

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

Federal Highway Administration/TxDOT Austin District/Hays County

RM 150: from IH 35 northbound frontage road to CR 204

CSJ: 0805-01-017

Project Number: PTF

Hays County

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), and Hays County are proposing realigning approximately 0.58 mile of Ranch-to-Market (RM) 150 from Interstate Highway (IH) 35 northbound frontage road to County Road 204/ Lehman Road. This realignment would provide a continuous facility because RM 150 East would be intersecting with RM 150 West at IH 35. Approximately 700 ft of the existing RM 150 East that is being realigned would be removed from the state roadway system, would remain open to traffic, and would be a local street renamed Hill Street.

The proposed facility would be a four-lane divided roadway with continuous sidewalks and shoulders. Travel lanes would be 12-ft wide with a 9-ft to 21-ft wide raised median, 4-ft wide shoulders, and 6-ft wide sidewalks between IH 35 and the new Hill Street, and 12-ft wide travel lanes, a 14-ft to 24-ft wide center turn lane, 4-ft wide shoulders, and 6-ft wide sidewalks for roadway sections between Hill Street and Lehman Road. The design speed is 35 mph based on the optimum limit for the geometric design of the proposed roadway. The connection of the newly named Hill Street with the new RM 150 East would include 4-ft shoulders and 6-ft sidewalks. Bicyclists could use the 4-ft shoulder.

The existing bridge over a tributary to Plum Creek would be widened by 18 ft on each side. The proposed widened bridge would accommodate two-way traffic with four 12-ft travel lanes, a 14-ft wide center turn lane, 6-ft wide shoulders and 6-ft wide sidewalks on each side.

PURPOSE AND NEED:

The purpose for the proposed project is to reduce congestion, enhance safety, and expand economic opportunity. There is a need to provide a continuous roadway from downtown Kyle to rural areas east of IH 35. A continuous roadway would lower traffic volumes on the frontage roads and would reduce the number of turning movements on and off the IH 35 northbound frontage road thereby reducing congestion and enhancing safety. The continuous roadway would also provide access to planned development that would expand economic opportunities within the area.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT APPROVAL: FHWA approved the environmental document as satisfactory for further processing on July 13, 2011.

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NOTICES AND ARTICLES: Legal notices were published in 2011 in the Austin American Statesmen on August 7 and 29; in Ahora Si on August 4 and 25; and in the Wimberley View and Hays Free Press on August 3 and August 24. Letters were mailed to adjacent property owners, public officials, and those individuals who requested to be included in the mail out for the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING DATE AND PLACE: An Open House and Public Hearing were held at Hays High School located at 4800 Jack C. Hays Trail, Buda, Texas, 78610 on Thursday, September 8, 2011. The Open House started at 6:00 p.m. and the Public Hearing presentation started at 6:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: There were 68 registered attendees at the Public Hearing. Fifty-five were interested members of the public.

Four elected officials were in attendance at the Public Hearing:

Sylvia Boasi (on behalf of) Debbie Ingalsbe, Hays County, Commissioner Precinct 1
Mark Jones, Hays County, Commissioner Precinct 2
David Wilson, City of Kyle, Mayor Pro Tem
Becky Selbera, City of Kyle, Councilmember

One public official was in attendance at the Public Hearing:

Lanny S. Lambert, City of Kyle, City Manager

In addition to the registered attendees, there were six people representing TxDOT, and six consultants representing URS Corporation, HNTB, CP&Y, LAN Corporation, and Nancy Ledbetter and Associates.

CONDUCTED BY:

John Hurt, TxDOT Public Information Officer
Introduction and Officiate During Public Comment
Mike Knapik, P.E., CPY, Inc.
Technical presentation on IH 35 Frontage Roads
Jessica Rodriguez-Gomez, P.E., URS, Corp
Technical presentation on RM 150 East
Andy Atlas, CPY, Inc.
Environmental presentation on IH 35 FR and RM 150 East
Bob Harwood, TxDOT ROW Agent
Right-of-way acquisition procedures

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EXHIBITS: The project design schematic was displayed for public review and comment. A packet of information regarding the proposed project was prepared and available to the hearing attendees. The packet included a welcome letter with contact information, the hearing agenda, project location maps, descriptions of the proposed projects, typical sections, and a comment sheet. Also available were the Categorical Exclusion document and TxDOT's *The Purchase of Right-of-Way* booklet.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Two oral comments on the RM 150 proposed project were presented during the Public Hearing. Sixteen written comments were received by the close of the public comment period, Monday, September 19, 2011.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS:

Issue	Number of Comments	Summary of Comments
Project Support	16	Expressions of support for the project as a whole or elements of the project plan.
Safety	12	Project would improve safety.
Congestion	12	Project would reduce congestion.
Economic Development	5	Project supports economic development.
Quality of Life	3	Project would improve quality of life.
Intersections	1	Improvements are needed at RM 150 and S Old Highway 81.
Extended Improvements	1	Extend improvements from CR 204 to SH 21.

RECOMMENDATION: The responses to the comments indicate that existing proposed plans have addressed all the above issues except to improve the intersection of RM 150 at S Old Highway 81 and to extend the proposed improvements to SH 21. The intersection will be improved as part of the IH 35 project; therefore, no recommendations were made to change the RM 150 proposed project. The proposed project logically terminates and has independent utility from the northbound frontage road of IH 35 to CR 204; therefore, improvements to RM 150 outside of these limits would be considered during the development of a different project on RM 150 and no changes to the proposed project are recommended.

In consideration of the strong support for the project as proposed in combination with the assessment of no significant environmental impacts, the realignment of RM 150 East from the IH 35 northbound frontage road to CR 204/Lehman Road project is therefore recommended for approval as a Categorical Exclusion.