TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS
AND
PROCESS FOR CONSENSUS ON THEM

Public Involvement

1. Provide sufficient notification of the public meetings to the public and affected stakeholders using a variety of communication methods. Notification should include information about the kind of input being sought from the public.
    a. Continue to use multiple media outlets to get information out about the public meetings. [1]
    b. Advertise in the paper and radio the purpose for the community input when announcing public meetings.
    c. Provide more official-looking notices of public meetings. Use a letter instead of a postcard.
2. Be sure to avoid community-wide events when scheduling public or committee meetings.
3. The public meetings should offer more opportunities for dialogue.
    a. Have a better dialogue, not lectures.
    b. Provide multiple maps at public meetings.
4. Be sure to have a good way to communicate with affected landowners.
    a. Notification of affected property owners needs to be improved.
5. Written information and someone to answer questions about right of way acquisition should be available at the public meetings. A designated table for the right of way information and several staff to answer questions is more appropriate later in the process than for this study.
6. Have data and maps posted in public places for viewing.
7. Develop a mechanism that reflects how public input is being used in the study.
    a. Accept opinions and information of the public as part of the public input process.
    b. Show the changes based on community input [on the maps].
8. Use alternate/additional methods like Internet polls and mail-in surveys for gathering data on constraints from the community.

[1] Information listed below the numbered item reflects the more precise wording of the recommendations as made by the Task Force members in their working groups.

Need and Purpose

1. Have a community-wide discussion on detailed needs to be addressed and to supplement general needs previously identified.
2. Provide more information to the public on the consequences of building the loop—tax issues, property evaluations, environmental impacts, impacts to downtown, etc.
    a. Provide more information to the public on the consequences of building the loop—tax issues, property evaluations, environmental impacts, etc.
    b. Identify the economic impact to downtown New Braunfels in a more specific needs and purpose statement that the city and county need to address.
    c. Review needs/water supply and contamination.
3. Clearly define the need and purpose of the roadway.
    a. Clearly define the purpose of the roadway for urban development or thru travel.
    b. Create limited access/driveways to control development in certain areas.
    c. Have ample ingress/egress on main intersections.
    d. Define the actual need.
    e. Determine whether it is a need or a want.
    f. Have better traffic studies and forecasts, long term (50-100 years).
    g. The need and purpose should more accurately describe land use patterns.
    h. The loop should be a tool for management and direction of growth.
    i. Options to a loop should be considered up front.

Constraints

1. Be clear and consistent when defining, naming and identifying constraints.
    a. Be consistent in naming the constraints categories.
    b. Clearly define the constraints before asking the public to rank them. Clarify definitions so that everyone understands them.
    c. Constraints should be measurable and not so subjective.
    d. Show all constraints on the maps using specific markers for each one.
2. Constraints should be tailored to community issues and not come from a generic list from TxDOT.
    a. List the Edwards Aquifer as a separate constraint.
3. Identify things that are regulated by law, such as environmental, wetlands, species, historic elements, cemeteries, parks, and schools as non-negotiable with special protection.
    a. Identify which constraints are covered by statutes, regulations, or law and identify those regulations
    b. Identify things that are regulated by law, such as environmental, wetlands, species, historic, cemeteries, schools, as non-negotiables with special protection.
4. Explain the procedure for the compilation of ranking and weighing.

5. Indicate the noise impacts outside the designated right of way.
    a. Disclose noise levels outside the 800-foot right of way.
    b. Identify a 300-foot buffer for noise.
6. Develop the study in a way that identifies an area where there are no subdivisions so that a roadway can be built.
7. In those cases where the ranking of criteria is the same or very close, use the individual ranking for each criterion rather than considering only the aggregate number, especially when considering splitting properties.
    a. Look at the ranking from the various groups individually instead of the average.
8. Constraints that should be evaluated beyond what the study considered.
    a. Disclose loss of acreage and buildings at proposed intersections.
    b. Add requirements to preserve quality of life, heritage and community values.
9. Note the total farmland acreage being affected as well as the parcels that are being divided.
    a. Note not just the parcels that are bisected, but also the total farmland acreage being affected.
10. Identify all homes that would be affected.

Facility Types

1. The local community should control the facility type.
2. Customize right of way and facility design per area based on environmental conditions.
    a. Platting authorities should maintain the focus on sensitive areas, i.e., limited access over the aquifer/recharge/contributing zones.
3. Clearly explain the different facility types and the impacts each would have on different aspects of community needs and affected property owners.
    a. Give a better presentation on the facility types to the public. People need to be aware of the various facilities and how each one will affect their property and lives.
    b. Show how the facility type/size impact other community needs.
    c. Provide examples of how small you can make the right of way and still accommodate transportation needs and avoid the constraints.
    d. Hike and bike should be a separate facility, not a paved symbol on asphalt.
4. Landscaping is a must.

Miscellaneous

1. Thoroughly review existing roadways and use of them.
2. Do environmental studies early on.
3. Have more education and information regarding:
    a. NEPA and Section 106 synopsis
    b. 1906 antiquities law and Texas antiquities laws to date
    c. Noise abatement
    d. Biological studies
    e. Hydrology studies
4. Before the study is complete, all conflicts need to be addressed (stakeholders, environmental issues, historical, etc.)
5. Provide more specific (better defined) funding sources for completion of the study, later loop studies and construction.
6. Use independent consultants for NEPA studies, et al, where the corridor is concerned—TxDOT contractors.
7. Keep elected officials informed and visible at the public meetings.
8. Preserve resources like the Edwards Aquifer.
9. Be sure the details are correct.

Procedure for seeking consensus on the recommendations:

- The list of recommendations will be sent to the Task Force members before the March meeting for their review.
- The recommendations related to the screening process will be identified at the February meeting and added to this list.
- There will be a total of 20 minutes per item to reach consensus. If consensus is not reached, the item will be included in the report with an indication of the concerns that were expressed and a description of the range of disagreement on the item. At 18 minutes, if consensus is not reached, the facilitator will review the concerns expressed to assure they are accurately captured.
- At the February meeting, once the recommendations for the screening process have been added to the list, the Task Force members will be asked to select the fifteen items they want to be sure to address in the Task Force recommendations included in the report. They will use a scoring system selecting their top 15 items from the list, where "1" is highest to "15," which is the lowest ranking priority item.
- The fifteen items with the lowest scores will be addressed at the March meeting. If there is additional time at the meeting, the next items on the list will be addressed according to their score and the available time. Any items not addressed will be included in the report as items recommended by the work groups but not addressed.
- This process will be looking for where there is agreement.