

## STAFF REPORT

**Case Number:** N/A  
**Request:** Discuss IH-35E Corridor Vision Study public engagement plan.  
**Address:** IH-35E Corridor  
**Lot Size:** ± 463 net acres  
**Petitioner:** City of Farmers Branch

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### BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an overview of the public engagement process designed in support of the IH-35E Corridor Vision Study. The vision study will guide development within the IH-35E corridor for approximately the next 20 years and include recommended action items to leverage existing assets in order to increase property values and allow for higher quality land uses within the corridor.

A robust public engagement plan was developed at the outset of the plan process in November, 2019. Input and feedback received through public engagement is important to ensure that the vision study considers the views and opinions of all affected parties including elected officials, land owners, businesses, residents residing near the corridor, staff, and other interested members of the community. The desired outcome of the public engagement process is that the community as a whole will support the adoption and implementation of the IH-35 Corridor Vision Study final plan document.

The coronavirus health pandemic has required review and adjustment of the original public engagement plan to be in line with current social distancing requirements, and being sensitive to the impact of the health pandemic on businesses and property owners within the IH-35E corridor. Staff and the consultant team are working together to adjust the engagement plan to ensure planned events are appropriate for this stage of the current health crisis.

### STUDY AREA:

The study area, shown in Attachment 2, includes approximately 463 net acres of land on the east and west sides of the IH-35E right-of-way. The study area is bounded by the City of Dallas to the south; City of Carrollton to the north; the Madill Railroad on the west; and generally the eastern boundary of PD-70, PD-86, and PD-32.

### CORONAVIRUS CONSIDERATIONS:

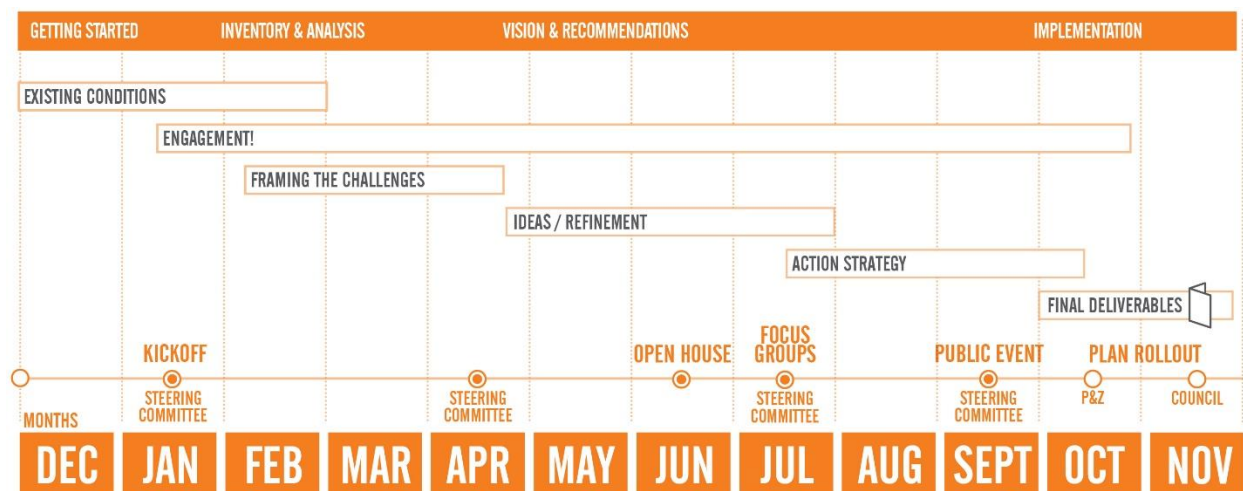
The first open house for the vision study was scheduled to take place on March 19, 2020, however, it was canceled due to the coronavirus outbreak. Due to the importance of having property owners and representatives from businesses located within the corridor participate in the engagement events, staff is sensitive to the fact that their priorities currently lie with protecting their property

and business interests, hence engagement events have been paused until such time when it is appropriate to engage the public. It is expected that public consultation (outlined in more detail below) will resume, in an online forum, in mid-June. Staff will reassess the proposed timelines on a regular basis and further modifications may be necessary based on the progression of the current health pandemic.

### ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW:

The public engagement plan was developed by Interface Studio LLC (the consultant) as one of the initial tasks in the plan process. Development of the engagement plan at an early stage helps to ensure that the project as a whole can remain on schedule and on budget. Also, and most importantly, it ensures that public engagement takes place during the appropriate phases of the plan development allowing feedback received to be considered and responded to, as well as ensuring that the final plan (vision study) is reflective of the feedback received.

The graphic below illustrates the project plan, demonstrating where engagement is anticipated to occur relative to plan development. Each engagement method proposed for the corridor vision study is explained in more detail below the graphic.



### Marketing Materials and Website:

The consultant has prepared a number of marketing materials as needed in support of the plan development process. The goal of these materials is to provide a recognizable brand for the plan process, and promote the plan to the Farmers Branch community. Examples include postcards, email banners, graphics for the webpage, and maps.

A website is being maintained to provide information to the public on the vision study process. As the amount of online engagement increases, the amount of information on the website will be increased, so that the website can act as an online resource and engagement venue for the public.

### Steering Committee:

The steering committee, which is comprised of the Planning and Zoning Commission, has met twice, first on January 13, 2020 and for a second time on April 13, 2020. The group will meet two additional times over the course of the plan preparation. The role of the steering committee is to provide input into the visioning stage of the process, and provide feedback on any draft development scenarios and draft versions of the IH-35E Corridor Vision Study plan document that are produced. Another key role for the steering committee is to help the consultant and staff conduct outreach within the community in order to promote participation in vision study events, as well as its adoption and implementation.

### Stakeholder and Councilor Interviews:

A series of stakeholder interviews were conducted in January. Land owners, business owners, developers, residents and councilors provided a baseline of knowledge for the corridor through identification of strengths, opportunities, and challenges. Interviews with councilors also provided the opportunity for them to share their development vision for the corridor with the consultant.

### Public Meetings/Online Engagement:

Two public meetings were envisioned for the plan development process. The first public meeting was originally planned for March 19, 2020 but was canceled due to the coronavirus public health crisis. In lieu of the in person public open house, staff and the consultant team are working on developing opportunities for online public engagement, including an online survey. This will allow the consultant to share analysis with the public and provide the opportunity for the public to answer a number of questions; the responses received will inform a draft vision, goals, and recommendations for future development within the corridor. It is anticipated that this first online survey will go forward in mid-June. Staff and the consultant are currently modifying the survey (similar to the one that the steering committee filled out) to include questions related to the impact of the coronavirus.

The second public meeting will be designed to solicit feedback related to the proposed vision and land use scenarios for the vision study. It is anticipated that this event will be held in September, or approximately three months after the online survey. The form of this public event will be determined based on the status of the health crisis, and staff and the consultant are remaining flexible so that the event can be designed to capture the best input given the conditions.

### Focus Groups:

Focus groups will follow the online survey by approximately one month, and are currently anticipated to occur in mid-July. Once the response period for the online survey has closed, analysis of the responses received will occur by the consultant. The focus groups will discuss the analysis and findings resulting from the online survey, as well as discuss topics such as open space, transportation, housing and infrastructure. The focus groups will present an opportunity for participants to raise ideas and concerns surrounding the analysis. It is expected that five focus

groups will be held and that they will be organized to target specific interests, such as developers, property owners, businesses or residents.

*Plan Rollout:*

The plan rollout phase includes presentation to and consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council of the proposed final plan document for the IH-35E Corridor Vision Study. This phase will include a public hearing process so that the public can express their views to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council related to the proposed final plan document for the IH-35E Corridor Vision Study.

**SUMMARY:**

In summary, each of the engagement opportunities identified above will contribute to the development of the IH-35E Corridor Vision Study with the end goal of developing a final plan document that stakeholders can support through adoption and implementation.