



Comments and Concerns Regarding Purpose and Need and the Study Process Based on Interviews with Potential Task Force Members

March 4, 6, 9 and 11, 2009

Clarity of Goals and Objectives

- Concern about the history and why they considered a loop.
- They didn't use anything to show the feasibility of the loop except growth data.
- They could have been clearer about what was driving it [the study].
- TxDOT came in good faith with no conflict of interest; trying to help people.
- Citizens said they need a loop. The City [of New Braunfels] didn't do anything. A concern was that it wasn't revisited. The City [of New Braunfels] has a desire to build an outer loop. They should have spent more time thinking about whether to do this or not.
- I'm opposed to it no matter where it goes; you could move it to wherever.
- Why is this necessary? What's it for?
- They were clear up front that an outer loop had been going on for 20 years.
- Part of the problem is that no one has really said why we need this.
- It's a layout for the future use of the land. The transportation/traffic board of the city did one years ago.

Traffic and Safety

- There is crowding on 725. There was an accident that completely blocked it for nine hours. So how do you get to San Marcos?
- I've seen how the traffic has changed on 306 since 1978.
- Will it relieve congestion on 306?
- Concern about how to get emergency vehicles through there.
- If I could get to San Antonio or Austin without having to go through New Braunfels, that would be great.
- It will mean a better path to the recreation areas – Canyon Lake and the Upper Guadalupe.
- Do need a road over the Guadalupe on the south to be able to get around. Need to connect 725 and 46.

- It's pleasant on 2722 – there's not much traffic to 337, about 3 ½ miles. But it is bad on 337. It carries a lot of traffic.
- Will it relieve congestion on 306?
- If it were to become a reality, it would be a good transportation artery. You could go from east to west and north to south without going through downtown.

Regional Concerns

- On the TxDOT plan it shows as a toll road.
- The study needs to be put in a much larger context – state or region – to see how it fits in a bigger plan.
- TTC and eminent domain, toll roads, etc., I don't know if it's toll roads or not, but it shuts the city off unless there is an exit.
- There is a lack of a bigger picture.

Planning for Growth

- TxDOT and the city leaders want to avert an Austin scenario- growth is coming and they want to plan for it.
- Schertz is growing to the northeast.
- We now have a place where we can at least start to plan. KB and Fieldstone are already buying up land toward Seguin and it will be “sub-divisioned out.” It happened with County Loop Road- 337.
- They just keep building subdivisions with big plots out 46.
- They are trying to limit development in the loop's path so there won't be things in the way to make it too expensive later.
- We're planning for the needs and their whereabouts. It's not like Walnut Street where we're paying big bucks to do it now.
- The data is all based on growth projections. They used the good growth years and assumed it would continue.
- The airport is growing so fast; it's the 15th biggest. The Austin corridor will be the biggest in 2025.
- Some want more development – not me. The more you put in highways, the more it develops.

Future Impacts

- It will kill downtown.
- The loop will promote so much development there will begin to be pollution from the runoff.
- The uniqueness of Comal County should be preserved; its charm.
- How does this fit in with how we want to be as a community?
- The new roads will ruin the countryside.
- You need to consider the cost of fuel and air pollution.

Trust

- There was the impression that it was wanted by a small portion of people. We had to find out why TxDOT wanted this – there was an agenda from the start.
- Conspiracy theories. There's some grand master plan for the state transportation network. TxDOT is lying.
- Who's benefitting? Who's driving it?
- So what's driving it? The GLO property owned by the Public School Trust Fund. It's a huge development on both sides of I-35.

Data Grouped for Purpose and Need and Environmental Process Issues/Comments

- It was to do a plan for an outer loop.
- We looked at various areas where it was most needed, had the least impact on landmarks, historical things, etc.
- We recognized the need – we didn't want it to be like Walnut where we want to do it then and later it is much more developed.
- Even if we don't do it in a few years, we'll need it eventually- we can set aside property and re-evaluate it then.
- There was the impression that it was wanted by a small portion of people; we had to find out why TxDOT wanted this – there was an agenda from the start.
- It started out as Commissioners Court and now it is in the ETJ and there is no control over the elected officials [for those whose property is in the county and not the City of New Braunfels].
- They never looked at alternatives [to a loop].
- At the end they looked at alternatives.
- It's all new roads.
- On the TxDOT plan it shows as a toll road.
- The study needs to be put in a much larger context – state or region – to see how it fits in a bigger plan.
- They could have been clearer about what was driving it [the study].
- There is crowding on 725. There was an accident that completely blocked it for nine hours. So how do you get to San Marcos?
- New Braunfels made a loop and it was upsetting and frustrating for people. They had the first public meeting in June, but they had had other meetings before that.
- I was told that TxDOT would do what New Braunfels wanted them to do.
- Once TxDOT, RJ Rivera and Kennedy came in to do the study there were six to eight alignments and it went down and down. In January 2008, they had things pretty well done.
- They were going to take thousands of people at first and then they are going through the rural areas and only take two houses or something. It's a good solid study.

- The loop is set and done. There's a small problem at Hoffmann.
- We need a loop or it will be bad in 20 years. We need something to spread people around.
- TxDOT came in good faith with no conflict of interest; trying to help people.
- They were clear up front that the outer loop had been going on for 20 years. Citizens said they need a loop. The City [of New Braunfels] didn't do anything. A concern was that it wasn't revisited. The City [of New Braunfels] has a desire to build an outer loop. They should have spent more time thinking about whether to do this or not.
- The need plus the studies done were never clearly explained.
- I've lived on 306 since 1978 so I've seen how it's changed. The traffic lights have helped.
- I'm opposed to it no matter where it goes; you could move it to wherever.
- Some want more development – not me. The more you put in highways, the more it develops.
- Before the study began, they were stuck on the idea of a loop. What alternatives were considered? It would be more logical to use the existing right of way instead of new roadway. Some of the route parallels existing roadway; it's a less destructive alternative. Is there another alternative?
- It will serve as a loop around New Braunfels and northeast Schertz.
- TxDOT and the city leaders want to avert an Austin scenario – growth is coming and they want to plan for it.
- Schertz is growing to the northeast.
- "Why is it necessary?"
- "Aren't there other options?"
- "What's this for?"
- "How does this fit in with how we want to be as a community?"
- Conspiracy theories. There's some grand master plan for the state transportation network. TxDOT is lying.
- It will kill downtown.
- There are too many lanes across 2722. It didn't make sense. There should be more flexibility about different sections.
- Majority of people [I've heard from] are long-time New Braunfels residents. They don't like how New Braunfels has grown.
- The more we build things like this, the more it grows.
- [They're saying] good and bad things. We absolutely need it and no more roads.
- The new roads will ruin the countryside.
- Some don't come until 20 years in the future.
- You need to consider the cost of fuel and air pollution.
- "Will it relieve congestion on 306?"
- Concern about how to get emergency vehicles through there.
- Think there will be overpasses built; they saw something about it.
- A turn lane was mentioned.

- There was never any official correspondence from the City [of new Braunfels] or the County [Comal] to do the study. The County Judge requested it informally and TxDOT “put it on the wish list.”
- Part of the problem with the process is that no one has really said why we need this.
- I heard the 46 at 2722 overpass was part of the outer loop.
- We now have a place where we can at least start to plan. KB and Fieldstone are already buying up land toward Seguin and it will be “subdivided” out. It happened with County Loop Road – 337.
- We can’t get it soon enough. If I could get to Austin or San Antonio without going through New Braunfels, that would be great.
- New Braunfels is a combination of river, freeways and railroad as barriers. The bridge from 725 to 46 would cost a lot. If the loop could provide a bridge like that, it would be great.
- They just keep building subdivisions with big plots out 46.
- Because of the land bought on 35 by the Texas School Fund, they need an exit to 35 to be viable and TxDOT said they needed an exit to 306.
- We asked at the meetings if widening 306 was being explored.
- It is a layout for the future use of the land. The transportation/traffic board of the city did one years ago.
- Using existing roads would help.
- They couldn’t decide what size the corridor would be.
- They don’t need 800 feet.
- Identified a need for the loop.
- It depends on the city growth—the zoning and city limits—where it will go. We’re doing this now to be able to set aside land and people will know where it will be.
- It will destroy downtown New Braunfels.
- They are trying to limit development in the loop’s path so there won’t be things in the way to make it too expensive later.
- They are wanting to manage all the growth—725 too.
- We’re planning for the needs and their whereabouts. It’s not like Walnut Street where we’re paying big bucks to do it now.
- We do need comprehensive planning. The idea of the loop was from the 60’s perspective.
- There is a lack of a bigger picture.
- Who’s benefiting? Who’s driving it?
- The priorities have been identified, so what’s driving it? The GLO property owned by the Public School Trust Fund. It’s a huge development on both sides of i-35. There should be more transparency.
- They just did a study about downtown and they know how a loop impacts downtown.
- Are there other ways to move traffic besides a circle?
- Look at other forms of moving people.
- They didn’t look at what’s appropriate. They just went with the circle that was already drawn.

- They waited too long to do it. It should have been done years ago.
- They said at one point they would consider feasibility of a loop and then they said it would have a corridor.
- The data is all based on growth projections. They used the good growth years and assumed it would continue.
- They didn't do anything to show the feasibility of the loop except growth data.
- The infrastructure of New Braunfels is not conducive to a large town. The hub structure means you're stuck if there's a wreck. The loop will alleviate traffic in New Braunfels and make it more convenient to get around. With emergencies it will help. There will be more access in and out.
- Every city I've lived in has a loop.
- It makes sense from a traffic perspective.
- The airport is growing so fast; it's the 15th biggest. The Austin corridor will be the biggest by 2025.
- We can set it aside now.
- It will definitely relieve the congestion we have and we'll continue to have development.
- They won't do the corridor all at once. People didn't understand. It [traffic] isn't as bad on the southern side.
- We can't wait. It'll be too late.
- I think way into the future; I look into the future.
- If it were to become a reality, it would be a good transportation artery. You could go from east to west and north to south without going through downtown.
- The widening of 35 helped.
- It will mean a better path to the recreation areas – Canyon Lake and the Upper Guadalupe.
- Helps traffic flow.
- It will cut down on accidents.
- On the west side it will provide relief for traffic congestion. That is the side where there is the most protest.
- If it works properly, you would be able to get from A to Z easily. It'll get traffic flowing.
- [Benefit to] developers so they can see where to develop – see about getting in and out of properties.
- Long-term- New Braunfels has doubled in size and there are traffic tie-ups now. This loop will alleviate some of this; especially on 306. You have to plan ahead now in the summer when you want to go anywhere because people are trying to get to the lake. The loop will help people to get where they want to be without having to go through New Braunfels.
- It will give the city a way to expand beyond its borders.
- None by widening of 406 or 46
- Do need a road over the Guadalupe on the south to be able to get around. Need to connect 725 and 46.

- The loop is not where it should be. It should be further out. Look at the distance from 337 and Sattler Rd. Across the river it's about four miles to 337 and River Road – not mid-way.
- They will take the path of no resistance. What's the purpose of the loop? They go in where it's the easiest to put or go around New Braunfels.
- Where they propose crossing [the river] there is more development between there and Sattler so they could pick up more traffic if they go further away from 337.
- Why don't you do something about the existing roadways? The answer wasn't satisfactory. Need to do a better job of selling the process for building this loop. TxDOT wants to do this loop and they see it as a different project from fixing up the existing roadways.
- We can't stop New Braunfels from growing.
- The study is based on a false assumption about growth.
- There'll be new development and things will move to accommodate it.
- The loop will promote so much development that there will begin to be pollution from the runoff.
- It doesn't need to be a full circle.
- The uniqueness of Comal County should be maintained; its charm.
- TTC and eminent domain, toll roads, etc. I don't know if it's toll roads or not, but it shuts the city off unless there is an exit.
- How will we benefit from it being where it is?
- It's pleasant on 2722- there's not that much traffic to 337, about 3/12 miles. But it is bad on 337. It carries a lot of traffic.
- They couldn't make another interchange at Schwab or Ingle because the developers got out in front of the planning.
- It's time to get it planned and constructed.
- It might be good to do bonds and get it done quicker.
- The Work Group problem comes from lack of communication about the objectives. I'm not quite sure what they were. The community needs to know better what they are.
- The County and City looked at the map and made a circle. Then said, "Now let's talk to the public." From the beginning they missed something.
- Look at specific phases; some need more attention than others to relieve traffic tensions. You might go first to the southeast or from 46 around to 35 north of New Braunfels from Seguin. Then 725 to connect with that and put the bridge for 46. From 725 to 46 to relieve traffic to 35. That would relieve about 60 percent of the tie-ups now. The other piece is south of 35 to connect to 725 that goes to the quarry area would cover about 75 percent of the traffic. That corner they did and widening 46 to 1863 and 2722 will help with the congestion.
- Be clearer about the goals and objectives.
- Need more transparency from TxDOT such as reasons for study and toll road plans without a feasibility study (as previously requested by Comal County and City of NB)
- Subdivisions are going up, but they're not on the map in the county.

- They never completed 337.
- If we put it off any longer we won't be able to do things.
- I'm not sure if it's worth the time because I don't think I'll make a difference.
- I can't believe we need a road this big.
- Be aware of what the feds are doing to stimulate the economy
- Plan so there can be action. Not just planning with no action.
- Loop needs to be built within 5-10 years, instead of 25.
- Knowing the growth of Comal County and I want to have a plan. The subdivision growth on 306 causes concerns about having to buy up already existing facilities.
- I'm interested in less traffic.
- Seeing that something needed to be done to relieve traffic and do something for the good of the community.
- Who's behind this? Will we get information about who asked for it?
- The history and why they considered the loop; TxDOT deciding to do it; need to clear up the misconception