

Welcome to the Location Public Hearing for *Highway 89 Improvements*

AHTD Job 080457
April 6, 2017



How do I get involved?

- Please sign in at the registration table.
- Gather information, view the displays, and ask questions.
- Oral statements can be taken at the recording area.
- Written statements may be submitted by using the attached comment form, mailed to the address below, or emailed to: environmentalpimeetings@ahtd.ar.gov by Friday, May 5, 2017.

AHTD Environmental Division
PO Box 2261
Little Rock, AR 72203-2261

Location Public Hearing Information

What is the purpose of this hearing?

This hearing presents information about the Highway 89 Improvements project. It also provides an opportunity for AHTD staff to explain the project alternatives and potential impacts, and answer any questions you may have.

Your participation is needed to help identify, discuss, and resolve any problems or controversial issues. Comment forms have been provided for you to express your views and let the AHTD know which project alternative you prefer.

Copies of the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for this project are available at this hearing and on the AHTD website at www.arkansashighways.com. The EA describes potential effects associated with this project.

What is the Highway 89 Improvements project and what would it accomplish?

The project proposes changes to Highway (Hwy.) 89 to alleviate railroad crossing delays and improve east-west travel in the City of Mayflower. The project would include a railroad overpass for Hwy. 89 and either widening the existing route or constructing a new location route.

What are the project alternatives?

Four alternatives were considered for this project: the No Action Alternative and three build alternatives. **Figure 1** shows the typical roadway cross section for the proposed alternatives. The alternatives are described below.

No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would provide only routine roadway maintenance in the project area. Delays due to passing trains and traffic congestion would worsen as traffic volumes increase.

Alternative 1

This alternative would include constructing an overpass to replace the existing Highway 89 crossing. It would also realign the right angle curves at the Old Sandy Road and Snuggs Circle intersections. Highway 89 would be widened to four travel lanes with a continuous two way left turn lane in order to provide acceptable future traffic operations through the project area.

The existing Interstate 40 (I-40) overpass would be widened to four travel lanes with a dedicated center lane for making left turns onto the ramps. The plan includes bicycle and pedestrian facilities and a connection to North Main Street. The total construction cost for Alternative 1 is estimated at \$18.3 million.

Alternative 2

This alternative would involve constructing a new railroad overpass west of the existing I-40 interchange. The existing Highway 89 railroad crossing would remain in place. It would also connect the east and west segments of Highway 89 with a new location route.

The new route would start at the new railroad overpass and connect to the intersection of Highway 89 and Billy Drive. A connection to North Main Street from the new route would also be provided.

It would initially be constructed as a two lane roadway, with additional lanes constructed in the future when needed. Right of way sufficient to allow for future expansion to a four lane roadway with a raised median would be acquired. This alternative would include bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

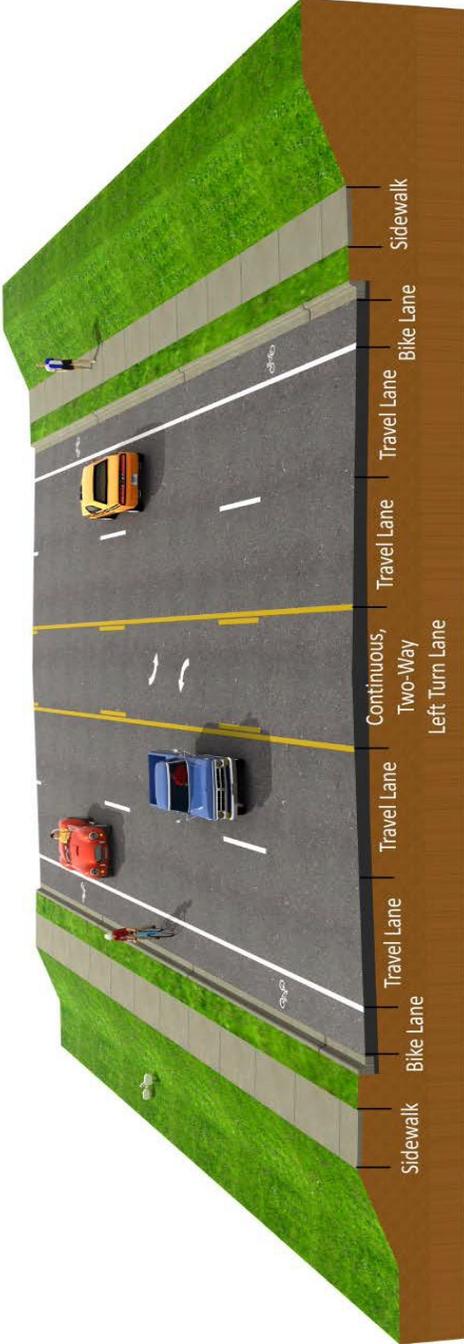
A new I-40 overpass would be constructed in addition to the railroad overpass. It would provide four travel lanes and a dedicated center lane for making left turns onto ramps. The overpass would cross I-40 at a skewed angle, requiring a longer bridge than would a perpendicular crossing. The I-40 eastbound entrance ramps would be modified. However, this design would require lower than desirable design speeds. The total construction cost for Alternative 2 is estimated at \$18.6 million.

Alternative 3

Similar to Alternative 2, Alternative 3 would construct a railroad overpass west of the existing I-40 interchange and provide a new route from the overpass to the intersection of Hwy. 89 and Billy Drive. The existing Hwy. 89 railroad crossing would remain in place. A connection from the new route to Main St. would also be provided.

Alternative 3 would initially be constructed as a two lane roadway, with the additional lanes constructed in the future when needed. Right of way sufficient to allow for future expansion to a four lane roadway with a raised median would be acquired. Alternative 3 would include bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Figure 1 Typical Cross Section



A new I-40 overpass would provide four travel lanes and a dedicated center lane for making left turns onto the ramps. The overpass would cross I-40 at a perpendicular angle, requiring a shorter bridge than would a skewed angle crossing. The total construction cost for Alternative 3 is estimated at \$18.6 million.

What has been completed on the project?

An EA was approved by the Federal Highway Administration in February 2017. The EA describes potential social, economic, and environmental impacts of the project alternatives. The table below summarizes quantitative alternative impacts for comparison purposes.

Alternative Impact Comparison Table

Alternative	Project Length (miles)	Total Project Cost (million) Includes: Relocation Utilities Right of Way Acquisition	New Right of Way (Acres)	Relocations	Wetland Impacts (Acres)
No Action	0	0	0	0	0
1	2.8	\$30.2	31.7	51	0.4
2	1.8	\$23.2	40.1	10	1.3
3	1.9	\$23.4	43.8	10	0.6

The EA identified Alternative 3 as the Preferred Alternative for the following reasons:

- Fewer adverse impacts compared to Alternative 1 and similar impacts as Alternative 2.
- Traffic modeling results indicate it would optimize mobility.
- Metroplan, Faulkner County, and the Cities of Mayflower and Conway have expressed a preference for Alternative 3.

What happens when new right of way is acquired?

Acquiring right of way involves property owners being contacted by AHTD Right of Way Division personnel. These may include appraisers, negotiators, closing agents, and possibly property managers.

The initial step in the acquisition process is the property valuation. Once the valuation is prepared, reviewed, and approved, a negotiator will contact the property owner by mail or in person to begin the negotiation process. If negotiations are successful, a Contract to Sell is executed and submitted for payment. Once the AHTD completes the title opinion and the deed is prepared, a closing agent will be in touch to get the deed signed and deliver the check. At this time, the state takes possession of the property.

For those cases where all efforts to negotiate are unsuccessful, the tract is submitted to the AHTD Legal Division to file condemnation. The appraisal amount is deposited in the court and the landowner may withdraw the funds placed on deposit without affecting their right to claim additional compensation.

No one will be required to surrender possession of their property or improvement until just compensation has been made. A detailed policy and procedures brochure is available at the Right of Way table at this hearing, or through the AHTD Right of Way Division.

What if businesses or residences need to be relocated?

The relocation assistance program is intended to help offset expenses incurred by those who are displaced by federal-aided highway projects. This program provides advisory assistance and payments to help offset those expenses.

No one can be required to move without at least 90 days advance written notice, and comparable replacement housing will be made available to all residential displaces (built if necessary) before project construction begins. This housing must be fair housing and offered to all affected persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Relocation assistance, which is separate from the compensation a person receives for real estate, comes in two basic forms – physical assistance and monetary assistance. In order to be eligible for relocation assistance and compensation, a person must be in occupancy at the initiation of negotiations for the property. The type of relocation payments individuals are eligible for depends on the type of displacement: i.e., owner, renter, etc.

Relocation assistance and payments will be provided until all displaces have been relocated from the project. If a person is not satisfied with the amounts that have been offered as relocation compensation, an appeal may be filed and the case heard promptly and carefully reviewed by an AHTD Appeals Officer.

Relocation assistance brochures explaining each payment and eligibility requirement in detail are available at the Right of Way table at this hearing.

What happens after this hearing?

The AHTD will review the comments received from citizens, public officials, and public agencies. An alternative will be chosen to move forward with for design. After design is available, a Design Public Hearing will be held.

The AHTD will prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) document for review by the Federal Highway Administration. The approved FONSI will identify the Selected Alternative and conclude the National Environmental Policy Act process. Right of way acquisition can then begin.

For additional information, please visit our website at www.arkansashighways.com; call us 501-569-2281, or email us at environmentalpimeetings@ahtd.ar.gov.

Thank you for your attendance and participation in this hearing!

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

**Location Public Hearing
AHTD Job No: 080457
Highway 89 Improvements
Faulkner County**

April 6, 2017

Please Print

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Which Alternative would you prefer?

- No Action
- Alternative 1
- Alternative 2
- Alternative 3 (Identified as Preferred Alternative)

• REMEMBER •
Your comments must be in writing or recorded on tape to be considered part of the official record of this public hearing.

Comments:

(Use additional sheets if necessary)

Written Comments should be left in the drop box at this hearing or received by 4:30 p.m., Friday, May 5, 2017 at the following address:

Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department
Environmental Division
P.O. Box 2261
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-2261
Telephone: 501-569-2281
Fax: 501-569-2009

Email: environmentalpimeetings@ahtd.ar.gov

For additional information, please visit our website at www.arkansashighways.com