before getting onto US 380. We will speak to the NMDOT about improvements to the Red Bridge Rd. intersection. We will look at transitions on top of hills so there is adequate distance for slower traffic to speed up.

- *Q: I only saw improvements at the intersection in the Town of Tatum. Is there any need to address ADA in Town? Maybe address long-term plans for Tatum in the study.*

A: US 380 through Tatum is operating well as a 4-lane roadway. We didn't see any areas in Tatum that deal with capacity and safety issues. This doesn't mean there are no plans for reconstructing; it just means it's not a top priority at this point. We have to break this down into multiple projects phased over years for funding purposes. When we do make improvements, it will be to improve pavement. ADA would need to be incorporated. We can address this as necessary in the report.

- *Q: In 2014 part of this road was a mill and fill project. We encountered huge problems going up the hill mentioned previously. Water was coming off the top of the roadway. This occurred in the eastbound passing area near the top of hill. How will this be addressed in this project?*

A: We will be looking at geotechnical issues during the design phase of the project. Where water is pumping like that, in some projects, we can bridge over that with no issues. In other projects, we have had to build structures to address and fix this issue. We will look at this during the design phase of the project.

- *C: Please review the speed limit. Improve the speed limit without changing the design. Even 5 miles per hour more would be appreciated.*

R: We will look at this to see if this would still be safe for travelers.

- *C: Based on existing conditions on the east side of the state line, speed needs to be maintained on the NM side. The transition area would be much shorter on the NM side, so when people coming from TX get to these passing lanes in NM, they assume these match the ones on the TX side. My concern is that the transition should meet the same speed ratio as in TX.*

R: We will definitely look at this. If transitions can be made longer, it will help avoid driver confusion. We will look at the speed limits and transitions on the TX side.

- *C: I drive that stretch 2 times per week. There is a similar problem at White Mill Rd. I turn south every Sunday at that intersection, so please look at that intersection as well. Regarding the traffic count study, does this include weekends? On Friday, I turn into a regular person and travel to Hobbs. I watch someone take a risk,*

*and we have to move over to shoulder. I've had 2 blowouts from the rumble strips, trying to avoid getting hit. Please reconsider a 4-lane roadway here because it's so dangerous.*

R: We are looking at that intersection as well. We are recommending a dedicated right turn lane and a dedicated left turn lane so cars can decelerate and get into their own lane. We will also be looking at an acceleration lane so cars can get up to speed. Going into Roswell, we will look at tying the 2-lane in with the 4-lane. We used historical data for traffic counts and normalized weekends with weekdays. Hopefully, we can look at this traffic after COVID and get a more accurate count. Weekends have a higher overall traffic count, but no peak hours. We know it's a concern. The first step is to get passing lanes in place with available funding. Then the NMDOT can expand US 380 to a 4-lane roadway in future. Right now, traffic counts don't justify 4 lanes throughout the corridor. Future traffic volumes might increase and justify the 4 lanes. This might need to be relooked at in the future.

- *Q: When is the goal to have this in production?*

A: We will need to kick this back to the District for answers. All of the funding has not been identified. Until construction funding is in place, it's hard to know what the construction timeframe will be. We don't have funding identified. The goal is to get through the study and get the Preferred Alternative designed so we can go out and get funding. We can try and take advantage of any federal or state funding.

All participants were thanked, and the meeting was concluded.