

Coordination of Broadband Installation Report

Voluntary Joint Trenching Cost Savings
and Activities

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Coordination of Broadband Installation

Section 201.672, Texas Transportation Code, requires the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to provide notice on its website of ongoing and planned highway construction projects that include voluntary joint trenching opportunities in the state's right of way for broadband providers. A broadband provider may collaborate with TxDOT to deploy broadband conduit or other broadband facilities in the state's right of way. TxDOT is to give special consideration to projects that are likely to improve access to broadband for rural and/or underserved communities and, to the extent practicable, assist political subdivisions in taking advantage of voluntary joint trenching opportunities.

Furthermore, Section 201.673, Transportation Code, requires TxDOT to annually submit a report to the legislature on:

1. the actions taken by TxDOT in carrying out the coordination of broadband installation opportunities for voluntary joint trenching; and
2. any costs or cost savings to the state and private entities associated with voluntary joint trenching opportunities.

TxDOT Implementation Actions

TxDOT's online Utility Accommodation Toolkit¹ and Project Tracker² provides notice to broadband utility providers seeking joint trenching opportunities to contact the local TxDOT District in which the trenching would occur. Both websites are frequented by utility companies seeking information and project details to further coordination between entities.

Additionally, TxDOT developed the Joint Trench Application³, a mapping tool for utility companies to coordinate potential joint trenching locations between other utility companies and TxDOT. This application better informs decisions by both the companies as well as TxDOT on project plans and development.

Costs and Cost Savings

Since implementation, no joint trenching opportunities have emerged. As a result, the program's costs and savings remain at zero dollars. TxDOT will continue to look for ways the program could benefit both TxDOT and utility companies, with the aim of achieving cost savings in the future.

¹ TxDOT Utility Accommodations Toolkit: <https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/right-of-way/utility-accommodations.html>

² TxDOT Project Tracker: <https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/projects/project-tracker.html>

³ TxDOT Joint Trench Application: <https://maps.dot.state.tx.us/JTA/>