



Meeting Notes

Grayson County Tollway Project

Date: September 22, 2010, 9:00 a.m. **Location:** Sherman City Hall

Subject: Grayson County Tollway (GCT) Study – Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting #2

Documented by: Noel Paramanantham, PE (TxDOT)/Mike Garrison, PE (Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.)

Attendees: (See attached sign-in sheet)

Purpose of the Meeting

The purpose of the meeting is to assemble key decision makers within the proposed GCT Study Area to understand TxDOT's feasibility and corridor routing process, and assist in identifying additional constraints and alignments to contribute to this comprehensive study. The primary objective over the next 8-12 months is to perform a route alignment analysis (resulting in a preferred alignment), conduct travel demand modeling, and analyze traffic & revenue as well as toll feasibility for the proposed 33-mile Grayson County Tollway. The alignment will start on the south end of Grayson County at FM 121 (planned terminus of the Dallas North Tollway from Collin County), and extend north to US 75 near Denison.

Meeting Notes:

1. Introduction/Overview (TxDOT – Noel Paramanantham, PE)
2. Corridor Study (Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc. – Mike Garrison, PE / Civil Associates – Naser Abusaad, PE, AICP)
 - o Data Collection & Constraint Mapping Status
 - o Community Advisory Group Input
 - o Typical Sections
 - o Alternative Alignments Evaluation Process
 - o Draft Alternatives Analysis Matrix
 - o TAC Input on Alternatives for Further Consideration
 - o Traffic Modeling
3. Public Involvement (Half Associates, Inc. – Matt Craig, PE)
 - o Community Advisory Group Meetings – September 20th and October 5th
 - o Denison Development Alliance Briefing – September 24th
 - o First Public Meeting – tentative mid-November
 - o Next Meeting of TAC – October 27, 2010
4. Workshop Session (All)

Notes from the meeting:

Mr. Noel Paramanantham (TxDOT Project Manager) opened meeting and briefed the group on the feedback received at the first Community Advisory Group (CAG) meeting last Monday night (September 20th). He mentioned that the study team had worked to bring these ideas forward to this meeting for comments, and all input was welcomed. Noel then turned over the program to BGE Project Manager, Mike Garrison.

Mike welcomed the group and expressed the team's appreciation for the requested data that had been transmitted from many of the study area cities. He showed that this data had been incorporated into the GCT Constraints Map, and that along with the comments received at Monday night's CAG meeting, this map was now complete. All alignment alternatives from the first TAC meeting as well as the first CAG meeting had now been included on the map, and the purpose of this meeting was to get feedback on those alignments, and determine if any modifications or additions needed to be made. Once today's comments were addressed, the alignment alternatives shown on the map would constitute the "Universe of Alternatives", and would then go through the full evaluation matrix process that would be described in detail by Naser Abusaad at this meeting. Mike mentioned that this process had already been started on alignments presented up to this point, as a lot of measurements for length, disturbed area, existing ROW, etc. was required and could be done as additional alignments were being considered.

Mike presented some 2-lane, 3-lane ("Super 2") and 4-lane typical sections to show how the roadway could be phased towards an ultimate 6-lane facility with or without frontage roads. He mentioned that frontage roads would be evaluated, if warranted or requested by others, but that a separate funding source may need to be considered due to not only the capital cost of the facility, but the perpetual maintenance cost, which can result in 4 to 5 times the initial construction cost. A two lane facility with an alternating passing lane was generally accepted as a good initial project to construct. Mike turned the program over to Naser, to talk about the Environmental screening process.

Naser then went through the Alternatives Evaluation Matrix in more detail regarding the analysis of alternatives, always keeping in mind the Need and Purpose of the project (addressing the increased truck traffic along the US 75 corridor, improving mobility in Grayson County, and providing a cost-effective, safe solution). Naser had some quantities generated for the alternatives presented to date, but the team wanted to wait to present these alternatives after any additional comments were received/addressed, and the revised alignments maps were regenerated. Naser then turned the program over to Matt, who commented on the CAG recommendations for the north half of the project (north of US 82).

Matt said that the objective was to review the alignments and provide 3 or 4 to the public that served a full range of objectives (both ends of the spectrum). Reviewing the Need and Purpose for the project, any alignment tying south of FM 84 to US 75 really didn't serve the needs of the City of Denison to relieve truck traffic along US 75. So the alignments that best suited this situation tied to US 75 between the major railroad crossing just north of Denison, and the Randell Lake. Because the Denison Development Alliance had some major plans for the northwest quadrant of US 75 and FM 84, the alignments really converged on almost a single point along US 75 that allowed a good geometric tie. The alternative alignments that had been developed to date which achieved this objective were alignments N1-N5. Matt then described each of these alignments in detail, receiving comments from the TAC during the discussion.

- There are several alignments which cross the railroad tracks just west of the large switching yard, and then cross FM 120 to head towards the North Texas Regional Airport. Only one of these alignments actually traversed east of the airport and then tied south of it to SH 289. Airport officials **do** not care for this alignment, as it bypasses the airport and could limit future runway expansion as well as development south of the airport. Other alignments either crossed just north of the airport runways or utilized FM 120 and then created a southern relief route around Pottsboro. There were several comments about these alternatives, but most thought they were valid for further consideration.
- Matt mentioned that there were two alignments that actually stayed north of FM 120, and created a northern relief route around Pottsboro, tying into SH 289 just north of FM 120. Mike interjected that while these alignments appeared to be longer than the ones mentioned before, they did not require any railroad crossings, and the additional length versus constructing railroad bridges along with 2 years of coordination, may be a wash. These alignments would require some widening of the SH 289 right of way north of FM 120 (pass through financing section did not acquire ROW too far north of FM 120). The group generally liked these alternatives and said they should be considered for further evaluation.
- Matt mentioned that George Schuler had recommended an alternative alignment running from US 82 parallel to the SH 289 corridor, west of the airport near the Hagerman Wildlife Refuge, and then across the north side of Pottsboro adjacent to FM 120 over to US 75. He said this would service the new development that would be taking place along Lake Texoma to the west of Pottsboro.
 - Several individuals with the TAC commented that this would be a very expensive proposition, and would not compete well with an already improved SH 289 facility that can support that proposed traffic. The general consensus was that the alignment could remain in place for evaluation, but it was not a preferred route by any of the TAC members.
- Matt explained the alternatives tying south of Denison and south of Sherman. Although these appeared to be shorter routes, most of them did travel through some already improved areas, and did not fully serve the need and purpose of the project to help in diverting truck traffic off of US 75, prior to passing through Denison and Sherman. The study team's initial evaluation of these alignments was showing higher impacts.
- David [Howerton](#) (City of Denison) stated that FM 1417 and FM 131 needed to be extended north of FM 84 to relieve traffic along both FM 84 and US 75.
- Mike Shahan (NTRA) stated that the study team needed to be aware of the 50:1 clear zone approach required for landing planes.

The focus area moved to the south of US 82, and Mike provided comments made by the CAG on Monday evening, including the following:

- Both Dorchester and Southmayd have a desire to avoid placing the GCT along existing SH 289 within the southern study area. Dorchester's concern was disruption of existing homesteads, while Southmayd had more concern about the footprint of a proposed interchange at SH 56 and the potential disruption of the recently-designated Historic Preston Trail Corridor north of SH 56.
 - The mayors of Sherman and Gunter, as well as the county judge, all commented that SH 289 had been improved to south of SH 56, and this facility was constructed for this facility to tie to.
 - Mayor Magers (Sherman) commented that the City of Sherman would not support an alignment alternative that traversed the west side of Southmayd.
 - Commissioner Short said that any alignment running concurrent with SH 289 from Southmayd to Gunter would be very difficult to acquire, and to expect to see pushback from the public. He would not support having to go through that process again like he did with the SH 289 pass-through financing section.
 - The group concluded that the favored alignment would tie south of SH 56 along SH 289 so as not to disturb the urbanized area of Southmayd, and to create as little impact as possible to the existing SH 289 corridor south of Southmayd.
 - Commissioner Short said that the wider ROW had been acquired a few thousand feet south of Southmayd, and would accommodate the tie-in of the proposed GCT.
- The City of Gunter has a desire to connect two MUDs north of the city with the GCT running in a west-to-east fashion. Although this impacts less landowners, the roadway becomes longer, and has to tie to SH 289 just north of Gunter, requiring ROW acquisition along SH 289 from Dorchester to Southmayd. The alignment they preferred looked identical to S3, but was shifted south to avoid running through smaller parcels. They said that they had 3 out of 4 land owners committed to donate land for this alignment.
 - Mike suggested an alternative, which took an initial bend towards the east, but then turned north to parallel SH 289 along new ROW, prior to tying into SH 289 a thousand feet or more south of SH 56. This alignment would allow some connectivity to the new MUDs, stay off of SH 289 through the narrow ROW areas, and tie to SH289 south of [Southmayd](#), creating minimal impact to that town and keeping the footprint in the rural area.
 - Jeff Neal from NCTCOG commented that through their study of the Collin County Outer Loop, tollways proposed parallel to an existing road does not move significant traffic away from the road, as travel patterns combined with tolled vs. non-tolled were difficult to overcome. From a toll viability standpoint, the project may warrant an interim connection to SH 289 in the early years, utilizing that existing facility until traffic demand built to a point that the greenfield tollway was needed west of SH 289.
 - Mr. Jim Griffin from NTTA mentioned that the group should consider two solutions; one near term with a need to tie SH 289 to the proposed DNT, and a second long range route decision to serve future traffic on new location. He also mentioned that staying along existing county road alignments appeared to be a path of least resistance when dealing with landowners.
 - The group concluded that this hybrid alignment might work for an ultimate facility, with some interim connection being made over to SH 289 just north of Gunter to create a cost effective connection between the DNT and SH 289 until traffic volumes warranted the ultimate facility.

Matt continued with the presentation by briefly covered the logo discussion presented at the CAG meeting, and said that Logo Alternative #4 has favorable response to date. Matt said the planning team would continue to receive input on the logo until we get closer to the public meeting. Matt also explained that the GCT website should be up and running shortly on TxDOT's main web page, and that interested parties could go onto the site and download the latest alternatives map, meeting minutes, and obtain general information on the project.

After a brief work group/discussion about various alignment alternatives, the meeting adjourned. The consultant team remained to discuss typical sections, design criteria, and a proposed pavement design structure with TxDOT, as firm decisions on all of these elements would be critical prior to generating any preliminary cost estimates for the alternatives, and then taking the alternatives to the public for general input.

Mike and Matt concluded the workshop, and asked everyone to tentatively reserve Wednesday October 27, 2010 (9am) for the third (and possibly last) TAC meeting. The final results of the evaluation process would be presented at this meeting, and at the first Public Meeting/Open House, scheduled for Tuesday, November 18th from 4pm-9pm at the City of Sherman Municipal Center Ballroom. Three conceptual alternatives would be presented at the public meeting for comments. This would lead to a final evaluation of the corridors and a technically/locally preferred alternative being presented at a final Public Meeting in January 2011.

Team notes/action items post workshop:

- TAC members to provide additional logo ideas to TxDOT by Friday, October 22nd
- TxDOT/Consultant Team to revise alignment alternatives per today's meeting (mostly in the Gunter area) and distribute these final alternatives to all TAC members along with Meeting Notes from today.
- Next TAC meeting #3 to be conducted on Wednesday, October 27th at Sherman City Hall (tentative). That will allow CAG#2 comments (October 5th) to be processed and presented to the TAC.

Materials Distributed at the Meeting:

- GCT Technical Advisory Committee Meeting No. 2 Agenda
- GCT Study Alternative Alignments with Environmental Constraints Map
- GCT Technical Advisory Committee Meeting No. 1 Meeting Notes (handed out per requests at the meeting)

This concludes the Meeting Notes. Our goal is to provide a complete and accurate summary of the proceedings of the subject meeting in these notes. If you feel that any of the items listed above are not correct, or that any information is missing or incomplete, please contact Mr. Noel Paramanatham at the TxDOT Sherman Area Office so that the matter can be resolved, and a correction issued if necessary. These notes will be assumed to be correct and accepted if we do not hear from you within ten (10) calendar days from your receipt.

Grayson County Tollway Study
 Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2
 Attendees - 09/22/2010

Last Name	First Name	Organization	Email	Phone
Abusaad	Naser	Civil Associates, Inc.	naser@civilassociates.com	(214) 703-5151
Ballou	Willies	City of Dorchester	wcballou@yahoo.com	(903) 476-0950
Benton	Bill	Grayson County Regional Mobility Authority	billbenton@blrctx.com	(903) 482-8400
Bynum	Drue	Grayson County Judge		
Chapman	Jerry	Greater Texoma Utility Authority, General Manager	jerryc@gtua.org	(903) 786-4433
Craig	Matt	Halff Associates, Inc.	mcraig@halff.com	(214) 346-6375
Crisp	Jackie	Grayson County Commissioner Pct. 3	crispj@co.grayson.tx.us	(903) 436-5772
Dillon	Doug	Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.	ddillon@browngay.com	(972) 464-4805
Farley	Kevin	City of Pottsboro	kfarley@cityofpottsboro.com	(903) 786-2281 x 5
Fisher	Eric	Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.		
Garrison	Mike	Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.	mgarrison@browngay.com	(972) 464-4811
Gibbs	Cliff	Mayor Pro-Tem, City of Gunter	ccpl4@ci.gunter.tx.us	(972) 742-1113
Griffin	James W.	NTTA	jgriffin@ntta.org	(214) 224-2181
Hagar	Chris	Civil Associates, Inc.	chris@civilassociates.com	(214) 703-5151
Hale	James	PW Director - City of Tioga	tiogacityhall@yahoo.com	(940) 437-2351
Harris	Kevin	TxDOT (Paris District Construction)		
Howerton	David	City of Denison	dhowerton@cityofdenison.com	(903) 465-2720
Hubbard	Bill	GCRMA		(940) 367-4406
Johnson	Wally	Sherman-Denison MPO	wjohnson@sdmpo.org	(903) 813-3531
Magers	Bill	Mayor, City of Sherman		
Millar	Mark	City Administrator - City of Gunter	mmillar@ci.gunter.tx.us	(903) 433-5185
Paramanatham	Noel	TxDOT (Project Manager - Sherman AO)	noel.paramanatham.txdot.gov	(903) 892-6529
Pepe	Daniel	Mayor, City of Southmayd	major@southmaydtx.com	(903) 818-7736
Powers	Mike	TxDOT (Paris District ROW)	mike.powers@txdot.gov	(903) 583-9523
Pylant	Jonathan	Halff Associates, Inc.	jpylant@halff.com	(214) 346-6237
Robinson	Matt	Greater Texas Land Resources	wrobinson@txlandresources.com	(214) 387-3993
Samuels	Darius	TxDOT (Paris District APD / Traffic)		
Selman	David	TxDOT (Sherman Area Engineer)	david.selman@txdot.gov	
Shahan	Mike	North Texas Regional Airport & GCRMA	shahanm@co.grayson.tx.us	(903) 786-2904
Short	C. E. "Gene"	Grayson County Commissioner Pct. 4	shortg@co.grayson.tx.us	(903) 813-4318
Speakman	Tom	Denison	tspeakman@cityofdenison.com	(903) 465-2720
Taylor	Scott	PE, City of Sherman	scott@sherman.ci.tx.us	(903) 892-4547
Wood	Robert	Sherman - Denison MPO	rwood@sdmpo.org	(903) 813-3534