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## FM 150 West Character Plan – Phase 2, Nature & Character Master Plan Citizens Advisory Panel Meeting Notes

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Date: February 23, 2017

Time: 6:00 PM

Subject: CAP Meeting 3

Location: Dripping Springs High School, Lecture Hall

Present: Hays County: Commissioner Whisenant, Commissioner Conley

CAP Members: David Braun, Casey Cutler, Shelby Eckols, and Mike Pruitt

Project Team: Joe Cantalupo, Ryan Bell and Hillary Essig with K Friese & Associates; John Kuhl and Julie LeClair with Hicks & Company; Brian Ray and Kelly Laustsen with Kittelson & Associates; Albert Castro and Jacqie Wilson with CD&P; Laura Harris with HNTB; Paula Gruber with Prime Strategies

6 Public members signed in

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### Meeting Summary

Joe Cantalupo started the meeting with introductions, review of the meeting agenda, meeting purpose and “hard issues” to be addressed. Then Brian Ray reviewed more developed concepts for different sections that the CAP previously worked on including the bypass connection to FM 150, bypass connection to FM 967, and the upgrade section of FM 967 and FM 1826. Below are highlights of discussions and questions for each section.

#### Bypass Connection to FM 150

- Discussed and agreed that the C alignment was still preferred as it minimizes impacts and helps to enhance the attractiveness of the bypass route by creating a shorter route.
- Discussed that an alignment further east (G) was not attractive due to the number of stream crossings that would be required and potential impacts of existing conservation easements.
- Discussed that the alignment was developed to utilize the ridge area.

#### Bypass Connection to FM 967

- As previously discussed, the E alignment is preferred to minimize the length of the bypass route and use of FM 967. The F alignment crosses a flood zone.
- Noted that going through the quarry or private preserves would create engineering challenges.
- Noted that the project team received a report from David Braun regarding the potential to impact the conservation easement at the intersection of the bypass connection and FM 967.

Mr. Braun and Mr. Bosse indicated the parcel was purchased with federal funds and the Hill Country Conservancy believes this parcel should be avoided.

### **Upgrade Section of FM 967 and FM 1826**

- Confirmed preference for a separate multi-use path and support for turn lanes where needed.
- Discussed FM 967, which serves as a transition to the community zone. Cross-section elements could include the introduction of wider shoulders, a multi-use path, and potentially a center turn lane in the future.
- Discussed the intersection of FM 967/FM 1826 and intent not to address the location of the intersection through this project.
- Discussed the character of FM 1826 and desire to minimize the urban look and feel of this section. The community uses along this section contribute to the desire for a lower speed limit and different roadway character. Cross-sectional elements could include wider shoulders, a multi-use path, center left-turn lane, right-turn lanes where needed, and potentially curb/gutter.
- Mr. Cutler noted the realignment of the intersection of FM 967 and FM 1826 should veer more towards the north (away from Salt Lick Restaurant) to encourage drivers to use this route over FM 150.
  - Brian noted this would not be particularly effective as it is not aligned with the goal of emphasizing the bypass route and is outside the intent of this project.

Kelly Laustsen then gave an update on new traffic count data and reviewed the tube counts and turning movement counts collected. She noted there was an error with the tube counts collected on FM 150 near the Onion Creek crossings so new counts will be done.

- The tube counts collected on FM 150 show a growth in volumes over the course of the day of 2-7% from counts taken in December 2014 to counts taken in December 2016.
- The turning movement counts show more significant growths in traffic during the AM and PM peak hours.
- Two intersections have a movement with a delay greater than 45 seconds during the PM peak hour, including the westbound left-turn at FM 150/RM 12 and the westbound left-turn at FM 967/FM1826.
- Discussed the increase in traffic and what level of service and amount of delay is acceptable to the community.

Following the traffic count data update, Brian Ray reviewed the intersections along the bypass and upgrade section and potential alignments and forms. Below are highlights of discussions for the four intersections.

- FM 150/Bypass
  - Discussed existing volumes on FM 150 and the desire to make the bypass route attractive.
  - Reviewed high-level concepts for a roundabout or traffic signal at the intersection and option to change the alignment of the roadway to favor the bypass.

- Due to the slower speeds through roundabouts, a smaller radius can be used on the approach to a roundabout compared to a signal. Roundabouts slow traffic down while creating a gateway or transition.
- Commissioner Conley noted that the intersection of FM 150/FM 3237 should be considered as well, and requested team consider a design similar to the junction on RM 12.
- Overall, the CAP expressed preference for a roundabout at this location and for making the route from FM 150 to the bypass continuous.
- FM 967/Bypass
  - Discussed existing volumes on FM 967 and the desire to make the bypass route attractive.
  - Reviewed high-level concepts for a roundabout or traffic signal at the intersection and option to change the alignment of the roadway to favor the bypass.
  - Overall, the CAP expressed preference for a roundabout at this location and for making the route from FM 967 to the bypass continuous.
- FM 967/FM 1826
  - Discussed the existing form and traffic volumes at this intersection. The average delay for the left-turn from FM 967 is over 60 seconds during the PM peak hour, based on the team's analysis.
  - Reviewed high-level concepts for a roundabout or traffic signal at the intersection and option to change the alignment of the roadway to favor the route from FM 1826 (towards Driftwood) to FM 967.
  - It was noted that roundabouts can help with sight distance issues.
  - The group expressed the variety of travel patterns at the intersection.
  - Overall, the CAP expressed a preference for a roundabout and desire to keep the alignment of the intersection more neutral.
- FM 150/FM 1826
  - Discussed the existing form and traffic volumes at this intersection. The average delay for the left-turn from FM 1826 is approximately 40 seconds during the PM peak hour, based on the team's analysis. There is a heavy movement of traffic between Elder Hill Road and FM 1826.
  - Reviewed high-level concepts for a roundabout or traffic signal at the intersection and option to change the alignment of the roadway to favor the route from the north section of FM 150 to FM 1826.
  - The group discussed whether roundabouts would deter drivers from using the roadway – the general feeling was this would not happen.
  - The CAP expressed preference for a roundabout and interest in altering the roadway alignment.

In closing the meeting, Joe Cantalupo shared information about the upcoming steps to be addressed in the next meeting and a proposal to condense the schedule. The team felt the CAP should continue working through the last section of FM 150 (from FM 1826 to RM 12) and then all information could be presented at a single public meeting for the entire corridor. This schedule would also allow the County to take advantage of potential future funding for improvements on the corridor. It was noted

that there may be concern from the public regarding the condensed schedule. The CAP members offered to share schedule information with the public and bring any comments back.

The group ended the meeting by reviewing more details on the traffic count data. The CAP requested graphs of all the tube counts collected, and the team noted it would be posted on the website.