

PUBLIC HEARING COMMENT AND RESPONSE REPORT

IH 35: from FM 1626 to Yarrington Road

CSJ: 0016-02-114

Project Number: PTF

Hays County

SUMMARY OF ORAL COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Sylvia Boasi, Administrative Assistant to Hays County Commissioner Ingalsbe stated that Commissioner Ingalsbe encourages comments on the proposed project.

Response: Comment noted.

Ove Rajmussen commented on the congestion at the intersection of Old Highway 80 [81] and Center Street [RM 150] and the need for improvements.

Response: The intersection would be converted from a four-way stop to a two-way stop as a part of the project on IH 35 that extends from FM 1626 to Yarrington Road. Traffic would be required to stop on Old Highway 81 before turning onto RM 150; therefore, the congestion on RM 150 (Center Street) would be reduced because the traffic would not be required to stop at a stop sign. A traffic signal was considered at this intersection; however, it is precluded because it would be too close to the railroad.

Tim Miller expressed support of the conversion of the frontage roads from two-way to one-way. He stated concerns about traffic volumes and congestion, roadway signage and vehicle speeds on local roads that intersect with the IH 35 frontage roads. He commented specifically about the truck traffic on Hays County roadways and indicated it occurs because truckers are avoiding weigh stations near Yarrington Road. He opined that the signage on the county roads and the intersection configurations do not limit or prohibit the truck traffic access or travel speed.

Response: The proposed project would improve mobility by relieving congestion and improve safety on the frontage roads. The improved mobility on the frontage roads is anticipated to relieve traffic on the local roads that feed the frontage roads. This anticipated relief would occur because as the frontage road traffic moves more consistently, drivers are less likely to choose another route to avoid driving on the frontage roads. The truck weigh stations near Yarrington Road are open at least 40 hours each week. These openings are random and are not set by FHWA, TxDOT or Hays County but rather the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement section of the Texas Department of Public Safety. Although truck drivers may choose alternate routes to avoid these weigh stations, Hays County cannot preclude truck traffic on county roads that provide access to commercial developments that depend on trucking for delivery of their products. The intersections of the county roads with the frontage roads are controlled with stop signs that require reductions in vehicle travel speed equivalent to other intersection configurations. Presently, there is no apparent need to reconstruct the intersections.

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SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Tim Miller expressed concern about traffic volumes and congestion, roadway signage and vehicle speeds on local roads that intersect with the IH 35 frontage roads. He commented specifically about the truck traffic on Hays County roadways and indicated it occurs because truckers are avoiding weigh stations near Yarrington Road and roadway congestion in downtown Kyle on RM 150 (Center Street). He opined that the signage on the county roads and the intersection configurations do not limit or prohibit the truck traffic access or travel speed. He surmised these conditions reduce safety.

Response: See the response Mr. Miller's verbal comment.

Senator Jeff Wentworth, District 25 expressed support that the planned project would improve safety and indicated it would support economic growth and improved quality of life.

Response: Comment noted.

State Representative Jason Isaac, District 45 expressed support that the planned project would improve safety and indicated it would support economic growth and improved quality of life.

Response: Comment noted.

Constable James H. Kohler, Justice Precinct 2 expressed support that the planned project would improve safety. He indicated the improved safety would overall decrease travel time.

Response: Comment noted.

Fire Marshal Mark Chambers, Hays County Fire Marshal's Office expressed support on behalf of the Fire Marshal's Office that the planned project would improve safety. He indicated the improved safety would overall decrease travel time.

Response: Comment noted.

Tom Partin, Executive Director of San Marcos-Hays County EMS, Inc. expressed support on behalf of the emergency management services that the planned project would improve safety. He indicated the improved safety would overall decrease travel time.

Response: Comment noted.

Superintendent Jeremy Lyon, Hays Consolidated Independent School District expressed support on behalf of the school district that the planned project would improve safety.

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Response: Comment noted

Chief Glen Whitaker, Kyle Fire Department expressed support on behalf of the Kyle Fire Department that indicates the planned conversion of the frontage roads from two-way to one-way improves safety. He further commented on the replacement of the entrance ramp with an exit ramp and associated an increase in travel time for emergency vehicles. He suggested an emergency vehicle only cross-over be provided between the frontage road and the main lanes.

Response: Support noted. It is estimated that travel times would be reduced overall when mobility is improved by the proposed project. Emergency vehicles may access the main lanes of IH 35 from the frontage roads at any point on the level grassy swales between the main lanes and frontage roads. A designated spot may preclude crossing at other more convenient locations.

Chief Jeff Barnett, Kyle Police Department expressed support on behalf of the police department that the planned project would improve safety. He indicated the improved safety would overall decrease travel time.

Response: Comment noted.

Lanny Lambert, City Manager for the City of Kyle indicated on behalf of the city that vehicular crashes and inclusion of the proposed project in CAMPO's plan and program support the need for the proposed improvements. He expressed support from the city that the planned project improves safety and indicated it would support economic growth and improved quality of life.

Response: Comment noted.

Brian Bondy, President of the San Marcos Area Chamber of Commerce expressed support on behalf of the Board of Directors of the chamber that the planned project would improve safety and mobility.

Response: Comment noted.

Gerald Hill, Executive Director of Seton Hays Foundation expressed support that the planned project improves safety.

Response: Comment noted.

Amy Madison, Executive Director of the Greater San Marcos Partnership expressed support on behalf of the development firm that the planned project improves safety. She indicated the firm also believes the proposed project supports the planned regional roadway system and planned economic development while using innovative financing.

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Response: Comment noted.

Rick Sheldon, owner of Rick Sheldon Real Estate indicated that as a real estate developer who has partnered with Hays County and the City of Kyle, he supports and endorses the planned project objective to maintain mobility and improve safety as populations grow in Hays County. He opined that roadways like the proposed project support economic growth and improve quality of life.

Response: Comment noted.

Michael Weaver, Principal of Prime Strategies provided copies of resolutions from Hays County Commissioners Court signed by Hays County Judge Bert Cobb, M.D., Commissioner Debbie Gonzales Ingalsbe, Precinct 1, Commissioner Mark Jones, Precinct 2, Commissioner Will Conley, Precinct 3, and Commissioner Ray Whisenant, Precinct 4 and from and from the City Council of San Marcos signed by Mayor Daniel Guerrero. These resolutions support of the proposed improvements. He also attached copies of support letters previously received by TxDOT and summarized above.

Response: Comment noted.

Sabas Avila, P.E., Assistant Director of Public Services, City of San Marcos commented on the proposed design of the Yarrington Road bridge at IH 35. He suggested context sensitive and roadway design elements include 10' shoulders or 5' bike lanes, 8' sidewalks, landscaping, street trees, aesthetic bridge treatments, and antique bridge lighting. He stated that the City of San Marcos is willing to participate with the funding of the design amenities.

Response: The preliminary proposed Yarrington Road bridge includes a 12-foot shoulder and 36-foot shoulder, which would adequately accommodate cyclist. Additionally, 8-foot sidewalks are proposed on each side of the shoulders. Hays County is coordinating with the City of San Marcos regarding design amenities requested for the Yarrington Road bridge.

David Davila, Hill Country Concrete Products commented that the existing two-way directions of travel on Old Highway 81 support his business and should be maintained.

Response: The directions of travel on Old Highway 81 would remain two-way.

Cathy Howell expressed support that the planned project improves safety and mobility.

Response: Comment noted.

V. Jean Bales commented on access to her property for agriculture equipment.

Response: As a result of the proposed improvements, the agriculture equipment would need to be

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driven approximately 1 mile longer than existing conditions allow but the travel time would likely be less because of the improved safety on the frontage roads.

Cathy Shaw owner Arrowhead Trading Company commented on how Old Highway 81 provides economic support. She commented on the need to maintain access to the businesses on South Old Highway 81.

Response: South Old Highway 81 will remain a two-way roadway, would be connect to the IH 35 southbound frontage road, and drivers on the southbound IH 35 frontage would be able to turn onto South Old Highway 81 to access businesses along the roadway.

Lidia Linn owner of Bandstar Music commented on how Old Highway 81 provides economic support. She commented on the need to maintain access to the businesses on South Old Highway 81.

Response: Please see the response to **Cathy Shaw**.

Wendy Raky commented on maintaining the east access of Champion Boulevard to Yarrington Road along the two-way frontage road east of IH 35.

Response: Although the east end of Champion Boulevard would be converted to a cul-de-sac and would no longer be connected to the frontage road, existing access to Yarrington Road along Premier Parkway would remain unchanged.

Jeff Barton expressed his support for the proposed project.

Response: Comment noted