

FM 150 WEST ALIGNMENT STUDY

APRIL 14, 2015 PUBLIC MEETING

DRAFT SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

Hays County, Texas

CSJ Numbers: 0016-17-013; 0805-04-028; 0805-04-027



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview	1
Project Purpose and Need	1
Open House Details.....	1
Notifications of the Public Meeting	2
Meeting Materials.....	3
Presentation.....	3
Question and Answer Session.....	3
Summary of Public Comments.....	6
Recommendations and Next Steps.....	7

OVERVIEW

This is a summary and analysis of the public meeting conducted for the Farm-to-Market (FM) 150 West Alignment Study on April 14, 2015. Hays County and the Texas Department of Transportation are considering the re-alignment of a five-mile section of existing FM 150 from Arroyo Ranch Road east through Kyle to Interstate 35 (I-35). The County is working with the public during this study to ensure that the process and design of the roadway reflects local values while providing a solution to the congestion issues through Kyle.

Work began on this project in early 2014. Meetings were held with property owners and stakeholders in March 2014. Then a public open house was held to introduce the project and collect input. 102 people attended this meeting and 27 comments were received. The County then expanded the study area, based on public input, and four potential corridors were evaluated at a high level. A second public meeting was held in September 2014 to share information on the four different corridors within the study area. 131 people attended this meeting and 117 online surveys were completed. The third public meeting was planned to share analysis completed on all four corridors and the selection of Corridor C.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

The Hays County Transportation Plan, adopted in January 2013, proposed a re-alignment of FM 150 to alleviate congestion in downtown Kyle where there is limited space to improve the existing roadway. A portion of new location roadway, if constructed, would provide an alternate route, reducing congestion by providing separate routes for through and local traffic, and accommodate pedestrian and bicycle considerations.

The purpose of the FM 150 West Alignment Study is to identify and evaluate a project that would relieve congestion in downtown Kyle, provide enhanced travel conditions for through traffic, improve safety, and accommodate pedestrian and bicycle considerations. This project would address current traffic needs as well as future traffic needs with the growth projections showing Hays population more than doubling by 2030.

OPEN HOUSE DETAILS

Date: Tuesday, April 14, 2015

Time: 6 to 8 p.m.

Presentation: 6:15 p.m.

Location: Hays High School Cafeteria
4800 Jack C. Hays Trail
Buda, Texas 78610



Presentation at Hays High School – April 14, 2015

Purpose: The project team analyzed public input, technical information, and performed further studies and evaluations on the four corridors considered for the FM 150 Alignment Study. The analysis of the four corridors was presented and the selection of Corridor C was announced.

Format: A brief open house was conducted from 6:00 to 6:15 p.m. and a formal presentation was given at 6:15 p.m. There was a question and answer session held after the presentation and comments were collected. A court reporter was also present to record verbal comments attendees wished to make.

Attendance: There were 135 people registered via the sign-in sheet. Of those, seven were employees of TxDOT, project team members, or elected public officials.

NOTIFICATIONS OF THE PUBLIC MEETING


Published Notifications: Meeting notices were placed in the following newspapers:

- *Hays Free Press* on March 18, 2015 and April 8, 2015
- *El Mundo Newspaper* (Spanish) on March 19, 2015 and April 9, 2015

Mailings: Meeting notices were mailed to 120 property owners and businesses within the study area on March 17, 2015.

Emails: A meeting notice was emailed on March 17, 2015 to 193 people and two reminder email reminders were sent on April 2, 2015 to 201 people, and on April 9, 2015 to 205 people with meeting information and to collect email addresses.

Signage: The project team placed 15 signs with meeting details in various locations along and near the project limits from April 7, 2015 to April 14, 2015.



Public Meeting

Tuesday, April 14, 2015 - 6 to 8 p.m.
Presentation: 6:15 p.m.
Hays High School, Cafeteria
4800 Jack C. Hays Trail, Buda, TX 78610

Hays County and TxDOT are considering a realignment of FM 150 from Arroyo Ranch Road to I-35. The team has evaluated four different corridors and selected a preferred corridor for further study. Join us to learn more about the analysis and preferred corridor. The meeting will include a brief open house, presentation, and Q&A session.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 16, 2014, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

www.improvefm150.com

Published Notification in the Hays Free Press



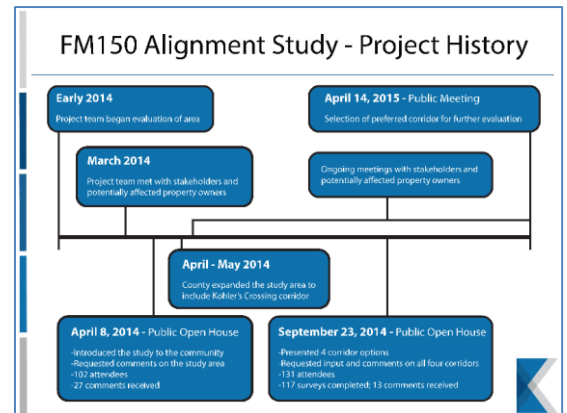
FM 150 Alignment Public Meeting – April 14, 2015

MEETING MATERIALS

As community members entered, they were asked to sign in and shared email addresses if they wished to receive project updates. All were provided comment cards and project contact information cards.

Two sets of large presentation boards were displayed:

- Project History Board
- Overall Map of all Corridors
- Map of Corridor C



Project History Display Board

Project team members were available to answer questions.

PRESENTATION

A presentation was made which outlined the project overview and history, analysis of the four corridors studied, and the selection of Corridor C for further study. Details were also shared on next steps for the project which will be to further study Corridor C to identify and study a potential roadway alignment to consider as a build alternative, to meet with any potentially affected property owners, and to hold another public meeting in fall 2015 to share details and again collect input.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Upon the conclusion of the presentation, a question and answer session was held. Below is a general summary of the questions and answer session.

- **Will an environmental impact statement be done?**
 - All National Environmental Policy Act regulations will be followed. It is anticipated that an environmental assessment will be the appropriate level of environmental documentation.
- **Does Corridor C impact more residential areas than Corridor D? In follow up discussions concerns were expressed over not knowing how many residents affected.**
 - As no alignment has been selected, the number of residences directly affected, cannot be determined at this point. We can get the total number of residences in the Corridor C study area, but until we know the location of the roadway alignment we are unable to share exact numbers. In any case, all efforts will be exhausted to avoid residential and business impacts and minimize landowner impacts.
- **Questions on eminent domain and the process were asked.**
 - A brief discussion of eminent domain was held with an overview of the new laws in place to protect property owners. It was also mentioned that that the location of the roadway alignment is unknown and therefore it is too early to initiate discussion of right-of-way needs.
- **Concerns this project will not relieve the congestion in Kyle. People living in northern and southern end connections would have to go out of their way to use this corridor.**

- While there is a lot of traffic going north there is also a significant amount going south. This project is identifying a way to relieve some of the Kyle congestion, as well as address future traffic projections.
- **Questions were asked regarding traffic surveys and studies for FM 150 and RR 2770 to show how much traffic is going north and show commuter versus local traffic. Residents believed they saw 16 areas where traffic counts were being done. Residents also wanted to see similar traffic counts that were shared for the FM 150 Character Plan meeting and were concerned this information was not presented.**
 - The project team does not have surveys that distinguish between commuter and local traffic. The intent for this meeting was to share that Corridor C has been selected. TxDOT traffic data maps and Level of Service Maps are on the website and have been shared at previous meetings. Now that a corridor has been selected, the team will begin to look for a preferred alignment and more studies will be done as this process continues.
- **Question regarding why the project was limited to only four study area corridors, as none of these please everyone. Why would a corridor further north not be considered?**
 - When first defining the study area, we stopped short of Kohler's Crossing. Due to requests made in the course of public comment, the Kohler's Crossing corridor was considered. Looking at areas further north, we would begin to address a different problem in the County. This northern section is not part of this study and does not address the goals of this project, but this may be an additional consideration for the County in the future.
- **Concerns about safety for schools and buses with the large number of people moving into Blanco Vista as well as safe access onto I-35 from Yarrington Road.**
 - As there is not a preferred alignment at this point, there are not detailed plans for the connection. However, safety is a top priority for this project.
- **Questions on whether this project is attempting to move traffic through downtown Kyle to go north or south.**
 - The purpose of this project is to provide a safe and efficient route for traffic flow throughout the county. The additional benefit is providing relief to the City of Kyle. The point is not only to accommodate Kyle but the overall growth of the entire county. Unprecedented growth documented in the recent past combined with current population projections provide evidence that the county will continue to grow. With this current and pending growth on the horizon, it would be irresponsible to do nothing.
- **Question whether this road improvement's purpose would be to encourage growth.**
 - Any proposed improvements would be planned and designed to deal with expected growth and development; not to encourage growth.
- **Questions on traffic study numbers and the availability to review them. Noted that CAMPO shows the traffic increase up to 2040, west of 35 is not significant. Are the numbers mixed from various sources?**
 - As stated, the TxDOT traffic data maps and Level of Service Maps are on the project website and have been shared. Currently, information from the CAMPO 2035 Plan is being used but updated data from the CAMPO 2040 Plan will be used once it is adopted and available. The need for this project is based on projected population growth and related safety and traffic congestion issues.
- **Concerns on growth straining the natural resources of the county, most importantly water.**

- A brief discussion of water issues in the county was held but the team noted this was not a part of this transportation project.
- **Who is paying for the project?**
 - The County is paying for the Alignment Study and design but is partnered with TxDOT throughout the process as it is a state facility. Construction funding will come from a combination of the state and County. Once all the studies are finished, the project will have gone through the state and federal environmental process.
- **Are public comments and surveys available for review?**
 - Summaries of workshops and public input are all available and posted on the project website. In addition to the summaries, all of the technical information we have discussed is also posted.
- **Questions about the intersection of FM 150 and Arroyo Ranch, as it is very dangerous. Will this project improve safety in this area?**
 - Part of the next phase of this project is to identify, analyze, and select a preferred alignment that best solves safety issues.
- **Questions on why Corridor A was not selected, as it was preferred by the public and seems to be the cheapest and shortest. Noted corridor A would need an overpass, but C would relocate people, why not build the overpass instead?**
 - There is not an alignment yet, so no definitive answer can be given on relocations. All of the corridors evaluated make sense to a certain extent, however the Kohler's Crossing Option does not address all needs for this project, as much as Corridor C does.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment period was from April 14 to April 27, 2015. During this time, the project team received 31 total comments. Two email reminders of the official comment period were sent to the project distribution list. The first was sent on April 17, 2015 to 251 recipients and the second was sent on April 24, 2015 to 252 recipients. Full comments and responses can be found in the Comment and Responses Report.

During the comment period the project team received:

- 27 Comments Submitted by Email
- 1 Written Comment Received at the Public Meeting
- 3 Verbal Comments

Below is a summary of topics taken from the comments received, as well as the frequency those topics appeared in the comments submitted. Note that some comments may have covered more than one topic.

Topic	Number of Comments
Personal Property	9
Traffic Patterns and Congestion	6
Does Not Support Corridor C	6
Support Corridor C	5
Public Preferences Not Chosen	5
Cemeteries	4
Safety	4
Alternative Route Suggestion	4
Protection of Organic Farm	4
Support Corridor A	3
Speed Limits	3
Water Availability Concerns	3
Environmental Concerns	3
Location of Road	2
Traffic Data	2
Bicycle and Pedestrian	2
Historical Property	2
Kyle Loop	2
Oppose all Corridor Options	2
Population Growth	2
Comment on Character Plan Project	2
More Information Needed	2
Number of Water Wells Referred to in Corridor Analysis Report	2
Road Not Needed	2
Traffic Studies	2
Support for Option 1 in Corridor C	2
Does Not Support Project Process	2
Location of Study Area	1
Eminent Domain	1

Does Not Support Corridor A	1
Opposes corridor through Blanco River Ranch Property	1
Old Stagecoach Road Congestion	1
Alignment West of Blanco River Crossing and Old Stagecoach Road	1
Questions of Population Growth	1
Questions of Corridor A	1
Warbler Habitat	1
Not Sharing Information with Public	1
Questions on General Land Office Property	1
Does Not Support Project	1
Environmental Process	1
Stream on Property	1
Preference for Eastern Alignment in Corridor C	1
Cost	1
Previous Planning Study	1

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Hays County and the project team recommend moving forward to identify a preferred alignment within Corridor C. This will include environmental documentation and conducting a more detailed environmental analysis, more detailed engineering, more detailed cost estimates, and working closely with potentially affected property owners and the public.