



## SH 71 U-Turn Relocation Neighborhood Meeting

August 3, 2016 from 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

183 South Project Office

7901 E. Riverside Drive, Austin, TX 78744

# WELCOME!

Welcome to the neighborhood meeting for the 183 South Project's proposed relocation of the westbound to eastbound U-turn, or turnaround, on SH 71 at the intersection with US 183 near The Parking Spot and Gatti's Pizza. Your participation and input is appreciated.

**The reason for the proposed relocation is that safety is compromised at the existing turnaround.**

Drivers traveling at high speeds and wishing to complete a U-turn or turnaround from westbound SH 71 to eastbound SH 71 must slow down quickly and make a sharp left turn. Then they must compete with high speed through-traffic as they attempt to merge onto eastbound SH 71. The construction of the 183 South Project presents an opportunity to mitigate this safety risk and improve operations by relocating the turnaround movement to a safer location at the existing Riverside Drive turnaround.

The proposed closure would enhance safety and traffic flow on SH 71 and is recommended by Colorado River Constructors (CRC), who is designing and building the 183 South Project under the oversight of the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (Mobility Authority) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

**At today's meeting, you will have an opportunity to review and comment on the following:**

- **Current condition of SH 71 westbound to SH 71 eastbound turnaround location**
- **Proposed relocation of the movement to Riverside Drive**
- **Benefits of relocation**

Staff members from CRC, the Mobility Authority, and TxDOT are here to listen to your input and answer your questions. Design and construction will proceed based on public feedback received, while prioritizing safety and operational considerations.

We welcome your comments. You may leave your comments with us, mail them to the address indicated on the form, or provide them online at [www.183South.com/contact](http://www.183South.com/contact). Comments must be received by August 15 to be included in the official record for this meeting.

**Thank you for your interest and participation in the 183 South Project.**



# EXHIBITS





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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Why are we proposing the relocation of the SH 71 westbound to SH 71 eastbound U-turn / turnaround?

- Driver safety is compromised at the existing location of the U-turn/turnaround. Drivers wishing to complete a U-turn have to enter a heavily traveled high speed roadway where cars are changing lanes and there are often few gaps or openings in the flow of traffic. Construction of the 183 South Project presents an opportunity to mitigate this safety risk and improve operations by relocating the turnaround movement to a safer location at the existing Riverside Drive turnaround.

## This turnaround used to be a safe option for drivers. What happened?

- Regional growth combined with recent and ongoing projects to improve mobility on SH 71, such as the SH 71 Express Project and the Riverside Overpass Project, are transforming SH 71 from a rural highway to an urban, controlled-access highway. These changes are making it harder to safely navigate the U-turn/turnaround. The current location of the westbound to eastbound turnaround means drivers have to complete a low-speed turnaround in the median of a high-speed urban highway. These movements are usually prohibited on controlled-access facilities because of the risks associated with low-speed traffic merging with high-speed through-traffic.

## What are the safety and operational benefits of the relocation?

- Drivers using the SH 71 turnaround at Riverside Drive will be merging onto a lower speed frontage road with less traffic and more breaks in traffic due to the adjacent traffic signal. As a result, they will find it easier and safer to merge into existing traffic. In addition, drivers trying to access Austin-Bergstrom International Airport and destinations like The Parking Spot will already be on the right hand side of the road. As a result, they will not have to cross over several lanes of traffic in a short distance to reach the entrance to The Parking Spot and will find it easier to get to the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport exits.

## Where would the new turnaround be relocated to?

- The alternative westbound to eastbound SH 71 movement would be located at Riverside Drive where there is an existing free-flow turnaround. This is a non-signalized U-Turn, so drivers do not have to wait at the light in order to complete the turnaround.

## How much further would drivers have to travel to turn around at Riverside?

- The Riverside Drive turnaround is 0.8 miles from the existing turnaround. Additional round trip travel distance will be 1.6 miles.

## What is the difference in travel time?

- Additional travel time is less than 2 minutes round trip during peak periods.

### **How can drivers access the new turnaround?**

- Instead of using the existing westbound to eastbound U-Turn on SH 71, drivers would continue on westbound SH 71 toward Interstate 35, take the Riverside Drive exit, use the free-flow left turnaround there, and re-enter eastbound SH 71.

### **Would drivers have to go through a traffic signal to use the Riverside Drive turnaround?**

- No. Drivers do not have to wait at a traffic signal to use the turnaround at the Riverside Drive overpass.

### **Will drivers have to pay a toll to access the new turnaround?**

- No, all access points for the Riverside Drive turnaround are non-tolled.

### **How is this different from the current condition?**

- The current turnaround is located directly adjacent to the SH71/US 183 interchange and in the middle of the high-speed mainlanes of SH 71. The new configuration would shift this movement west to the Riverside Drive turnaround and the lower speed frontage roads.

### **What is the process for determining the final outcome? What criteria is considered?**

- Ultimately, our goal is to improve safety and mobility for the traveling public in a way that best meets the mobility needs of the community. Enhanced safety and operational efficiency of the roadway are the driving factors as we continue our evaluation, and public input plays a key role as we assess the effects of this proposed relocation on the surrounding community.

### **How does public input influence the process?**

- Because we believe that communities make projects better, we are soliciting feedback from the public on this proposal and encourage the community to become engaged in the process. As part of that process, we are holding a neighborhood meeting to inform affected property owners of impacts that may result from implementation of this proposal. All comments received during the public comment period (August 3–August 15) will become part of the official record and will be considered in the final evaluation process.

### **When would the existing turnaround be closed?**

- If this relocation plan is advanced, we anticipate closing the existing turnaround location in 2017.

**Thank you for your interest and participation in the 183 South Project.**





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# COMMENT FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:  
(optional) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Texas Transportation Code, §201.811(a)(5)):  
Check each of the following boxes that apply to you:

- I am employed by TxDOT
- I do business with TxDOT
- I could benefit monetarily from the project or other item about which I am commenting

**COMMENT:**

**Written comments may also be mailed to: 183 South Project Office, Attn: Zack Hensley, 7901 E. Riverside Dr. Suite 100, Austin, TX 78744, or submitted online at [www.183South.com/contact](http://www.183South.com/contact). Comments must be received by Monday, August 15, 2016.**

This form may be used to provide written comments on this project. Any questions placed on this form will not be considered an open records request and will not be treated as such. If you have an open records request it must be submitted under a separate letter.



CENTRAL TEXAS  
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