



Excerpts Regarding Need and Purpose from the Study Report and Other Documents

1.1 Need

Transportation improvements are needed in the study area due to increasing strain on the existing transportation infrastructure because of extensive growth and development in the region. Additions to the existing infrastructure are needed to provide: (1) provisions for regional mobility and connectivity including alternatives to crossing the Guadalupe River; (2) an immediate planning tool for setting aside New Braunfels Outer Loop ROW as many areas are developing rapidly and causing the unavailability of land for future ROW; and (3) increased roadway safety.

NBOL Study Report, p. 26

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the proposed corridor/loop concept is to (1) preserve and enhance regional mobility and connectivity; (2) increase capacity of the transportation infrastructure; and (3) preserve safety.

- **Preserve and Enhance Regional Mobility and Connectivity:** The New Braunfels Outer Loop would provide an additional corridor in Comal and Guadalupe Counties. The City of New Braunfels is currently serviced by LP 337, which connects IH 35 north and south of the City. This would provide an efficient route to and from several rapidly growing communities such as: Mission Hills, River Oaks, Pinnacle, Rolling Oaks, and development near the Guadalupe River.
- **Increase Capacity of the Transportation Infrastructure:** Increasing roadway capacity with the addition of the proposed project would accommodate existing and future traffic demands while decreasing present and anticipated traffic congestion. While many existing roadways are currently being widened or planned for widening, these actions alone will not be sufficient to support future growth in the area.
- **Preserve Safety:** The proposed project would preserve the safety of existing roadways within the region. Providing more options for traffic flow, would reduce the number of vehicles traveling on existing roadways and thus decrease the chances of traffic accidents. Also, by improving access and mobility within the project area, the project would enhance vehicular travel for area law enforcement agencies, fire departments, and other emergency service providers.

NBOL Study Report, p. 26

According to the US Census Bureau, the State of Texas, Comal and Guadalupe Counties, and the City of New Braunfels have experienced similar growth rates over the past 10 years; increasing 19 percent, 34 percent, 27 percent and 25 percent, respectively. The population in the project area has doubled in the last 10 years. Information from the Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer ranks Comal County as the 12th fastest growing county in the State and Guadalupe County as 24th fastest.

NBOL Study Report, p. 27

According to the Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer the projected population in 2010 for Comal and Guadalupe Counties is 98,000 and 110,000 respectively. Development in Comal County and Guadalupe County is overwhelming the existing infrastructure. In recent years, vehicular traffic utilizing IH 35 has increased dramatically. Between LP 337 north and south, the year 2000 traffic data demonstrated that the IH 35 corridor increased from 76,000 vehicles per day (vpd) to the 2005 volume of 81,666 vpd, which is an increase of seven percent over five years. The same section of roadway is expected to increase an additional seven percent by the year 2010 for a total ten year increase of 14 percent (year 2000 to 2010). IH 35 has experienced a rapid increase in congestion and a related decrease in safety and mobility. IH 35 is heavily utilized and without any additional capacity in the project area, congestion is expected to worsen.

NBOL Study Report, p. 27-28

Table 1 – Percent Increase in Traffic Over Five Years

Major Arterial	2000 Traffic Volume (VPD)	2005 Traffic Volume (VPD)	Percent Increase
SH 46 (west of IH35)	39,300	45,410	+ 15 %
Loop 337	76,000	81,666	+ 8 %
FM1863	5,100	6,070	+ 19 %
FM 306	9,500	10,800	+ 13 %
FM 1102	2,700	3,870	+ 43 %
FM 1101	2,540	2,760	+ 8 %
SH 46 (east of IH35)	26,100	34,700	+ 32 %
FM 1044	3,950	4,860	+ 23 %

Source: Traffic (AADT) – TxDOT 2000-2005.

NBOL Study Report, p. 28

In addition to these plans [the Major Thoroughfare Plans], the study team also considered the following:

- A possible connection to SH 130
- The proposed widening and grade separations on FM 306
- The SH 46 widening project
- On-going realignment project at Schwab Road

NBOL Study Report, p. 32