In accordance with guidance from the State of Texas, this meeting will be conducted virtually at the link below. Anyone can watch the meeting, but only the Mayor's IH-35E Betterments Task Force members will be permitted to speak. Public input will be gathered through questions submitted to the Planning Department at 972.919.2542 or askplanning@farmersbranchtx.gov by April 20, 2020 at 12:00 p.m. (noon).


A. STUDY SESSION

A.1 20-213 Discuss the roles and responsibilities of the Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force.

A.2 20-214 Discuss the 2019 Texas Department of Transportation IH-35E widening schematic.

A.3 20-215 Discuss prioritizing potential betterment improvements including the process for making recommendations to Farmers Branch City Council.

A.4 20-216 Discuss future meeting dates for the Mayor's IH-35E Betterments Task Force.

B. ADJOURNMENT

Farmers Branch City Hall is wheelchair accessible. Access to the building and special parking are available at the main entrance facing William Dodson Parkway. Persons with disabilities planning to attend this meeting who are deaf, hearing impaired or who may need auxiliary aids such as sign interpreters or large print, are requested to contact the City Secretary at (972) 919-2503 at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Certification
I certify that the above notice of this meeting was posted 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, on the bulletin board at City Hall.

________________________________________
City Secretary                                                                 Stamp:

Posted By: ____________________________

Posted Date:__________________________
Discuss the roles and responsibilities of the Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force.

BACKGROUND:
The Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force was established on February 18th, 2020 through Resolution No. 2020-025. The purpose of this agenda item is to discuss with the task force their roles and responsibilities and for them to gain an understanding of its purpose.

Resolution No. 2020-025 outlines that the purpose of the Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force is to:

Identify opportunities for improving mobility and aesthetics of the IH-35E Highway corridor within the City of Farmers Branch including but not limited to structural improvements, intersection designs, sidewalks, hike and bike trail connectivity, landscaping, lighting, public art, and overhead utility relocation, and to make recommendations as needed to the Mayor and City Council.

ACTIONS:
None

ATTACHMENTS:
1. Resolution No. 2020-025
RESOLUTION NO. 2020-025

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FARMERS BRANCH, TEXAS, ESTABLISHING THE MAYOR’S IH-35E BETTERMENTS TASK FORCE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Farmers Branch desires to establish an ad hoc committee to be known as the Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force to identify opportunities for improving mobility and aesthetics of the IH-35E Highway corridor within the City of Farmers Branch, Texas;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FARMERS BRANCH, TEXAS THAT:

SECTION 1. There is hereby created an ad hoc committee to be known as the “Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force” which shall have the following purposes and be subject to the following:

A. Purpose. The purpose of the Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force is to identify opportunities for improving mobility and aesthetics of the IH-35E Highway corridor within the City of Farmers Branch including but not limited to structural improvements, intersection designs, sidewalks, hike and bike trail connectivity, landscaping, lighting, public art, and overhead utility relocation, and to make recommendations as needed to the Mayor and City Council.

B. Members. The Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force shall consist of: (i) the Mayor; (ii) Director of the Planning Department and/or designee; (iii) the Director of the Public Works Department and/or designee; (iv) the Director of Sustainability and Public Health Department and/or designee; (v) the Director of Parks and Recreation Department and/or designee; and (vi) one member of the Planning and Zoning Commission, one member of the Public Arts and Culture Committee and such other individuals as may be appointed by the Mayor from time to time and confirmed by the City Council. The members of the Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force appointed by the Mayor pursuant to Section B (vi) above serve at the pleasure of the Mayor and may be removed at any time by the Mayor. An application for consideration of appointment to the Task Force shall not be required. The Mayor shall serve as the Chair of the Task Force.

C. Meetings. The Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force shall meet at such times as may be called by the Mayor.

D. Sunset. The Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force shall dissolve on December 31, 2020 unless otherwise continued by resolution of the City Council.
SECTION 2. This resolution shall become effective immediately upon its approval.


ATTEST: \hspace{1.5in} APPROVED:

____________________________ \hspace{1.5in} ______________________________
Amy Piukana, City Secretary \hspace{1.5in} Robert C. Dye, Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

____________________________
Peter G. Smith, City Attorney
(TM 113507)
Discuss the 2019 Texas Department of Transportation IH-35E widening schematic.

BACKGROUND:
The purpose of this agenda item is to provide the task force with an overview of the IH-35E widening schematic. The topics that will be covered include:

- Overview of the major differences between the 2010 approved schematic and the revised 2019 schematic within the Farmers Branch.
- Identification of impacted properties within Farmers Branch.
- An overview of the 2011 Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Urban Character Design Guidelines.
- Intersection design at IH-35E/Valley View Lane and IH-35E/Valwood Parkway, including staff comments provided to TxDOT (Attachments 2 and 3).
- Mayor’s request for an exit ramp from east bound IH-635 to Valley View Lane.

This item will provide an opportunity to discuss and ask questions regarding the schematic in order to gain an understanding of TxDOT’s planned widening of IH-35E and how the Mayor’s Betterments Task Force may impact the design of the IH-35E within Farmers Branch.

ACTIONS:
None

ATTACHMENTS:
1. Staff Presentation
2. Preliminary Intersection Layouts - Valley View Lane and Valwood Parkway Intersections
3. March 31, 2020 letter from Farmers Branch Staff to TxDOT RE: IH-35E Phase 2 Expansion - Staff comments related to Valley View Lane and Valwood Parkway schematic intersection designs.
A.2 2019 TxDOT Schematic
IH-35E Phase 2: Proposed Project

- Phase 1 of the widening was completed in 2017.
- Phase 2 of the widening is anticipated to begin in 2022 and take approximately 4 years.
- Phase 2 widening will occur from IH-635 to Denton County line, 6.39 miles.
- Full reconstruction of the existing 6 general purpose lanes to 8 general purpose lanes, with auxiliary lanes at entrance and exit ramps.
- Toll manages lanes will remain 2 reversible lanes.
- Full reconstruction of the continuous frontage roads and numerous intersection improvements.
IH-35E Phase 2: Proposed Project

PRESENT CONDITION

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION

SOURCE: Texas Department of Transportation.

NOTE: Additional capacity shown in purple.
IH-35E Phase 2: Proposed Project
IH-35E Phase 2: Proposed Project
Changes from 2010 to 2019

- The original 2010 schematic was updated in December 2019.

- Major change is that the Essilor building at 13515 N Stemmons Fwy is no longer impacted.
2010

property impacted

2019

property no longer impacted
Impacted Properties

- Most impacted properties are located on the west side of IH-35E.
- Impacted buildings include:
  - 13115 N Stemmons Fwy - Shell
  - 13375 N Stemmons Fwy - Big D
  - 14005 N Stemmons Fwy - Bates Discount Cycle Parts
  - 14011 N Stemmons Fwy - CARSTAR Mr.Collision
  - 14015 N Stemmons Fwy - Beeco Plumbing Supply
  - 14051 N Stemmons Fwy - Phillips 66

- Impact on the east side of IH-35E is mainly in the form of curb cuts.
- TxDot has begun acquiring necessary land for Phase 2 of the IH-35E expansion.
The design guidelines provide information on the aesthetic design of the IH-35E Corridor.

Farmers Branch is defined as being a part of the Urban Character Zone.

The design guidelines define the following terms:

- **Baseline Aesthetic Treatments**: Integral to the project corridor design.
- **Accent Aesthetic Treatments**: consist of graphic display enhancements designated to specific primary intersection abutments and are to be considered as integral to the project corridor design.
- **Enhanced Aesthetic Treatments**: include corridor elements above and beyond the Baseline Aesthetic Treatments, and are to be considered as an added option to the project corridor design and require specific coordination, obligations and participation with municipalities for implementation. Enhanced aesthetic treatments include:
  - monumentation;
  - additional landscape and/or hardscape;
  - bridge lighting and various additional bridge elements.
Urban Character Design Guidelines

Color and Texture

- Primary Color (Warm Gray): Federal Standard 264201
  - Walls
  - Beams
- Secondary Color (Brick Red): Federal Standard 30699
  - Abutment Walls
  - Steel Railings
- Accent Color (Cream): Federal Standard 27538
  - Traffic Railings
  - Coping
  - Deck Edges

Overpass Bridge - Sloped Abutment

Retaining Walls - Accent

Roses Option Elevation
Urban Character Design Guidelines

Overpass Bridge Hardscape and Landscape - Basic

Overpass Bridge Hardscape and Landscape - Enhanced
Intersection Design

- TxDOT has defined each intersection in their Design Guidelines:
  - Valwood Parkway and IH-35E is defined as a baseline intersection.
    - Basic design
  - Valley View Lane is defined as a baseline/accent intersection.
    - Includes a graphic
Intersection Design: Valley View Ln

- Farmers Branch Staff submitted a letter to TxDOT on March 31, 2020 outlining requested changes to the Valley View Ln intersection. Requests included:
  - Reduce underpass lane widths to 11ft to reduce the length of pedestrian crossing.
  - Increase sidewalk width to 6 / 8 ft depending on location
  - Ensure sidewalks in underpasses are barrier free (no columns) and friendly to pedestrians.
  - Provide dedicated free right turn lane on southwest corner; northeast corner comparable to what exists today
  - Consolidate the free right turn lane with the adjacent though lane on the southeast corner.
Intersection Design:
Valley View Ln
Farmers Branch Staff submitted a letter to TxDOT on March 31, 2020 outlining requested changes to the Valwood Pkwy intersection. Requests included:

- Reduce underpass lane widths to 11ft to reduce the length of pedestrian crossing.
- Increase sidewalk width to 6 / 8 ft depending on location.
- Ensure sidewalks in underpasses are barrier free (no columns) and friendly to pedestrians.
Intersection Design:
Valwood Pkwy
Intersection Design:
Example of pedestrian friendly underpass

Attachment 1 – Photo illustrating columns providing separation between sidewalk and main travel lanes.
Exit Ramp from EB IH-635 to Valley View Lane

- Mayor requested an exit ramp from eastbound IH-635 to Valley View Lane.
- The request was made due to the significant redevelopment that has begun within the city’s DART Station Area, and to improve access to Farmers Branch particularly for persons traveling eastbound on IH-635 from points west of IH-35E.
- TXDOT representatives have approved the exit ramp for Valley View Lane which will be constructed concurrently with the IH-35 widening project, at no additional cost to the city.
NOTE: THROUGHFARE PLAN SHOWS FUTURE VALLEY VIEW LN PAVEMENT SECTION AS 8 LANE DIVIDED

PRELIMINARY - SUBJECT TO CHANGE
NOTE: THROUGHFARE PLAN SHOWS FUTURE VALWOOD PKWY PAVEMENT SECTION AS 6 LANE DIVIDED

PRELIMINARY - SUBJECT TO CHANGE
March 31, 2020
Ms. Ashton Strong, P.E.
TXDOT – Dallas District Office
4777 E. Hwy. 80
Mesquite, TX 75150

RE: IH-35E Phase 2 Expansion – Staff comments related to Valley View Lane and Valwood Parkway schematic intersection designs

Ms. Strong,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments related to the proposed intersection design schematics for IH-35E at Valley View Lane and Valwood Parkway, as it relates to the overall IH-35E Phase 2 expansion project. Per your request, below are staff’s comments.

IH-35E at Valley View Lane (VVL)

1. Lane widths: With exception of U-turn lanes, all VVL lane widths need to be maximum 11-feet wide. Our goal is to minimize the overall width of the intersection that pedestrians have to walk (north/south) hence the narrower lane widths, but also reallocate that space to improved pedestrian connections (east/west) along VVL.

2. Column placement/Pedestrian connectivity/Sidewalk widths: The following comments are inter-related:
   a. Sidewalk along south side of VVL needs to be minimum 8-ft width (clear of obstructions); minimum 6-ft width (clear of obstructions) along the north side.
   b. Sidewalks being placed at back of curb without any physical barrier protection from the adjacent travel lanes (and U-turn lanes) are not desirable for pedestrians. What can be done to better protect the pedestrians and ensure that we have the minimum sidewalk clearances? (see also c. below)
   c. The columns need to be placed where they are not in the middle of the pedestrian connection/sidewalk areas. Could the columns be shifted so that the columns help serve as a buffer between the main travel lanes and sidewalks in order to improve the pedestrian areas as shown in the attached image (see Attachment 1)? What improvements could be provided to buffer the pedestrians on the U-turn side?
3. Right turn lanes:  
   a. Southwest corner – Provide dedicated free right turn lane (instead of consolidated with through lane).  
   b. Northeast corner – Provide dedicated free right turn lane comparable to what is currently existing today.  
   c. Southeast corner – Consolidate the free right turn lane with the adjacent through lane.  
   d. Northwest corner – okay as proposed.

4. Other: What is planned within the 2-foot wide dimensioned area that overhangs into the travel lanes?

IH-35E at Valwood Pkwy

1. Lane widths: With exception of U-turn lanes, all Valwood Pkwy lane widths need to be maximum 11-feet wide. Again, our goal is to minimize the overall width of the intersection that pedestrians have to walk (north/south) hence the narrower lane widths, but also reallocate that space to improved pedestrian connections (east/west) along Valwood Pkwy.

2. Column placement/Pedestrian connectivity/Sidewalk widths: The following comments are inter-related:  
   a. Sidewalk along south side of Valwood Pkwy needs to be minimum 8-ft width (clear of obstructions); minimum 6-ft width (clear of obstructions) along the north side.  
   b. Sidewalks being placed at back of curb without any physical barrier protection from the adjacent travel lanes (and U-turn lanes) are not desirable for pedestrians. What can be done to better protect the pedestrians and ensure that we have the minimum sidewalk clearances? (see also c. below)  
   c. The columns need to be placed where they are not in the middle of the pedestrian connection/sidewalk areas. Could the columns be shifted so that they help serve as a buffer between the main travel lanes and sidewalks in order to improve the pedestrian areas as shown in the attached image (see Attachment 1)? What improvements could be provided to buffer the pedestrians on the U-turn side?

5. Other: What is planned within the 2-foot wide dimensioned area that overhangs into the travel lanes?

Exit Ramp from EB IH-635 to Valley View Lane

As TXDOT is aware of, the Mayor of Farmers Branch is requesting an exit ramp from eastbound IH-635 to Valley View Lane. The primary reasons for this exit ramp are due to the significant redevelopment that has begun within the city’s DART Station Area, and to improve access to our community particularly for persons traveling eastbound on IH-635 from points west of IH-35E. Based on TXDOT’s last briefing to the City Council, it is staff’s understanding that TXDOT’s operations design team is evaluating the requested exit ramp and the Mayor/city is still awaiting feedback from TXDOT whether this is a feasible option (presuming the appropriate financing strategies can be resolved).
We will continue to work towards providing TXDOT with additional feedback related to aesthetic enhancements and utility improvements/relocations desired by the city, prior to August 1, 2020 per your email dated March 3, 2020.

In the meantime, if you have questions or need clarification related to these comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at 972.919.2542 or at tina.firgens@farmersbranchtx.gov. We look forward to working with you and your team for a successful project within our city.

Sincerely,

Tina M. Firgens, AICP
Director of Planning

Attachment 1

CC: Mr. Charles Cox, City Manager
    Mr. John Land, Deputy City Manager
    Mr. Ben Williamson, Assistant City Manager
    Mr. Marc Bentley, Director of Public Works
    Mr. Shane Davis, Director of Sustainability and Public Health
Attachment 1 – Photo illustrating columns providing separation between sidewalk and main travel lanes.
Discuss prioritizing potential betterment improvements including the process for making recommendations to Farmers Branch City Council.

BACKGROUND:
Resolution No. 2020-025 outlines that the purpose of the Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force is to identify opportunities for improving mobility and aesthetics of the IH-35E Highway corridor and should include but not be limited to:

- Structural improvements;
- Intersection design;
- Sidewalks;
- Hike and bike trail connectivity;
- Landscaping;
- Lighting;
- Public art;
- Overhead utility relocation; and
- Any other items identified and deemed appropriate by the Task Force.

TxDOT will be issuing a request for proposals for the detailed design and build of the IH-35E widening in August, 2020. Prior to this date, any betterments recommendations made by the task force to TxDOT will first need to be reviewed and approved by City Council, including the allocation of funding. In addition, the City will be required to enter into agreements with TxDOT for the construction and maintenance of betterments. TxDOT has offered to coordinate with staff throughout this betterments evaluation process to ensure that the task force’s considerations are aligned with TxDOT’s construction capabilities.

Below is the process staff is recommending in order to formulate a final recommended list of betterments improvements for City Council’s consideration:
A few key items to note are:

- Betterments should be prioritized so that staff can begin to prepare information to bring to the task force for consideration.
- Betterments that will require a higher level of review and costing may need to come back to the task force more than once; these items should be prioritized to allow adequate time for review and formation of a recommendation.
- It would also be beneficial if the task force identified any additional betterments that need to be considered earlier in the evaluation process.
- Ranked betterments will be presented to City Council, taking into consideration the greatest positive aesthetic impact for the money spent.

**ACTIONS:**
Staff recommends the task force identify betterments for further evaluation.

**ATTACHMENTS:**
None
Discuss future meeting dates for the Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force.

BACKGROUND:
As the mandate of the Mayor’s IH-35E Betterments Task Force is time sensitive and recommendations need to be made to City Council prior to August 1, 2020, staff is recommending the following meeting dates:

- May 5, 2020, 10am - 12pm
- May 19, 2020 10am - 12pm
- June 2, 2020 10am - 12pm

Additional meetings will be scheduled at the May 19, 2020 meeting if needed.

ACTIONS:
1. Approve the recommended meeting dates; or
2. Approve alternate meeting dates as decided upon by the Task Force.

ATTACHMENTS:
None