

# Get the 411on281...EIS



THE LATESTS ON THE US 281 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT SEPTEMBER 2010

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Looking for up-to-date information on the **US 281 SUPERSTREET?**

[Click here](#) for the latest information and videos and [click here](#) for answers to frequently asked questions about the US 281 Superstreet!

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**Contact Us**

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**CAC Corner**

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was created to be the voice of the community related to the US 281 EIS and to ensure community concerns and ideas are heard. The committee is comprised of representatives from stakeholder groups that live or work along the US 281 corridor, including civic, community and environmental groups, educational institutions and businesses within the corridor. Although the creation of the Community Advisory Committee is not a requirement of the US 281 EIS, the Alamo RMA chose to form the Committee to further ensure that community concerns, ideas and suggestions are heard as the EIS process moves forward. [Click here](#) for a current roster of the organizations and representatives of the Community Advisory Committee and to view meeting documents.



Members engaged in discussion at a Community Advisory Committee meeting

If you would like more information about the CAC, please contact the CAC facilitator, Linda Ximenes, at: 210-354-2925 or by e-mail at [US281EIS@AlamoRMA.org](mailto:US281EIS@AlamoRMA.org).

**Request a Speaker!**

If you belong to a group or association that would like more information about the US 281 EIS process, we want to visit with you!

[Submit your request here](#) and we will get back to you to coordinate a speaker for your next meeting.

[Join Our Mailing List](#)

Para recibir este boletín en español, favor de llamar al 210.495-5256.

Forward this email to a Friend



Dear

**The US 281 EIS Newsletter is now digital!**

The Alamo Regional Mobility Authority would like to thank you for your participation and interest in the US 281 EIS. While the US 281 Draft EIS is being completed, you will receive updates through a new digital source. Beginning in September, a monthly email that includes the US 281 EIS E-Newsletter will be sent to those who have joined the US 281 EIS email list. We encourage you to read the E-Newsletter, talk with your friends and neighbors about the content, and forward it to anyone who may be interested in staying up-to-date on the US 281 EIS progress. If you know someone who would like to receive the US 281 EIS E-Newsletter, please direct them to [411on281/EIS](http://411on281/EIS) website to [sign up](#) to join the mailing list.

We hope you enjoy the new format and we want to know what you think about the E-Newsletter; please [click here](#) to send us an email. As always, we look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,  
Alamo Regional Mobility Authority

**US 281 EIS Interns Present "Outside the Box" Ideas to the Alamo RMA Board of Directors**



Dr. Gayle Nicoll, Associate Professor, Department of Architecture, UTSA; Erik Leitner, UTSA Architecture intern; Jimmy Robertson, Jacobs Engineering; Marisol Chapa, UTSA Architecture intern; Sergio Martinez, UTSA Urban & Regional Planning intern; Jesus Moulinet, Jacobs Engineering; Blake McCarver, UTSA Civil Engineering intern; Dr. Richard Diem, Dean of the Honors College, UTSA

Thanks to the efforts and encouragement of the Alamo RMA to include a wide range of stakeholders in the US 281 EIS, Jacobs Engineering (US 281 EIS firm) recruited a team of four UTSA students to investigate Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) for the US 281 corridor. The interns spent the summer with Jacobs Engineering learning about CSS and how it could be applied to US 281. They presented their findings at the August 12, 2010 Alamo RMA Board of Directors meeting.

**Context Sensitive Solutions** is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders in providing a transportation facility that fits its setting. It is an approach that leads to preserving and enhancing scenic, aesthetic, historic, community, and environmental resources, while improving or maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions. *\*Results of Joint AASHTO/FHWA Context Sensitive Solutions Strategic Planning Process Summary Report, March 2007*

The interns identified four key contextual elements of the US 281 corridor: Camp Bullis, the Texas Hill Country, the Edwards Aquifer, and Endangered species. They focused on current conditions within the corridor related to mobility, safety, water quality, lighting, aesthetics and landscaping. Their Context Sensitive proposals included low-impact development approaches to managing storm water runoff; using wind and solar energy; creating a sense of community through aesthetic treatments; and developing multi-modal connections.

*"We are uncertain about how people will move in the future, but we need to realize that our decisions today, regarding transportation systems, will have a great impact in the future of our communities and the environment."*  
The US 281 EIS - UTSA Interns August 2010

Storm water management could include "rain tanks" (remember the large milk carton looking objects that supported our exhibits at the public meetings?) that are installed underground to collect, filter and redistribute water runoff from the roads; rain gardens; and highway runoff filtration systems that use permeable materials to allow water to filter through to the collection tanks.

Alternative energy sources, such as wind and solar, were suggested along the corridor. Wind turbines placed on lighting columns or median barriers, or solar panels mounted on existing structures would provide lighting along the corridor. These sources were determined to be low maintenance and cost-effective over time.



"Rain tanks" used to display information at US 281 EIS Public Meeting #3

Aesthetic recommendations included landscaping with native plants, artistic treatments for columns and retaining walls, and accent lighting.

The interns also noted that Context Sensitive Solutions should not just focus on the highway corridor but also its connection with the surrounding communities. Pedestrian crosswalks and sidewalks could be made more inviting and safe for pedestrians to use. For short trips within the corridor, such facilities could create more inviting spaces and encourage walking instead of a continuing dependence on the automobile.

To view the Intern's Context Sensitive Solutions presentation to the Alamo RMA Board of Directors, please [click here](#).

**US 281 EIS Public Meeting #3 Standing Room Only!**

Over 200 people attended Public Meeting #3 on April 29, 2010. An open house provided an opportunity for attendees to ask questions about the US 281 EIS. The open house was followed



Small group sessions at US 281 EIS Public Meeting #3

by a formal presentation. Attendees then broke into multiple small groups to provide an opportunity for attendees to share and discuss differing viewpoints about each of the three proposed build alternatives that were presented. These build alternatives include:

1. [Overpass/Expansion](#)
2. [Expressway](#)
3. [Elevated Expressway](#)

To learn more about these alternatives, visit the [EIS website](#).

Public Meeting #3 received over 80 formal comments that will be included in the official meeting summary report, which will be made available to the public in the coming months. The comments and input from the small groups are continuing to be used to shape the alternatives being considered in the Draft EIS. Once the Public Meeting #3 summary report is available for viewing, notifications will be mailed and a notice will be posted on the 411on281 website and in this E-Newsletter. Visit the [411on281 website](http://411on281/US281EIS) to review the materials from [Public Meeting #3](#).



We will update you each month with information about the Draft EIS as it becomes available. Currently, the three alternatives presented at [Public Meeting #3](#) on April 29, 2010, plus the "No Build" Alternative have been advanced to the Draft EIS for further study and development. Each **Alternative** that was carried forward to the Draft EIS is listed below with a description. The "build" alternatives listed include analysis for non-toll and toll options.

- No Build:**
- US 281 SuperStreet Improvements
  - Upgrade to Loop 1604/US 281 Interchange
  - All planned short and long range transportation improvements (except the US 281 corridor North of Loop 1604)
  - Short-term minor maintenance and safety improvements that maintain the continued operation of existing US 281 North of Loop 1604
  - Provides a baseline to compare against all build alternatives
- Overpass/Expansion Alternative**
- Non-Toll
- Expressway Alternative**
- Non-Toll
  - Toll
  - Managed Lanes - An operational approach to managing lanes. Lanes can be free or have tolls based on certain conditions such as:
    - Number of persons per automobile
    - Vehicle type
    - Time of day and week
    - Combination of any of the above
- Elevated Expressway Alternative**
- Non-Toll
  - Toll
  - Managed Lanes

**Complementary Elements of All Build Alternatives**

- Bus, Park-and-Ride Facilities
- Bike & Pedestrian Facilities
- Growth Management
- Transportation System Management are easily implemented, low capital cost transportation improvements that increase the efficiency of transportation facilities and services. Examples include improved intersection or signal operation, access management and ride-sharing.
- Transportation Management typically refers to policies, programs and actions that are directed towards decreasing the number of single-occupant vehicles on the road. Examples include mandatory alternate work schedules and management.

If you have any questions about the alternatives being carried forward to the Draft EIS, please send us an email: [US281EIS@AlamoRMA.org](mailto:US281EIS@AlamoRMA.org).