



PROJECT FAQ AND GLOSSARY

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1. Where can I find more information about the study?

Visit www.DentonCountyOuterLoop.com for more information about the study.

2. Who is leading the study?

Denton County has partnered with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to initiate an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to construct a six-lane freeway primarily on new location connecting I-35 in Denton County, Texas with the Dallas North Tollway in Collin County, Texas. Denton County is also coordinating with local governments and other agencies such as the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and the Texas Historic Commission (THC), to help ensure a regional approach to transportation planning.

By leading the schematic design and environmental study, Denton County will be able to better respond to local concerns and sensitive issues.

3. Why is this study being conducted?

Communities in Denton County are growing rapidly. As growth and development continue to move north and east, transportation improvements will be needed to address the increasing population and traffic. The Denton County Outer Loop is being studied to:

- ▶ **Plan for future growth.** Denton County is projected to grow from 1.07 million people in 2025 to 1.88 million people by 2050, an approximately 76% increase in population.
- ▶ **Enhance regional mobility.** The current road network in the study area was not designed for the anticipated traffic growth. An additional high-capacity east-west corridor through this part of the county will improve mobility and travel times.
- ▶ **Preserve land needed for a future corridor.** Upon receiving environmental clearance at the end of this study, the County will be able to preserve the necessary land for the corridor to safeguard it from future development.

Transportation projects can require years of advanced planning and development, which is why the County must plan now for the growth it expects in the future.

4. What is NEPA?

NEPA stands for the National Environmental Policy Act. It is a federal law that outlines the process Federal agencies must follow to determine the impacts of their actions on the human and natural environment. The NEPA process is followed for projects that will use Federal funding or require Federal approval, including transportation projects. For this project NEPA requires Denton County, as part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process, to evaluate all viable alternatives and disclose the impacts of the alternatives considered.

5. What is an Environmental Impact Statement?

An EIS is a detailed document that provides a rigorous review of the potential impacts of a proposed project or action on the surrounding environment. The preparation of an EIS follows a structured process from project initiation, through scoping, documentation, and the issuance of an environmental decision in the form of a Record of Decision (ROD). This process typically takes two years to complete.

During the EIS, the study team is conducting desktop studies in which they will reference existing environmental databases. The team is also conducting field studies for certain resources and detailed modeling for air quality and traffic noise. An EIS is warranted when the proposed project or action is anticipated to have significant impacts on the human and natural environment, which would require the consideration of minimization, where practicable, and mitigation to offset unavoidable impacts. The NEPA process and development of an EIS requires extensive public involvement.

6. What is the status of the project?

The Denton County Outer Loop is in the Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Study phase of project development. The current study began in the fall of 2022 and is expected to last three to four years. In early 2024, Denton County and TxDOT completed the Feasibility phase of the Denton County Outer Loop Study and transitioned into the EIS phase. This phase of the project is a more in-depth study than what was previously done and will build on information collected during the feasibility phase in accordance with the NEPA process.

7. Has a route already been chosen?

No decisions have been made for the final alignment for this roadway. The development of the EIS includes the design and evaluation of four build alternatives and a no build alternative. A preferred alternative will be determined at the end of the NEPA process in spring 2026.

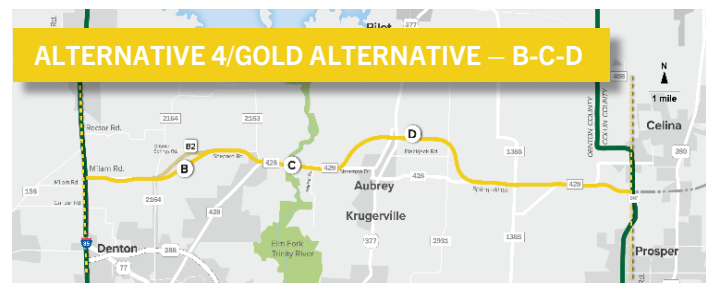
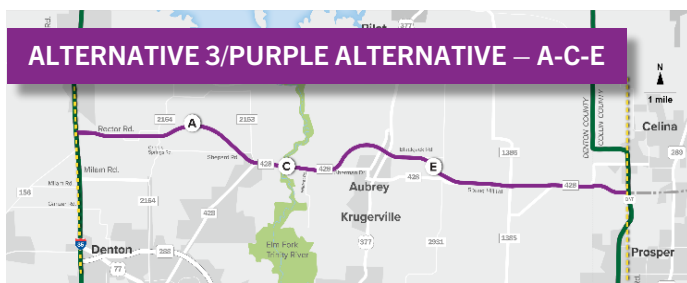
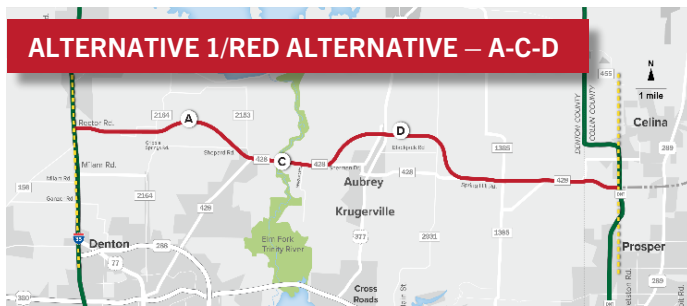
Previous planning documents have included the Denton County Outer Loop, but the routes shown on maps were for visioning purposes only. This study examined a universe of possible alignments for the roadway to identify the reasonable build alternatives, which are now undergoing an extensive evaluation process that includes public input.

8. What alternatives are currently under consideration?

Each of the alternatives under consideration are made up of a combination of “build” segments A, B, C, D or E, primarily on new location. Segment B has one variation, noted as B2, that is also being considered. Together, the segments can be combined into four end-to-end build alternatives that provide a contiguous freeway connecting I-35 on the west and the Dallas North Tollway on the east. These include:

- ▶ Alternative 1/Red Alternative, consisting of segments A, C and D.
- ▶ Alternative 2/Blue Alternative, consisting of segments B, C, and E.
- ▶ Alternative 3/Purple Alternative, consisting of segments A, C and E.

- Alternative 4/Gold Alternative, consisting of segments B, C and D.



9. How have these alternatives been modified since scoping?

As the schematic design was developed, revisions have been made to the segments at various locations to minimize impacts to property, enhance safety of the roadway design and in consideration of public and stakeholder input received during the Fall 2024 scoping meetings. Some curves were also modified to improve geometry for stopping sight distance and to better align intersections.

10. What is a no build alternative?

The study team is evaluating the future impacts to the study area if no new freeway is built, but projected population and traffic continue to grow. The analysis will also account for other roadway improvements in the study area and will assess whether transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and other modes and methods to manage travel demand would be able to independently address the identified needs. The no build alternative is used as the baseline for comparison of the build alternatives.

11. What is a schematic?

A schematic is a layout that includes the basic information necessary for proper review and evaluation of a proposed roadway improvement. Among other items, a schematic includes:

- Project location and limits.
- Traffic volumes, both existing and projected.
- Proposed main lanes, ramps, frontage roads, bridges, and cross streets.
- Horizontal and vertical alignments with curves, elevations, grades, and vertical clearances.
- Existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.

12. Why is the Outer Loop in Denton County being studied again?

Multiple studies have been conducted to determine the need and feasibility of the Denton County Outer Loop. Now this study is needed to develop a schematic design, identify the Preferred Alternative, and develop the Environmental Impact Statement to environmentally clear the project.

13. When will the route be finalized?

We anticipate announcing the Preferred Alternative in Spring/Summer 2026. A public hearing will be held and then the EIS will be finalized in late summer 2026. A Record of Decision will be expected to follow.

14. How will a final decision be made?

The study team, guided by Denton County in partnership with TxDOT, is following the federally regulated EIS process as outlined in NEPA to evaluate potential environmental impacts and develop the schematic design. An extensive evaluation matrix has been developed and input from the public and local cities will be considered heavily. This process will point us to the technically and locally preferred alternative that best meets the purpose and need of the study while minimizing potential impacts.

15. How will the community be involved and how will public input be considered?

Public input is critical to this project and has and will continue to be used to help identify constraints and concerns in the study area. Comments from the public will also be considered as modifications continue to be made to the alternatives under consideration.

Additionally, the study team will continue to meet with stakeholders in the study area including local governments, neighborhood groups, property owners, and other interested parties.

16. When would construction begin?

Making the Denton County Outer Loop a reality will take time. Following issuance of the environmental decision (as a Record of Decision), the County may move forward with final design and development of detailed construction plans, cost estimates, and the acquisition of right of way. Utility coordination will occur throughout the schematic and final design, with utility relocations, where needed, occurring prior to the start of roadway construction. Final design and right-of-way acquisition could take several more years before construction could begin.

Construction would be phased over time. For example, frontage roads may be built first, and then the main lanes of a freeway over time as demand increases. Construction cannot begin until full funding is secured. Construction funding for this project has not been identified.

17. How is this project related to the other “Outer Loop” projects in the region?

While the Denton County Outer Loop is an independent project, it is also part of a larger system of proposed freeways that will link together to form the Regional Outer Loop, extending from Denton County, across Collin County, and then south through Rockwall, Kaufman, and possibly Ellis Counties.

18. How is this project related to other projects in Denton County such as the work being done on I-35, the I-35/Milam Rd. interchange, and planning for US 380?

These projects are all separate projects from this study, which is focused on evaluating options for the Denton County Outer Loop. A list of adjacent or planned projects in the study area can be found on the Fall 2024 Public Scoping Meeting exhibit boards at www.DentonCountyOuterLoop.com.

19. What are the start/end points for the Denton County Outer Loop?

The logical termini for the Denton County Outer Loop have been identified as I-35 on the west and the Dallas North Tollway to the east.

20. How did the study team consider the previous Denton County Outer Loop studies?

The Denton County Outer Loop study process began with mapping known existing and future constraints throughout the study area and evaluating the following previous studies:

- ▶ Denton County Thoroughfare Plans (2013 and 2017).
- ▶ North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Greenbelt Corridor Feasibility Study (2019).
- ▶ TXDOT US 380 Freeway Feasibility Study through Denton County (2021).

Alternative alignments from these studies were modified to meet current project design standards, minimize displacements and environmental impacts, and address impending future development.

21. Are you coordinating with other agencies?

Denton County and the study team are coordinating closely with federal, state, and local agencies throughout the process, including TxDOT, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas Historic Commission, Collin County, study area cities, and others.

22. How would this roadway make the road network safer?

Due to growth in traffic and population, along with existing roadways being at-grade and undivided, it is anticipated that the study area will experience an increasing number of high-injury and fatal crashes. A grade-separated freeway with median provides safer design features for the larger volume of traffic expected in the region.

23. Will this roadway be a tollway?

No, tolling is not being considered as an option for funding.

24. What are Conservation Lands?

For the purposes of this project, Conservation Lands refers to lands along the Ray Roberts Lake State Park Greenbelt that are either owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or in private or state ownership but under a protective conservation easement. A Conservation Easement is a binding agreement between the landowner and another party called an easement holder that permanently limits uses of the land to protect natural resources.

25. What are Flowage Easements?

A Flowage Easement is a perpetual right granted to a government agency, such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to flood privately owned land in order to operate a reservoir.

26. Will any of the alternatives under consideration require displacements?

All alternatives would require displacements, including residences and businesses. The study team has been working to reduce the number of displacements in each segment. However, some displacements cannot be avoided as Denton County and TxDOT are required to comply with state and federal design standards for a freeway facility. Schematic design roll plots that indicate displacements can be viewed on the project website at www.DentonCountyOuterLoop.com.

27. How might any of the alternatives under consideration affect my property?

If the project receives environmental clearance and moves forward, right-of-way for this project would be acquired in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended. The State of Texas provides information on Landowner rights, which is included in both English and Spanish on the [Resources Page](#) of the project website. More information will also be provided to affected property owners following the Public Hearing and final determination of the Preferred Alternative.

Regarding property values, changes in property values are driven by value associated with site specific factors such as accessibility, safety, noise, visual amenities, proximity to shopping, community cohesion and business productivity. Denton County and TxDOT cannot reasonably foresee which of these impacts will affect the value of a particular property, whether in a negative or positive way.

28. Is Denton County tracking future developments in the study area?

Yes, the study team is tracking future developments as part of this project. These include locations of future homes, businesses, schools and open space. Denton County will continue to coordinate with local governments and developers to gather information on project status, potential costs, and planning/permit process timelines. A development heat map, showing the latest development data as of August 31, 2025, is available for review on the interactive map on the website at www.DentonCountyOuterLoop.com.

29. How can Denton County address future development?

Denton County and adjoining counties have become an attractive location for new commercial and residential developments, which can make it difficult to identify land needed for future transportation improvements. Denton County cannot fully regulate development in the study area but is taking it into consideration for future planning. Early planning and public involvement are important for maximizing mobility benefits, identifying and developing potential transportation options, evaluating and mitigating possible impacts, and preserving right-of-way needed for potential improvements.



30. What is included in the estimated total project costs?

The estimated total project cost, as shown on the evaluation matrix boards include ROW acquisition, utility relocation and full facility construction. However, at this stage these are high-level costs. The next phase of the project development process would include final construction plans and detailed estimated costs.

31. How can I receive updates about the study? Who do I contact if I have questions?

You can sign-up to receive study updates on the website at www.DentonCountyOuterLoop.com. The study team can be contacted with questions by emailing info@dentoncountyouterloop.com, calling 737-471-1672, or by visiting the project website.

32. Where can I find information about future public meetings?

Information about future public meetings will be posted on the project website at www.DentonCountyOuterLoop.com. Denton County and TxDOT will also post a 30-day notice for the next Public Hearing.