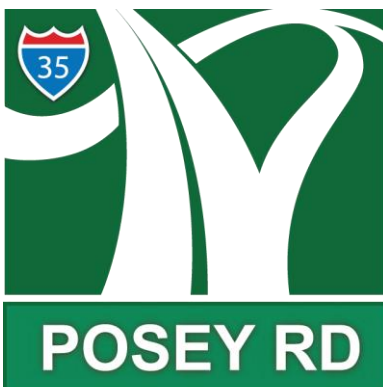


I-35 AND POSEY ROAD INTERSECTION

JANUARY 2015 PUBLIC MEETING COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Hays County, Texas

CSJ: 0016-03-103



Verbal Comment

Comment – Perry Horton

Hi. This is Perry Horton, the landowner of the northeast 200 approximate acres at Posey Road and I-35. I would like to express my concern for the proposed off-ramp north of Posey Road. Our concern is that we have to allow so much frontage after the off-ramp and that would prohibit us or limit us to one entrance to a future development site. We propose or suggest that the proposed off-ramp be moved further south to allow more frontage along the frontage road in front of the northeast property at Posey and I-35.

Response – The project team has taken into consideration the location of driveways along the frontage road in relation to the proposed ramps. The team is following access control requirements as defined in the TxDOT Access Management and Roadway Design Manuals which is used to control access points on the frontage road. The project team will continue analyzing existing and proposed conditions based on traffic and crash data to determine impacts and provide any recommendations to the County and TxDOT before the final schematic is completed.

Written Comments

Comment – Darius Todd

I have a great deal of concern about the NB Exit Ramp @ Posey Road. The congestion at that ramp is already tremendous during peak periods. The move of the NB Posey Rd exit all the way back to York Creek will increase the likelihood that visitors to the outlet malls will exit nearer to the malls. The traffic interchange getting off of NB I35 and those getting on the NB Entrance Ramp will be very dangerous; especially considering the entrance to the Tanger section (@ Cracker Barrel) is slowing to make a right turn. This plan makes an already dangerous section of road even more treacherous. I have been involved in an accident @ that location and will not support this type of change! An alternate option would be to reverse the on/off ramp directions allowing entering traffic to get on I35 NB before exiting traffic is allowed to merge onto the access road. However, this may necessitate the installation and use of an onramp bridge. At any rate, the current plan puts me and my family @ risk on a daily basis coming from our residence. Therefore, I am opposed to it.

Positives:

1. Overpass w/ turnaround is definitely needed!

Lesser concerns:

1. Length of construction (18 mo) that will impede access to my residence from the NB side
2. Lack of signal lights
3. I35 congestion during construction

Response – Hays County, and in particular the City of San Marcos, is one of the fastest growing regions of the Country. The entrance and exit ramps are being reversed from the traditional “diamond” pattern to an “X” pattern in accordance with the Mobility35 Plan. The “X” pattern ramp configuration is more consistent with what many drivers expect in an urbanized area. The ramp reversals will allow traffic to enter the interstate highway in advance of the Posey Road intersection

and exit after the intersection, which will result in reduced traffic flow through the intersection, easing congestion and decreasing pollution from idling vehicles. The proposed “X” configuration will also move the majority of the weaving movements between vehicles entering and exiting the highway to the frontage roads and off of the I-35 mainlanes. Moving the weaving movements to the frontage roads is safer as speeds are lower on the frontage roads than the mainlanes. The existing “diamond” pattern ramp configuration has a higher crash rate than other types of ramp layouts.

The new at-grade intersection of Posey will have stop signs until traffic volumes warrant a fully signalized intersection and existing entrance and exit ramps will be open during construction of the new ramps. The duration of the project is driven by the new construction of the new I-35 overpass while maintaining two lanes in each direction on I-35.

The project team has taken into consideration the location of driveways along the frontage road in relation to the proposed ramps. The team is following access control requirements as defined in the TxDOT Access Management and Roadway Design Manuals which is used to control access points on the frontage road. The project team will continue analyzing existing and proposed conditions based on traffic and crash data to determine impacts and provide any recommendations to the County and TxDOT before the final schematic is completed.

Comment – Betty Galuan

My concern is the frontage road becoming one way it is inconvenient to go 1 ½ mile for turnaround to head north. Santa’s Ranch—is another problem every year. We will be stuck and not able to leave our house. People using our property to turn around. School Bus—right now picks up kids and turns around @Heldenfels now it will have to drive to York Creek for turnaround.

Response – The frontage roads are being converted to one-way for safety reasons. While it might be longer for access, it is needed for safety reasons and to continue the one-way frontage roads that have already been converted on I-35 through Hays County. The project team has visited with the owners of Santa Ranch and the one-way frontage roads will help improve safety and mobility to the attraction by providing two lanes in one direction. If the right lane into the attraction is backed up, traffic on the frontage road can continue and pass safely on the left lane without being stuck or fearing oncoming traffic. Since traffic will be traveling in one direction, we anticipate that motorists will stop using your property to turn around.

Comment – Gina Perez

In a emergency situation we would have to travel 3 miles to come turn back into San Marcos. What about during the holidays Santas Ranch has access road blocked off. What about school busses having to travel a different route where it will be wasted time and waste of tax payers as well. The one-way will make it inconvenient for the ones who have been there for years.

Response – The frontage roads are being converted to one-way for safety reasons. While it might be longer for access, it is needed for safety reasons and to continue the one-way frontage roads that have already been converted on I-35 through Hays County. The project team has visited with the owners of Santa Ranch and the one-way frontage roads will help improve safety and mobility to the attraction by providing two lanes in one direction. If the right lane into the attraction is backed up,

traffic on the frontage road can continue and pass safely on the left lane without being stuck or fearing oncoming traffic.

Comment – John Horton & Perry Horton

Our Family owns the 200+ Acre property at the NE corner of I-35 & Posey. We are concerned about the exit ramp (n) after passing posey.

Response – The project team has taken into consideration the location of driveways along the frontage road in relation to the proposed ramps. The team is following access control requirements as defined in the TxDOT Access Management and Roadway Design Manuals which is used to control access points on the frontage road. The project team will continue analyzing existing and proposed conditions based on traffic and crash data to determine impacts and provide any recommendations to the County and TxDOT before the final schematic is completed.

Comment – Nick Nusbaum

What type of traffic control will be at the intersections of Posey Rd and the Access Rd.
4 way stop
Stop lights
None

Response – Stop signs will be used at the intersection of Posey Road and I-35 frontage roads until traffic warrants a signalized intersection.

Comment – Austin Wilson

I would like to propose the idea of new reformation. I have lived on Hunter Ridge road for ten years, and I use Posey road frequently. However, when I have driven on it, my largest concern has always been the point where the road becomes extremely rough. Personally, I do not see nearly as much traffic on this street compared to Centerpoint or McCarty lane. As a spectator of the future remodeling plans, I noticed the idea to detour the traffic of the freeway onto Hunter road. While I do appreciate the redo on this section of Hunter road, the remodel cannot handle that much volume. I am very firm when I say that it is also an invasion of privacy.

When I travelled in South America for several months, I was warned that being in a town too close to an 'artery' (or a main highway many people use), may have the consequences of a higher possibility of theft. And I received the privilege of witnessing this happen to an older woman who was seated on the bus, close to where I was seated. The police were notified and since I was the only one near the seat at the time, I had to attempt to describe the person I saw. I had no idea he was even committing a crime, from my angle! The point I would like to make across from this story is millions of different kinds of people use Interstate 35 for multitudes of different purposes. Many of those individuals are not even from the United States. If you place the high volume of vehicles, on a two-lane road, I fear for my belongings, my family and my animals.

In turn, I do agree Posey road needs reform, but your people are the experts at figuring out ideas, and this one, from my perspective, sounds like a ploy to force me out of my own home. Please do not impose upon my property and privacy by making a stride this large in my backyard. Or if you do, please redirect the traffic away from Old Bastrop and Hunter road. Thank you

Response – The proposed detour is not intended for I-35 traffic, but is for motorists who use Posey Road to cross over I-35. During construction of the bridge, traffic that normally uses Posey Road to access I-35 will have to use Hunter Road or Old Bastrop Highway to get to Centerpoint Road or York Creek Road. Construction of the I-35 overpass is anticipated to take approximately 18 months and then the detour would not be necessary.

Comment – Darius Todd

I am writing this as a follow up to the public comment card that I left at the public open house for the Posey Road I-35 intersection project.

I am very much in favor of the creation of an overpass with a turnaround to replace the inefficient, ineffective and confusing Posey Road access roads and bridge. However, I have a great deal of concern about the "NB Exit Ramp at Posey Rd" (NB Centerpoint Rd 200 exit).

Problem:

There is already a tremendous amount of congestion at that ramp during peak periods. The move of the northbound Posey Road exit all the way back to the York Creek area will increase the likelihood that visitors to the outlet malls will utilize exit 200 nearest the malls. This is mainly due to having to stop on the access road at the Posey road intersection. The fastest unimpeded exit to get to the Outlet Malls when travelling on I-35 northbound will be the "NB Exit Ramp at Posey Rd" (NB Centerpoint Rd 200 exit).

The traffic interchange between those getting off of the proposed "NB Exit Ramp at Posey Rd" (NB Centerpoint Rd 200 exit) and those utilizing the NB I-35 Entrance ramp near the Tanger Outlet will unnecessarily increase the danger caused by this already poorly planned access point. This hazard is magnified by the fact that two entrances to the mall exist at that same location and a great number of automobiles make hard stops to make the right turns to access these entrances. This plan makes an already dangerous section of road more treacherous. I have been involved in an automobile accident at this location and will not support this ill advised plan.

Is there a study showing the current utilization of NB Exit 199 vs. NB Exit 200? I would wager that the majority of vehicles utilize exit 199 when exiting northbound as it is safer.

Alternative Option:

1. Reversal of the "NB Exit Ramp at Posey Rd" (NB Centerpoint Rd 200 exit) to an On Ramp instead. This will allow traffic to get off of the access road at a high volume point thus alleviating congestion and allowing a safe entrance to the highway. It will also remove the hazardous interchange between those entering the malls and those entering the highway.
2. Placement of an "innovative intersection" at the Posey Road/I-35 access road intersection (as described in your literature describing Aquarena Springs Drive and Hopkins Street). This would give preferential treatment to automobiles that have exited the highway and provide better control for traffic entering the Tanger Outlet.
3. Reversal of the "NB Entrance Ramp at Posey Rd" near San Marcos Toyota to be the "NB Exit Ramp at Posey Rd" (NB Centerpoint Rd 200 exit). This will allow close access from I-35 to the Outlet Malls.

Other Concerns:

1. (Major) Southbound I-35 On Ramp access from Posey road is moved all the way down to the York Creek area. This is an inordinate distance to travel to get on I-35 from Posey Rd towards New Braunfels, San Antonio and beyond. This is especially true when events like the Santa's Ranch back up traffic for hours going southbound on the access road.
2. (Inconvenience) This plan will encourage business growth in the area. The lack of traffic signals at the Posey Road/I-35 access road intersection will guarantee traffic tie ups as the surrounding land is developed.
3. (Inconvenience) The length of construction (18 mo) will impede access to my residence when driving from origination points north of Posey Road. We work, worship and play north of our residence. So this will greatly impact our daily lives.
4. (Inconvenience) There will be occasional construction congestion on I-35 that will impede north and south bound commerce at times.

I am in favor of growth and better access to the resources in our city. As someone who has commuted to/from Austin from San Marcos for over 20 years, I desire smart alternative routes and modes of transportation. Many of the improvements that have been implemented as a result of the Mobility35 project have greatly enhanced our ability to get from point A to point B quickly and safely. This proposal has some definite flaws that, given some careful thought, can be resolved. I look forward to your reply and future proposals.

Response – Hays County, and in particular the City of San Marcos, is one of the fastest growing regions of the Country. The entrance and exit ramps are being reversed from the traditional “diamond” pattern to an “X” pattern in accordance with the Mobility35 Plan. The “X” pattern ramp configuration is more consistent with what many drivers expect in an urbanized area. The ramp reversals will allow traffic to enter the interstate highway in advance of the Posey Road intersection and exit after the intersection, which will result in reduced traffic flow through the intersection, easing congestion and decreasing pollution from idling vehicles. The proposed “X” configuration will also move the majority of the weaving movements between vehicles entering and exiting the highway to the frontage roads and off of the I-35 mainlanes. Moving the weaving movements to the frontage roads is safer as speeds are lower on the frontage roads than the mainlanes. The existing “diamond” pattern ramp configuration has a higher crash rate than other types of ramp layouts.

The project team has taken into consideration the location of driveways along the frontage road in relation to the proposed ramps. The team is following access control requirements as defined in the TxDOT Access Management and Roadway Design Manuals which is used to control access points on the frontage road. The project team will continue analyzing existing and proposed conditions based on traffic and crash data to determine impacts and provide any recommendations to the County and TxDOT before the final schematic is completed.

Innovative intersections are generally only used when the volume of left turns is high enough to warrant an innovative design. Otherwise, conventional intersections are preferred because they require less ROW, allow through traffic on the frontage roads, are less expensive, and meet driver expectations. Posey Road does not and is not projected to have a high enough left turn volume to justify an innovative intersection at this time.

1. While the southbound entrance ramp from Posey will be further to some property owners, access to southbound I-35 will also be closer to other properties along the southbound Frontage Road. The one-way frontage roads will help improve safety and mobility to the Santa's Ranch attraction by

providing two lanes in one direction. If the right lane into the attraction is backed up, traffic on the frontage road can continue and pass safely on the left lane without being stuck or fearing oncoming traffic.

2. Stop signs will be used at the intersection of Posey Road and I-35 frontage roads until traffic warrants a signalized intersection.

3. The contract for construction will include incentive/disincentives to help encourage a shorter construction timetable. However, 18 months is the estimate for the construction of the I-35 overpass while maintaining two lanes in each direction.

4. A traffic control plan will be included in the design plans to help minimize traffic congestion during construction and the impact to northbound and southbound commerce.

Comment – Kurt Schriefer

I understand that one-way access roads are being used for safety sake even though it adversely affects our plant (Heldenfels). My only other request would be to move the Northbound exit to Posey Road further North (closer to the Toyota dealership). I live in New Braunfels so my way to work will be to take the new Posey Road exit and U-turn to head back South to the Heldenfels Plant. I would prefer not traveling on the access road as much as possible.

Lastly, I know the York Creek Road flyover is in the San Antonio District but hopefully it will be upgraded in the near future as well. That would solve a lot of our problems caused by the new Posey Road overpass.

Response – The project team has taken into consideration the location of driveways along the frontage road in relation to the proposed ramps. The team is following access control requirements as defined in the TxDOT Access Management and Roadway Design Manuals which is used to control access points on the frontage road. While moving the proposed ramp north would help decrease your travel time on the Frontage Road but this would also impact access to other properties.

The proximity of the new exit ramp to York Creek Road supports the shift to an “X” pattern at that location. As Hays and Comal Counties continue to develop, the “X” pattern ramp configuration is more consistent with what many drivers expect in an urbanized area.

Comment – Mark Stanley

My name is Mark Stanley with SouthFork Frontiers I know both sides of the coin to Posey Road from safety issues lost my father there 7 years ago to my business Canyon trail RV Resort in which people are complaining about using the York Creek flyover to return North to San Marcos both are in need of changing now . Exiting after posey road would be better access to get to my 100 acres after the repairs are done just getting north back to San Marcos were I do a lot of business & shopping if I have to head south might as well shop in New Braunfels that is the worst two overpasses on the IH 35 between Austin & SA. just my thoughts hope the safety issues concerns first as well as a prosperity for San Marcos community. Mark Stanley moving to East Texas soon.

Response – The York Creek overpass is in the San Antonio District of TxDOT and not a part of this project. We have shared your comments with them and any additional comments on York Creek should be sent to the District office: <http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/district/san-antonio/contact.html>.

The frontage roads are being converted to one-way for safety reasons. While it might be longer for access, it is needed for safety reasons and to continue the one-way frontage roads that have already been converted on I-35 through Hays County.

Comment – Rando Ammons

Dear Sirs:

As the operator of a business in the vicinity of the proposed new location of the I-35 South Bound Exit Ramp at Centerpoint Road (the Posey Road exit ramp #199), we are concerned about the proximity of the intersection of the exit ramp (i.e., the end of the ramp) with the Interstate feeder onto which the exit ramp empties.

The aerial depiction of this intersection point seems to be too far south to allow for a safe exit from the ramp into the driveways of businesses on the west side feeder near the intersection of the ramp and the feeder. It is believed that the proposed intersection point creates an unnecessary safety hazard for customers of these businesses as they are forced to make abrupt turns off the ramp across two lanes of traffic on the feeder.

For this reason, we respectfully request that consideration be given to moving the subject exit ramp as far north as possible to minimize the above described condition. It would seem that the beginning of the exit ramp could easily be moved north to begin at a point where the Centerpoint Road overpass ends (flattens out), without affecting the construction cost of the exit ramp. Although there are no dimensions on the available aerial depiction of the ramp available to us, it would appear that this suggested move would allow 100 yards or so to reduce the safety hazard described above. This move should not negatively impact any businesses in the area of the exit ramp nor Interstate traffic flow.

Your consideration of this suggestion is appreciated.

Response – Moving the ramp 100 yards would require the overhead sign support to be reconstructed. TxDOT Access Management guidelines require at least 250' of access control at the end of the ramp on a Frontage Road with an existing high number of closely spaced driveways.

Comment – John Harrison

The intersection at Posey and the west end of the overpass is very ruddy and unsafe if making turns to IH-35 south. You have to go very slow to keep your position if the road is wet/icy. It needs repair or paved over to remove the chuck holes/bumps. I along with other Posey/Hunter residence have expressed our concerns to those at the meeting but I am not sure if it made it to the right channels. Thank you for your help in this matter.

Response – Your concern has been shared with the County and TxDOT to evaluate any immediately needed repairs. This will be corrected with the construction of the project.

Comment – Jarrold Peters

Lets get the show on the road. Hays county needs to get with it and purchase the ROW between IH35 and Hunter Road. The road rebuilding could probably wait a couple of years but ROW needs to be gotten NOW.

Response – Construction is anticipated to start in 2016. Although this project is acquiring a right-of-way clip at I-35 for the intersection improvements, it does not require any additional right-of-way between I-35 and Hunter Road. Your comment on acquiring right-of-way for the future improvement of Posey Road between I-35 and Hunter Road has been shared with the County.

Comment – Reagan Dickerson

I would like to comment on the proposed changes to Posey road and the I35 exits. In my opinion these changes are long overdue. The exit swaps at the overpasses should alleviate some of the traffic pressure on some of the more heavily used exit and entrance ramps. The most important part of the changes are that they address some long standing safety issues. Changing the access roads to one-way will eliminate the current situation of vehicles exiting I35 into oncoming traffic. I have on no less than 5 or more occasions been run off the road by vehicles that exit I35 traveling head on towards me at a high rate of speed, because the exiting driver was unaware that the traffic was two way. I deal with this dangerous situation on a daily basis. I am surprised and consider us lucky in that so far there have been no fatalities of drivers that are unaware of this situation when traveling the access roads or exiting I35. I think that this is a very good thing for both traffic flow and safety along this location on I35. Thank you.

Response – The purpose of this project is to improve safety and mobility and your comment has been shared with the County and TxDOT.

Comment – Chris Leonard

To whom it may concern,

We have a manufacturing company located in the H&H Industrial park just off the access road south of Posey Road and west of IH-35. We recognize the need for improvements to the Posey Road/IH-35 intersection but have concerns regarding traffic flow and access. Even though I was able to speak to a few of project team members, I was unable to submit a comment to a court reporter last night at the open house.

Changing the access road into a one way will be detrimental to us and our employees, especially those who live in or north of San Marcos. Currently, vendors, employees, and customers can from the Industrial Park entrance to IH-35 northbound at Posey Road in approximately 0.9 miles because of the two-way access road. The proposed changes will drastically change that to an almost 4.5 mile drive to get to the same point. This will result in employees traveling an extra 850 miles plus per year to go home from work. Also, because of the extra miles and time, we will be more likely to use vendors and businesses in New Braunfels as opposed to those we currently use in San Marcos, especially with the build up businesses at FM 306 and IH-35.

It may not be a near term solution but has any thought been given to linking the Industrial Park with Posey Road via Central Texas Drive? The extension of Central Texas Drive would be less than 0.5 mile

and would give the businesses in the park as well as TexMix and Heldenfels access to Posey Road and the ability to head north into San Marcos via Hunter Road or IH-35.

Response – The frontage roads are being converted to one-way for safety and mobility reasons. While it might be longer for access, it is needed for safety reasons and to continue the one-way frontage roads that have already been converted on I-35 through Hays County. Your comment concerning connecting Central Texas Drive to Posey Road has been shared with the County.