

DRAFT RESOLUTION

STATE OF TEXAS §
§
COUNTY OF HAYS §

WHEREAS, on January 22, 2013, the Hays County Commissioners Court adopted the Hays County Transportation Plan, which was most recently updated on August 2, 2016; and

WHEREAS, the Hays County Transportation Plan identifies current and future transportation needs for the residents of Hays County and provides a path meeting county transportation needs as they were perceived in 2013; and

WHEREAS, one of the primary goals of the Hays County Transportation Plan is to promote consistency between transportation improvements and local planned growth, while protecting and enhancing the environment of Hays County and the quality of life of its residents; and

WHEREAS, the Hays County Transportation Plan recognizes the dwindling availability of clean, safe water is a significant challenge for the continued growth of Hays County; and

WHEREAS, the Edwards Aquifer is the primary drinking water source for much of the population of Hays County, including the Cities of Kyle, Buda, and San Marcos; and

WHEREAS, as an aquifer comprised of mostly porous limestone, with limited filtration capability, the Edwards Aquifer is extremely vulnerable to pollution that results from roadway construction, urban development, and stormwater runoff; and

WHEREAS, managing growth within the recharge and contributing zones of the Edwards Aquifer, and limiting the total amount of impervious cover located therein, is widely recognized as the most effective strategy to protect the groundwater quality and quantity for the residents of Hays County; and

WHEREAS, the Hays County Transportation Plan proposes the construction of several new and expanded roadways and bridges throughout the Edwards Aquifer Watershed; and

WHEREAS, many of these roadways are predicated on population forecasts assuming a 5.8% growth rate over the next 20 years for the areas within the Edwards Aquifer Watershed; however, given the environmental sensitivity of these areas and recent trend analyses, these population forecasts appear to be overinflated and should be reevaluated to portray a more accurate picture of predicted, future growth; and

WHEREAS, Hays County is a member jurisdiction of the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO), which is the Metropolitan Planning Organization responsible for creating a long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Austin-San Marcos metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, CAMPO's long-range transportation plan covers a period of at least 20 years and is required to be updated every five years; and

WHEREAS, the CAMPO Transportation Policy Board most recently adopted its CAMPO 2040 Regional Transportation Plan on May 11, 2015, and is scheduled to adopt the CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan in May of 2020; and

WHEREAS, as part of the development of the CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation, Hays County submitted the entirety of its proposed major thoroughfare plan, which includes new roads and bridges and expanded roads within the Edwards Aquifer Watershed; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott declared a State of Disaster for all counties within the State of Texas, due to ongoing public health concerns caused by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19); and

WHEREAS, most of the CAMPO region, including Hays County, remains under local “stay at home” orders with prohibitions on large gatherings, which forced CAMPO staff to cancel several in-person open house meetings and the in-person public hearing; and

WHEREAS, alternative “virtual” public houses and a “virtual” public hearing were held using available technologies; however, concerns about public access, equity, and timing during a global pandemic call into the question the effectiveness of such public comment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the materials provided to the public as part of the public engagement process include an incomplete draft plan, with information missing such as required mitigation plans to reduce environmental degradation, yet-to-be-released modeling data and financial forecasts, as well as an interactive map that contains errors; and

WHEREAS, in response to the unprecedented impacts that the COVID-19 crisis has had on local governments and the general public and in light of the incompleteness of the plan, the Travis County Commissioners Court has expressed serious concerns about the adoption of the CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan, as is; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to public input from Hays County residents, the Hays County Commissioners finds that the Hays County Transportation Plan, as amended, should be reviewed and updated, based on updated demographic, traffic, and other information and on current county priorities and fiscal constraints;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Hays County Commissioners Court hereby directs the Hays County Transportation Department to initiate a public process to review and update the Hays County Transportation Plan, which shall include a series of public meetings, open houses, and public hearings, to begin as soon as the Hays County Stay-at-Home restrictions for the COVID-19 pandemic are lifted;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hays County Commissioners Court requests that the CAMPO Transportation Policy Board take the following modifications on roadways listed for inclusion in the CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan:

1. Remove the proposed extension of Escarpment Boulevard from SH 45 SW to FM 150 (aka, the “Rutherford Ranch Bypass”; NF 13);
2. Remove the proposed realignment/extension of Jacob’s Well Road (NF 25);
3. Remove the proposed expansion of FM 150 to US 290, from RM 12 to US 290 West;
4. Remove the proposed new loop around the northern side of Dripping Springs (NF 2; NF10);
5. Reduce the proposed expansion of RM 1826 to six lanes to no more than four lanes, and, where appropriate to two lanes with center and side turn lanes;

6. Reduce the proposed expansion of FM 3237 to 2 lane divided with median and shoulders to appropriate safety improvements to the existing 2 lane road;
7. Reduce the proposed expansion of FM 2325 to 2 lane divided with median and shoulders to appropriate safety improvements to the existing 2 lane road;
8. Reduce the proposed expansion of Fitzhugh Road to 4 lanes to making safety improvements to the existing 2 lane roadway (from RM 12 to the Travis County line);
9. Reduce the proposed expansion of FM 150 to a 4-lane divided highway be reduced to a 2-lane roadway with appropriate center and side turn lanes, and with appropriate safety design specifications;
10. Reduce the proposed expansion of Hamilton Pool Road west of the Travis County line 2 lane divided with median and bike lanes and sidewalks to improvements to the existing 2 lane road with bike lanes and compatible with Hamilton Pool Road improvements in Travis County; and
11. Remove that portion of the proposed Kyle Loop between RM 1626 and FM 150;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Hays Court Commissioners Court requests that CAMPO create a new “Hill Country Conservation” roadway designation, so that the roadways in western Hays County, in the Onion Creek and Blanco River watersheds, on and upstream of the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, may be designated in the CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan as “Hill Country Conservation” roadways, with design details that prioritize safety, water supply protection, scenic beauty, and limited access to conservation easements;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hays County Commissioners Court hereby requests that CAMPO present its population and employment estimates and projections made in support of the CAMPO 2045 draft plan to the Hays County Commissioners Court in a public work session within 30 days of the lifting of stay-at-home Covid 19 restrictions;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hays County Commissioner Court formally requests that the CAMPO Transportation Policy Board vote to extend the public comment period on the CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan for a minimum of sixty (60) days following the completion and public distribution of a final draft of the plan. Additionally, the Hays County Commissioner Court requests that the CAMPO Transportation Policy Board consider adoption of the CAMPO 2045 Regional Transportation Plan no sooner than twenty-one (21) days following the completion of the public comment period to provide CAMPO staff and the Transportation Policy Board Members opportunity to consider the public comments.