

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## New Braunfels Outer Loop Study

### ***Texas Department of Transportation to Unveil Recommended Alternative in January 2008***

NEW BRAUNFELS – Friday, December 07, 2007, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) announced the New Braunfels Outer Loop Study will present the recommended route in January 2008, four months earlier than the original date of May 2008. The announcement was made at the New Braunfels Outer Loop Study Technical Work Group (TWG) and Community Work Group (CWG) meetings held at the Comal County Fairgrounds-Arts and Crafts building. The current plan is to hold the fifth CWG meeting in mid-January and the Open House presenting the final recommended corridor will be held in late January. TxDOT will then present the recommendation to the City of New Braunfels and Comal and Guadalupe Counties in February. These entities will determine if the recommended route will be adopted into their respective Master Thoroughfare Plans (MTP).

The incredible amount of data collected from the two rounds of public meetings, six technical and community work groups, and numerous stakeholder meetings has afforded the study team the ability to deliver the recommended route within an earlier timeframe.

“We are definitely listening to the residents of the New Braunfels area,” said Judy Friesenhahn, P.E., with TxDOT. “We have heard from numerous people through the two rounds of public meetings, comment cards, the website, hotline and individual stakeholder meetings. They are requesting a recommended alternative now, not four months down the line. The study team has worked diligently to deliver this to the residents of New Braunfels, Comal and Guadalupe Counties.”

The study began with the development of the Universe of Options. The Universe of Options was compiled using information provided by an Agency Coordination Conference, the TWG, the first round of public meetings and input from the study team. The study team then refined the Universe of Options using trends developed from the Universe of Options. The Viable Route Options shown at the second round of public meetings was developed utilizing the following initial screening criteria:

- Minimize residential displacement
- Minimize impacts to schools
- Avoid cemeteries and prehistoric burial sites
- Avoid impacts to parks/recreational facilities
- Avoid impacts to historic resources
- Avoid impacts to landfill

The Viable Route Options have since been further refined by the study team into the Short List of Alternatives by evaluating the crossings at IH 35 and the Guadalupe River. The study team will take the Short List of alternatives and apply multiple screening criteria to determine the recommended route for the proposed outer loop.

TxDOT's five goals: reduce congestion \_ enhance safety \_ expand economic opportunity  
\_ improve air quality \_ increase the value of transportation assets.

The Study Area is approximately a 40-mile band around the City of New Braunfels that encompasses portions of Comal and Guadalupe counties. The outer loop could require two new crossings over the Guadalupe River and would connect to IH 35 on the north side of New Braunfels and to IH 35 on the south side of New Braunfels. The purpose of the study is to conduct the necessary planning and analysis needed to identify a corridor for the possible development of a New Braunfels Outer Loop. The study will seek to:

- Identify a potential corridor for land (right of way) preservation.
- Identify portions of the loop which could be constructed as stand alone projects.
- Follow NEPA guidelines to ensure information collected can be used for the development of future environmental documents for segments of the loop.

For more information on the New Braunfels Outer Loop Study or to view the Short List of Alternatives, please call the New Braunfels Outer Loop Study Hotline at (866) 704-1114 or visit the New Braunfels Outer Loop Study website at [www.nbolstudy.com](http://www.nbolstudy.com).

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For more information, call Maggie Rios at (210) 615-5836 or Laura Lopez at (210) 615-5839. Information about TxDOT is also available through the department's World Wide Web site (<http://www.txdot.gov>)