
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PUBLIC HEARING

STATE HIGHWAY 121 PROJECT

DECEMBER 13, 2004

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1 MS. CHAVEZ: Good evening and welcome to
2 this public hearing on State Highway 121, also known as
3 the Southwest Parkway. This proposed project's limits
4 are from IH 30 to FM 1187 in Tarrant County, and if
5 that's the meeting that you wanted to come and speak to
6 this, you're in the right place.

7 My name is Maribel Chavez, and I am the
8 District Engineer for the nine county Fort Worth
9 District of the Texas Department of Transportation,
10 also known as TxDOT. On behalf of the department, I
11 would like to express our appreciation to the City of
12 Fort Worth for allowing us to use this facility for
13 this hearing.

14 I would also like to thank you for your
15 interest in transportation in the region and for being
16 here tonight to participate in this unique opportunity
17 for additional public involvement on the proposed
18 project. The Final Environmental Impact Statement, or
19 FEIS, was made available to the public on November the
20 1st, 2004, for review and comment as provided for in
21 the National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA
22 regulations. We have worked with the U.S. Department
23 of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration to
24 use the flexibility available within the regulations to
25 provide for a more formal presentation of the final EIS

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1 than is required.

2 Although approval of the FEIS is not the last
3 step in the review under NEPA, this formal public
4 hearing does provide an additional opportunity for
5 public involvement. All subsequent comments will be
6 considered before the Federal Highway Administration
7 prepares the Record of Decision, or ROD, which is the
8 final NEPA stage.

9 Normally we like to begin public hearings
10 with a short history of the project. Unfortunately,
11 this project doesn't have a short history. There's no
12 such thing as a short history for this project, so I
13 won't give you that short history. Most of you know
14 that this -- this route has actually been discussed in
15 some form or fashion for over 40 years, and several
16 concepts were pursued all the way back to a public
17 hearing in 1993. However, at the time, due to funding
18 restraints both at the state and federal levels,
19 construction funds for the roadway could not be
20 identified.

21 In the mid 1990's, the City of Fort Worth
22 commissioned a feasibility study for the development of
23 State Highway 121. From these studies, the concept of
24 building State Highway 121 from Interstate 30 to
25 FM 1187 as a controlled access toll facility was

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1 developed. In 1997, the North Texas Tollway Authority
2 completed an assessment that indicated that State
3 Highway 121's feasibility as a toll road from
4 Interstate 30 to Altamesa Boulevard. On June 4th,
5 1998, a public meeting was jointly held by the North
6 Texas Tollway Authority and TxDOT to announce that
7 revised design and environmental studies along with
8 continuous public involvement conducted in cooperation
9 with the City of Fort Worth would take place.

10 From January 1999 until December 2000, the
11 City of Fort Worth also initiated three separate review
12 committees: The Citizens Advisory Committee, the Peer
13 Review Team, and the Project Development Team. After
14 the Project Development Team presented the review and
15 recommendations of the three independent committees,
16 the recommendations were presented to the city council.
17 These recommendations were subsequently approved by the
18 city council and submitted to the NTTA and to TxDOT for
19 review. The PDT's recommended alternative, as well as
20 an additional alternative derived from the
21 recommendations, is included within the EIS. With the
22 completion of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement
23 in December of 2002, the project proceeded to a formal
24 public hearing held April 22nd, 2003.

25 The North Texas Tollway Authority and TxDOT

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1 have diligently analyzed the public's comment expressed
2 during the public hearing process. This has resulted
3 in revised studies based on updated data and expanded
4 discussion of secondary and cumulative impacts and an
5 overall improvement in the readability of the document.

6 Before we begin the public comment part, we
7 must provide you some project and process information.
8 At this time I'll turn it over to Mr. Charles Conrad,
9 who is the Deputy District Engineer for the Fort Worth
10 District for the formal staff presentation.

11 MR. CONRAD: Thank you, Maribel. Good
12 evening. My name is Charles Conrad, and I am the
13 Deputy District Engineer for the Fort Worth District of
14 TxDOT.

15 Roadway planning and construction requires
16 close cooperation on all levels of government. The
17 proposed project is being developed by the North Texas
18 Tollway Authority, the Texas Department of
19 Transportation, and the City of Fort Worth, in
20 cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration,
21 the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and
22 Tarrant County.

23 The state and federal governments have
24 various laws, regulations, and guidelines that outline
25 the processes whereby public awareness of system

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1 planning and project planning can be assured.
2 Throughout the development of this project, there has
3 been extensive public involvement with citizens,
4 property owners, and elected -- affected local
5 governments regarding the proposed facility. Many
6 opportunities for public comment have been afforded
7 through public meetings, citizens advisory groups, a
8 State Highway 121 task force, and two formal public
9 hearings as documented in the approved Final
10 Environmental Impact Statement.

11 Approval of the Final Environmental Impact
12 Statement is not the last step in the review under the
13 National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA. The final
14 EIS is made available to the public for review and
15 comment as provided for in the NEPA guidelines. All
16 substantive comments are considered before the Federal
17 Highway Administration prepares the Record of Decision,
18 or ROD. Execution of the ROD ends the formal NEPA
19 stage.

20 Due to public interest in this project, the
21 City requested the opportunity for additional public
22 involvement in this -- as this project advances. While
23 not traditionally provided at the FEIS stage, the North
24 Texas Tollway Authority, TxDOT, and the Federal Highway
25 Administration agreed to provide this additional public

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1 hearing following the FEIS being made available to the
2 public. Before the execution of the ROD, a summary of
3 this additional public hearing and analysis of comments
4 will also be made available to the public. Substantive
5 comments not previously addressed in the FEIS will be
6 noted in the ROD. Although regulations do not require
7 public notification of the ROD, the Federal Highway
8 Administration will also make it available to the
9 public.

10 There are many phases that a project must go
11 through during its development, planning studies;
12 conceptual development; alternative analysis;
13 environmental studies in accordance with the NEPA
14 regulations; schematic development for the recommended
15 alternatives; permit coordination; right of way
16 acquisition; preparation of detailed plans,
17 specifications and estimates; financing and
18 construction, to name a few.

19 Just because we are nearing the end of the
20 formal NEPA phase, the opportunity for public input for
21 this project will not end. The City of Fort Worth,
22 NTTA, and TxDOT have been working on an amendment to
23 the interlocal agreement for the project to incorporate
24 the desired nature and characteristics of the project.
25 Prior to initiating the preparation of the detailed

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1 plans, specifications and estimates, the three parties
2 will conduct a process to develop a master plan that
3 will determine appropriate aesthetic treatments and
4 locations of these treatments, together with a master
5 landscape plan. We are committed to working together
6 to incorporate feasible and practical design features
7 desired by the public.

8 As for tonight's agenda, I will outline the
9 procedures for this hearing. We will discuss the FEIS
10 and the recommended alternative. A representative from
11 our office will then discuss the right of way
12 acquisition procedures. We will then take a recess for
13 about 15 minutes to allow everyone to look at the
14 display in more detail. Several persons involved with
15 the project will be on hand to assist you with
16 understanding of the project. The questions and/or
17 discussions during the recess will not be part of the
18 public hearing record. After the recess, the floor
19 will be open for statements about the project. This
20 time is strictly for statements. Responses will not be
21 provided during the hearing. They will be included in
22 the written summary and analysis of the hearing.

23 If you desire to speak tonight, please fill
24 out a registration form -- a form at the registration
25 desk before the recess is over. However, if you don't,

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1 the floor will be open for other statements before we
2 adjourn to be sure that everyone has an opportunity to
3 voice either their concerns or support for the project.

4 In order to move the hearing along, we ask
5 that all oral statements be limited to a maximum of
6 four minutes. We are making both audio and video
7 recordings of this hearing so that your statements can
8 be accurately transcribed and understood. If your
9 statement will exceed four minutes, please furnish a
10 written statement. You may include any information you
11 feel is necessary to explain your concerns such as
12 graphs, tables, drawings or photographs. Electronic
13 data or projection slides need to be converted to hard
14 copies for inclusion in the hearing record.

15 Written statements may be submitted tonight
16 or mailed to the address located on the back of the
17 written statement form and on the agenda. The
18 statement form and agenda are located at the
19 registration table. If you did not receive one as you
20 came in, please feel free to get one during the recess
21 or after the hearing. I'd also ask that all of you --
22 if you did not get an opportunity to sign in tonight,
23 to please register that you were attending this
24 hearing. Each statement we receive tonight and written
25 statements received or postmarked by December 31st,

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1 2004 will become a part of the hearing record.

2 Tonight we want to discuss the Final
3 Environmental Impact Study, or FEIS, and the
4 recommended alternative for the proposed state highway
5 project from Interstate Highway 30 to Farm to Market
6 1187. Throughout the history of this project, the
7 roadway has been referred to by several different
8 names. For the purpose of the FEIS, the recommended
9 project is identified only as State Highway 121, the
10 official state designation. The proposed action will
11 be a multi-lane controlled access toll road.

12 The National Environmental Policy Act, or
13 NEPA, is the process to identify and assess the
14 reasonable alternatives to proposed actions that will
15 avoid or minimize adverse effects of these actions upon
16 the quality of the human environment. We use all
17 practicable means, consistent with the requirements of
18 NEPA and other essential considerations of the national
19 policy, to restore and enhance the quality of the human
20 environment and to avoid or minimize any possible
21 adverse effects of actions upon the quality of the
22 human environment. Consistent with NEPA, a Draft
23 Environmental Impact Statement covering the social,
24 economic, and environmental effects of the alternatives
25 for State Highway 121, including information covering

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1 impacts to air, noise, water quality, vegetation,
2 cultural resources, along with other aspects of the
3 project was prepared and presented at the public
4 hearing on November 22nd, 2003.

5 The North Texas Tollway Authority and TxDOT
6 have diligently analyzed the public's concerns
7 expressed during the public hearing process for the
8 draft EIS. This resulted in revised studies based on
9 updated data and expanded discussion of secondary and
10 cumulative impacts and an overall improvement in the
11 readability of the document.

12 It has been determined that there are no
13 changes to the project that would result in substantial
14 environmental impacts not previously considered in the
15 draft EIS, nor is there new information relevant to
16 environmental concerns that would result in substantial
17 impacts not evaluated in the draft EIS. As a result of
18 this hard look, NTTA and TxDOT recommended proceeding
19 to the Final Environmental Impact Statement. The
20 Federal Highway Administration has concurred with this
21 approach.

22 The Final Environmental Impact Statement for
23 State Highway 121 from Interstate Highway 30 to Farm to
24 Market Road 1187 has been prepared in accordance with
25 the regulations developed by the Council on

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1 Environmental Quality for the National Environmental
2 Policy Act, U.S. Department of Transportation and
3 Federal Highway Administration.

4 The FEIS includes a detailed account of the
5 history of the project, including the consideration of
6 various modal and alignment alternatives. Four Build
7 alternatives and the No-Build were identified in the
8 draft EIS. During the public hearing, the City of Fort
9 Worth presented a resolution identifying an additional
10 Build alternative. Therefore, five Build alternatives
11 identified as A, B, C, C/A, and D, in addition to the
12 No-Build are presented in the final EIS.

13 Due to the 40-year history of the project and
14 subsequent land use patterns that have evolved, the
15 proposed Build alternatives are essentially confined to
16 the same horizontal alignment with the vertical profile
17 varying among the alternatives. In addition to the
18 vertical profile modifications, there are various
19 locations where different plan concepts have been
20 proposed depending on the alternative.

21 The recommended alternative which meets the
22 purpose and need of the proposed project while
23 incorporating public input has been determined to be
24 the Build alternative C/A. Alternative C/A would
25 incorporate much of the City's Resolution No. 2923

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1 insofar as is feasible and practicable. The
2 recommended alternative would improve access and a less
3 congested alternative route to local business,
4 residential and commercial properties.

5 With growth in population, it is inevitable
6 that there will be additional traffic demands on the
7 already overburdened existing facilities; hence the
8 need for State Highway 121. The North Central Texas
9 Council of Governments, or COG, is the metropolitan
10 planning organization for the Dallas/Fort Worth region.
11 COG, along with the Regional Transportation Council,
12 which is a group of civic leaders, have identified
13 State Highway 121 as a needed corridor and have
14 included this facility in the Metropolitan
15 Transportation Plan for the region. As a result, it
16 has been evaluated in the Air Quality Conformity
17 Analysis for the region. Air quality will not
18 significantly change.

19 Acquisition of right of way for project
20 construction would require the relocation of 47
21 commercial properties, 34 office units and three
22 residences. These relocations lie in the northern
23 section for approximately three miles along the
24 proposed State Highway 121. A traffic noise analysis
25 was conducted along the preferred alternative. This

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1 analysis revealed that traffic noise abatement walls
2 are feasible and reasonable at three locations along
3 the project. These locations are near the Mistletoe
4 Heights neighborhood, the Fort Worth Country Day
5 School, and the Hulen Bend/Park Palisades
6 neighborhoods.

7 There would be vegetative impacts due to the
8 construction on the new location. Detailed design of
9 the project would take into account minimizing the
10 disturbances to existing vegetation within the right of
11 way. Vegetation disturbances would be the minimum
12 necessary to construct the facility. Disturbed areas
13 within the right of way would be planted or seeded.
14 Impacts to wetlands and waterways are only estimates at
15 this time. This is because we are currently working
16 with the plan and not a detailed design. When the
17 detailed design is done, all areas of impact requiring
18 coordination with the US Army Corps of Engineers would
19 be identified and mitigation requirements would be
20 addressed at that time and implemented during project
21 construction.

22 No historical structures were found within
23 the project limits. An archeological survey of the
24 project corridor was conducted. Additional
25 investigations would be conducted in accordance with

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1 federal regulations pending acquisition of right of way
2 or right of entry. There are no known threatened or
3 endangered species impacts. There is no use of land
4 from waterfowl refuge, park or public-owned facilities
5 significantly impacted by the project. Hazardous
6 material sites within the project limits would be
7 handled appropriately and are not expected to impact
8 the development of the project. Development impacts
9 would be minimal because the facility is being
10 planned with controlled access.

11 Short-term aesthetic impacts would occur
12 during the construction of the proposed facility. In
13 the long term, the paved arteries and overpasses would
14 affect the current rural and scenic nature within the
15 southern end of the project. The northern end of the
16 project is in an established transportation corridor
17 including roadways as well as railroad facilities.
18 Placement of the project within this area would blend
19 into this already developed transportation corridor.

20 Short-term impacts to existing pedestrian and
21 bicycle facilities would be limited to the construction
22 phase of the project. Short-term detours would be
23 required at two locations. Prior to construction, NTTA
24 and/or TxDOT would coordinate the route and operation
25 of these detours and secure an agreement with the City

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1 and the Tarrant Regional Water District concerning
2 these temporary detours. Trail users would be detoured
3 from the existing trail while bridge elements are
4 placed overhead. When construction activities pose no
5 potential harm to trail users, the existing trail
6 system would be reopened for its use at that location.

7 Short-term air and noise impacts would also
8 occur during the construction phase. However, with the
9 use of proper abatement measures, these impacts would
10 be minimized. Other short-term impacts such as soil
11 erosion and sediment-laden runoff from construction
12 areas could temporarily impact rivers and streams along
13 the project. However, both temporary and permanent
14 erosion control structures would be employed to reduce
15 or eliminate sediment discharge into receiving waters.

16 The preliminary schematics for this project
17 were prepared by the consulting firm of Carter &
18 Burgess for the North Texas Tollway Authority and
19 TxDOT. At this time, the project manager for Carter &
20 Burgess, Mr. Darrell Thompson, will explain the
21 recommended alternative.

22 MR. THOMPSON: Good evening. I am
23 Darrell Thompson from Carter & Burgess, a consulting
24 firm representing the North Texas Tollway Authority.
25 This evening I will describe the recommended

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1 alternative, also referred to or known as Alternative
2 C/A, for the proposed SH 121.

3 The proposed SH 121 is planned to be a
4 multi-line controlled access toll road from IH 30 near
5 downtown Fort Worth in Tarrant to Farm to Market 1187,
6 for a total project length of approximately 15 miles.
7 The entire facility is on a new location.

8 The typical section for this portion of
9 SH 121 will consist of two to three twelve-foot travel
10 lanes in each direction divided by a median. The
11 median will vary from 48 feet to 124 feet in width.
12 The section includes ten-foot inside and outside
13 shoulders. The minimum right of way for this project
14 is 220 feet with additional right of way needed at
15 interchanges. The project contains eight diamond
16 interchanges, Montgomery/University, Stonegate,
17 Arborlawn, Overton Ridge, Oakmont, Altamesa or Dirks,
18 Sycamore School, and McPherson, and eight grade
19 separations without interchanges, Rogers, Hulen,
20 Stonegate, Oakbend, Dutch Branch, Risinger,
21 Stuart-Feltz, and Cleburne-Crowley, plus direct connect
22 interchanges at IH 30 and IH 20 with ramp connections
23 to Forest Park.

24 The exhibits of the project schematic plans
25 are located along the side of the room to your right,

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1 and we will have people there to explain those exhibits
2 during the break and they will be displayed on the
3 screen as I progress through the project layout. The
4 color code utilized is yellow for the main lanes;
5 bridges are in red; frontage roads or surface streets
6 are in green; blue identifies entrance and exit ramps;
7 orange represents tentative toll plaza locations;
8 purple indicates future roadways to be constructed by
9 others; and the orange dashed line depicts the
10 preliminary right of way for the project. Property
11 ownerships for tracts along the project are in black.
12 The lower portion of schematic plans are a profile view
13 of the main lanes. This profile shows the vertical
14 relationship between existing natural ground and the
15 proposed grade line of main lanes. For your
16 convenience, again, there will be representatives at
17 the exhibits during the break to answer questions.

18 I will now describe the project from IH 30
19 south. Within the interchange at IH 30, the main lanes
20 will be constructed -- the IH 30 main lanes will be
21 constructed between Summit and Trinity River -- the
22 Trinity River bridge. Access to westbound IH 30 will
23 be available from Summit and Forest Park. Access to
24 eastbound IH 30 from Forest Park will be provided via
25 the frontage road through Summit.

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1 The recommended alternative provides a
2 connection from SH 121 to Forest Park Boulevard
3 terminating with a signalized intersection. A
4 westbound ramp from SH 121 to University has been
5 added, which will relieve traffic operating on the
6 existing westbound IH 30 to University ramp. This
7 connection utilizes the existing Vickery bridge over
8 the river. A portion of this bridge is proposed to
9 accommodate pedestrian/bicycle traffic from each side
10 of the river. Please note that on this slide and on
11 the next few slides that the north arrow is pointing to
12 the bottom of the slide.

13 Proceeding to the west, SH 121 passes under
14 existing Rosedale/IH 30 connections which will require
15 reconstruction to optimize pier locations. SH 121 then
16 crosses over the Clear Fork of the Trinity River,
17 University, and Rogers, and under the Vickery
18 connections to Rosedale. The profile of SH 121 becomes
19 depressed below the surrounding terrain as the roadway
20 passes under the proposed Montgomery extension.

21 An alternative vertical arrangement at
22 Montgomery includes keeping the proposed extension of
23 Montgomery at ground level with SH 121 going over
24 Montgomery. With this alternative, the ramps to and
25 from Montgomery would intersect Montgomery at ground

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1 level instead of above ground.

2 A main lane toll plaza is located between
3 Montgomery and Hulen with the SH 121 alignment between
4 Vickery and the Union Pacific Railroad Yard. A split
5 diamond interchange will serve Montgomery and
6 University with access to Rosedale to and from the
7 west. Vickery will continue to have access to the
8 Rosedale connections. Eastbound Vickery traffic will
9 be accommodated by the proposed eastbound SH 121
10 frontage road which runs from Montgomery to Summit.
11 Many of the improvements being acquired as part of this
12 project occur between Hulen and Summit.

13 At Hulen, SH 121 will pass over the railroad
14 yard while passing under the reconstructed Hulen
15 bridge. The Hulen bridge will be rebuilt and widened
16 as part of this project. The new Hulen bridge will be
17 built to the east of the existing bridge, allowing
18 construction to take place while the existing bridge
19 remains in service. After coming back to natural
20 ground level west of Hulen, SH 121 will then pass over
21 Clear Fork Crossing, which will connect 121 to
22 Stonegate with a diamond interchange. SH 121 in this
23 area is located between the overhead electrical
24 transmission line and the railroad yard. Stonegate
25 Boulevard is planned by the City of Fort Worth to be

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1 extended west to Bryant-Irvin as a separate project and
2 will serve as access between Hulen, Bryant-Irvin and
3 SH 121.

4 The SH 121 alignment curves to the south at
5 this point, staying close to the surrounding ground
6 level, then cutting into an existing hill before
7 crossing over the Clear Fork of the Trinity River.
8 This river crossing is planned to span the floodplain
9 with proper clearances for the existing trail and
10 maintenance road on either side of the Trinity River.
11 It also allows for future roads on each side of the
12 river, including Stonegate on the north. SH 121 then
13 comes back to existing ground level, crossing under the
14 future extension of Arborlawn with a diamond
15 interchange at Arborlawn. The SH 121 median is widened
16 between the electrical transmission line and Arborlawn
17 with an additional 80-foot landscape buffer included on
18 each side of SH 121 in accordance with the Project
19 Development Team, or PDT, recommendations. Please note
20 on this slide and the remainder of the slides that
21 north is to the left.

22 SH 121 continues into a section between
23 Arborlawn and SH 183 where the facility is below the
24 level of the surrounding terrain as much as 60 feet.
25 This area is east of the Country Day School. Within

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1 the SH 121 interchange at IH 20, there will be frontage
2 roads on SH 121 from SH 183 to Overton Ridge, on SH 183
3 and on IH 20. A frontage road will also run southbound
4 from Arborlawn to SH 183. A fully directional
5 interchange is planned for IH 20 including direct
6 connections from the south to SH 183. 121 then crosses
7 under the westbound SH 183 frontage road and over a
8 lowered SH 183, over the existing IH 20 main lane, the
9 eastbound IH 20 frontage road and Overton Ridge. A
10 diamond interchange is planned for Overton Ridge.

11 South of Overton Ridge, SH 121 crosses under
12 future Oakbend and existing Oakmont, with a diamond
13 interchange at Oakmont. The profile grade of SH 121 is
14 depressed below the surrounding terrain for
15 approximately one mile centered about Oakmont.
16 Proceeding south, the roadway will then pass over
17 existing Dutch Branch. SH 121 proceeds at existing
18 ground level under a reconstructed Altamesa/Dirks, with
19 a diamond interchange planned at this location.

20 Ramp toll plazas, such as those shown as
21 Altamesa, will be included at the interchanges south of
22 Hulen, with the exception of the IH 20 interchange.
23 The initial collection of tolls will end at
24 Altamesa/Dirks, although the entire project is planned
25 as a toll facility.

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1 South of Altamesa/Dirks, SH 121 crosses over
2 the Fort Worth & Western Railroad and future Sycamore
3 School Road with a diamond interchange at Sycamore
4 School. SH 121 continues south passing under the
5 future Risinger extension, then over McPherson with a
6 diamond interchange at McPherson.

7 SH 121 then crosses under future planned
8 roads at Stuart-Feltz and Cleburne-Crowley, with a
9 planned main lane toll plaza between Stuart-Feltz and
10 Cleburne-Crowley. The alignment then curves back to
11 the south after crossing future Cleburne-Crowley Road.

12 The initial tie-in at FM 1187 will be two
13 lanes. An ultimate diamond interchange is planned at
14 this location to tie to the terminus of the SH 121
15 project planned from FM 1187 to US 67 in Cleburne.
16 This current project's southern terminus is FM 1187.

17 This concludes the description of the
18 recommended alternative, and I will turn the program
19 back over to Mr. Conrad.

20 MR. CONRAD: Thank you, Darrell. Our
21 Director of Transportation Planning and Development,
22 Mr. Bill Riley, will now discuss the right of way
23 acquisition process.

24 MR. RILEY: Good evening. As has been
25 previously discussed, additional right of way would be

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1 needed to construct this project. Property rights
2 needed for the expansion of the Texas highway system
3 are acquired under the guidelines of the Uniform
4 Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions
5 Act of 1970.

6 The State's authority to acquire property for
7 the transportation system is found in the Fifth
8 Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.
9 This authority can be used only when there is a
10 demonstrated public need for the property and the
11 property owners are compensated with just compensation.
12 Just compensation is defined as the fair market value
13 of the property needed plus an amount for damages that
14 might accrue to the remaining property as a result of
15 severing the acquired right of way from the whole
16 property.

17 The acquisition of this right of way is a
18 joint effort between the Texas Department of
19 Transportation and the City of Fort Worth.
20 Approximately 145 parcels of right of way and easements
21 would be required and approximately 50 will be
22 displaced. The acquisition time is estimated to be 30
23 months. The cost of the additional right of way is
24 estimated to be \$115 million.

25 The information being presented tonight

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1 represents the right of way requirements as near as
2 they can be determined at this time. It is possible
3 minor changes would have to be made as the planning
4 work is finalized.

5 As previously stated, each impacted property
6 owner would be offered just compensation for the
7 property needed for the project. To arrive at this
8 value, TxDOT would hire independent appraisers to do a
9 detailed appraisal on each property. These independent
10 appraisers are highly regarded professionals in our
11 community, bound by professional and ethical standards
12 to produce property values that reflect true market
13 conditions.

14 When the appraisal is complete, the value
15 would be offered to the property owner by one of our
16 staff members. We make no attempt to acquire property
17 for less than this appraised value. During this
18 meeting, the State's agent would discuss the highway
19 project's impact on the property owners -- on the
20 owner's property and try to answer any questions the
21 owner may have. The State's agent would also discuss
22 the alternatives that are available in the acquisition
23 process under the laws of eminent domain. The owner is
24 given at least 30 days to consider the offer and often
25 longer if it is needed.

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1 We also have a program for the relocation of
2 personal property from the route of the proposed
3 highway construction. If this is the case, a
4 relocation agent would be assigned to work with the
5 owner to get the property moved and the cost paid.
6 This agent would also work with the property owner to
7 secure the reimbursement of certain incidental expenses
8 necessary to convey title to the State.

9 I have a couple of brochures here that
10 explains the right of way acquisition process and the
11 relocation assistance program in more detail. I
12 encourage everyone whose property appears to be
13 impacted by this project to pick up one of each for
14 your convenience. Thank you.

15 MR. CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. Riley. Now I
16 would like to call upon Ms. Kay Walls to make some
17 comments. Ms. Walls is a member of the North Texas
18 Tollway Authority Board of Directors.

19 MS. WALLS: Good evening, Ms. Chavez,
20 Mr. Conrad, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Kay
21 Walls, and I reside in Cleburne, Texas. My remarks
22 tonight are made as a director of the North Texas
23 Tollway Authority. First, I would like to thank the
24 City of Fort Worth and Tarrant County and the State
25 Highway 121 Task Force, the North Texas -- Central

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1 Texas Council of Governments, the Texas Highway
2 Department of Transportation, my board of colleagues
3 and the staff of the North Texas Tollway Authority, the
4 citizens, community leaders, elected officials who have
5 worked so very hard to get us to this milestone of
6 completion of the required environmental clearance
7 process.

8 The development of this project, State
9 Highway 121 from IH 30 to FM 1187, completes and
10 exemplifies how government and citizens can work
11 together to enhance our quality of life. All of the
12 parties that worked together on this project should be
13 commended for their collaborative efforts.

14 The regional and local benefits exemplifying
15 State Highway 121 are profound. As the Final
16 Environmental Impact Study sufficiently states, by
17 providing a major link in the regional transportation
18 network, 121 provides a needed alternative route to the
19 congested urban arterials serving southwest Tarrant
20 County. This recommended project has a three-fold
21 purpose: Improve regional mobility, increase the
22 capacity of our local transportation system to carry
23 people and goods, to alleviate further overburdening of
24 our system.

25 Tremendous growth is anticipated in the DFW

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1 area in general and in Tarrant County in particular.
2 This growth cannot be handled solely through
3 operational improvements, transit or travel reduction
4 strategies, such as van pools or car pools. Our
5 current roadway system has aged and in many instances
6 is deficient in handling even the existing demand. All
7 of these factors underscore the need for a multi-mobile
8 approach to solving Tarrant County's regional
9 transportation challenges, and SH 121 is a key
10 component in this multi-mobile approach.

11 To facilitate the development of 121, the
12 City of Fort Worth, TxDOT and NTTA entered into a
13 three-party agreement in November of 2000. This
14 agreement serves to guide to the expectations and to
15 frame the responsibility of each signatory. As stated
16 in the November of 2000 agreement, beyond the goal of
17 providing a safe, efficient and cost-effective
18 transportation project, the intent of these parties is
19 to that -- to extend the reasonable, responsible and
20 the project's design, one, to incorporate a high degree
21 of aesthetic and urban design standards, and two, to be
22 consistent with and recognize the environment of the
23 121 corridor. NTTA's commitment to these ends is
24 evident by the \$4 million it has extended in developing
25 and in refining SH 121 schematics, as well as

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1 responding to the commitments of the City of Fort
2 Worth's peer review and their team that they have since
3 the November of 2000 interlocal agreement was signed.

4 Over the same period of time, NTTA has spent
5 an additional \$1 million to develop a city-wide
6 guideline to address landscaping and the aesthetics for
7 the implementation of SH 121 and on NTTA's other
8 projects. I am pleased to report that last week, the
9 City, TxDOT and NTTA finalized a term sheet to serve as
10 the basis for a further amendment to the interlocal
11 agreement. It's a big deal. This term sheet was
12 approved unanimously by the Fort Worth City Council
13 last Tuesday and by the NTTA Board of Directors last
14 Friday, which further details the nature and the
15 character elements that will be specifically designed
16 into SH 121. These elements will further enhance
17 NTTA's system guide -- system-wide design guidelines,
18 adapting them to the distinct features, challenges and
19 opportunities of the project's corridor. This approved
20 term sheet and the resulting amendment that should be
21 finalized by month's end illustrate the commitment of
22 all of the project's stake holders, the City, TxDOT and
23 NTTA, to address in a collaborative manner that issues
24 that are necessarily arising in the planning a project
25 of this type. Along with the City of Fort Worth, the

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1 Fort Worth District of the Texas Department of
2 Transportation, the NTTA was very pleased that this
3 project is receiving an environmental clearance. We
4 ask that the Federal Highway Administration move
5 expeditiously in granting this project of Record of
6 Decision.

7 The North Texas Tollway Authority looks
8 forward to our continuing working relationship with the
9 City of Fort Worth, TxDOT as SH 121 moves forward in
10 its design and construction phases. Ultimately, NTTA
11 looks forward in the near future to operate and
12 maintain a transportation facility which the residents
13 of Tarrant County will have value and utilize and view
14 with pride. Thank you.

15 MR. CONRAD: Thank you, Ms. Walls.
16 Before we recess for 15 minutes, I would like to
17 introduce additional personnel from our staff and from
18 the consultant staff that will be available at the
19 boards to assist with the orientation to the drawings.
20 Chris Hoff. If you would, kind of stand or let
21 yourself be seen. Milton Richter, David VanGorder,
22 Lynn Pipkin, Juan Sierra, Randy Bowers, Scott Hall,
23 Matt Lance, Joe Atwood, and Robert Hall.

24 As a reminder, please register at the table
25 if you desire to make a statement and also to record

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1 your presence at this hearing. When we reconvene, you
2 will be given the opportunity to make your statement.
3 We will now recess and reconvene at approximately 8:00
4 p.m.

5 (Break taken.)

6 MS. CHAVEZ: At this time we're going to
7 hear from Mayor Moncrief on behalf of the City of Fort
8 Worth. He would like to make comment with respect to
9 this project. Mayor Moncrief.

10 MAYOR MONCRIEF: I'm going to wake
11 you-all up. Wake up, wake up, wake up, we've got
12 business tonight. Who wants to build a road?

13 (Audience applauds.)

14 MAYOR MONCRIEF: Boy, that was lame. Who
15 wants to build a road?

16 (Audience applauds.)

17 MAYOR MONCRIEF: That sounds more like
18 it. Well, I am very, very excited to be here tonight
19 along with two of my colleagues, Clyde Picht and Wendy
20 Davis, who are both here, from the Fort Worth City
21 Council. Where are you two guys? I saw Clyde earlier.
22 Wendy is right over here.

23 This is a big night for Fort Worth. You
24 know, we've come a long way. That's not to say we're
25 at our destination yet, but we're a heck of a lot

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1 closer than when we started. I am excited to be here
2 tonight to express the City of Fort Worth's continued
3 support of what we call the Southwest Parkway. You
4 call it State Highway 121T. We call it another thing.
5 We call it a parkway.

6 This project, quite frankly, ladies and
7 gentlemen, has given a whole new meaning to the term
8 work in progress. You know, the Southwest Parkway
9 seems to have been a work in progress for not 10 years,
10 not 20 years, not 30 years, but as was mentioned
11 earlier, 40 years. Some said the road would never be
12 built. In the case of Fort Worth, this road is a lot
13 more than just a convenience. Certainly the gridlock
14 in traffic that we've experienced with Bryant-Irvin and
15 Hulen has gotten the attention of the people who live
16 in our city and it is inconvenient to try and get from
17 point A to point B, but it's now more than that, it's a
18 public safety issue because we can't get emergency
19 equipment to answer those calls, whether that be
20 ambulance or fire or police, when you get into that
21 high traffic time. It is -- it is very difficult. So
22 it's a major issue for us, and it's a very important
23 project for the citizens of Fort Worth.

24 Quite frankly, this is -- it's more than just
25 a road. This is a major artery. It's an artery for

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1 southwest Fort Worth and downtown, an artery that has
2 been delayed for way too long, but I'm here to tell you
3 that the wait has been well worth it. Together with
4 our partners at the North Texas Tollway Authority and
5 the Texas Department of Transportation, we're not only
6 going to build a road, but a Fort Worth road, a roadway
7 that we can all be proud of, not just to drive on, but
8 to know that we did the right thing, the right thing to
9 protect our neighborhoods, to support the Trinity River
10 Vision Master Plan, and at the same time alleviate
11 congestion and promote quality economic development.
12 That's a delicate balance to try and strike.

13 There are many in this community who never
14 thought that we would ever see this day. There were
15 those who didn't want the road to be built at all, and
16 certainly there were those who didn't want it to be
17 built as originally proposed in 1999. But as is so
18 common in our great city, leaders emerged. Involvement
19 of the community and our city council in a dialogue
20 ensured that all of the concerns, issues and impacts of
21 building the Southwest Parkway were addressed by NTTA
22 and TxDOT. Countless hours went into this project that
23 we are here tonight to support. There are too many
24 people to thank, but for the record I need to
25 acknowledge just a couple. Some are here and some are

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1 not. The late Charlie Hilton, who single-handedly
2 organized the business community and the city council
3 to try just one more time to build this road; Louise
4 Appleman, who chaired the first Citizens Advisory
5 Committee and served on the Project Development Team, I
6 know she's here tonight; Elaine Petrus, who is
7 currently chairing the Citizens Advisory Group and
8 whose countless hours of dedication are reflected in
9 the Southwest Parkway nature and character plan;
10 I-Care. I want to thank my fellow council members,
11 especially Chuck Silcox who never gave up, and Wendy
12 Davis who made us do the right thing to protect our
13 neighborhoods. Of course, I want to thank the NTTA
14 board, the former Chairman Dillard, as well as present
15 Chairman David Blair. I want to thank our
16 representative Bill Meadows. I want to thank Kay
17 Walls. I want to thank a friend of mine that I've
18 worked with for a number of years, Paul Wageman. I
19 want to thank their staff led by Jerry Hiebert. And,
20 also, I want to thank Maribel. She has put in some
21 long, tough hours on this project. Their willingness
22 to stay at the table, especially during some rough
23 times with our citizens groups, is to be commended.

24 On behalf of the city council, I want to
25 commend all of you for your continued efforts on behalf

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1 of the citizens who live in Fort Worth. And last but
2 not least, I want to thank someone who is not here
3 tonight, she's in Washington, and that's Congresswoman
4 Kay Granger, for engaging Federal Highway Administrator
5 Mary Peters in this project. The effort by these two
6 women is evidenced in the Final Environmental Impact
7 Statement that we are here supporting tonight.

8 Now, there are several things that I would
9 like to enter into the record this evening, and I would
10 ask the staff to provide these exhibits to the
11 reporter. The first is a resolution of support passed
12 by the city council on December 7th, 2004. The
13 resolution authorizes the mayor and city manager to
14 provide additional technical comments before December
15 31st. We will do that based on citizen comments
16 tonight and other comments received by our staff.
17 Also, the resolution supports and encourages NTTA to
18 look at alternative designs for the Montgomery Street
19 interchange and the Dirks Road/Altamesa Boulevard
20 interchange.

21 Second in the record, I want to call your
22 attention to the term sheet outlining the nature and
23 character of this road. The term sheet, also approved
24 by the city council on December 7th, will be
25 incorporated in an amendment to the current tri-party

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1 agreement. All three parties, the North Texas Tollway
2 Authority, the Texas Department of Transportation, and
3 the City of Fort Worth, will execute this agreement
4 before December 31st. This amendment and term sheet
5 are the foundation for further cooperative efforts by
6 the parties. It's a team effort to integrate the
7 principles of context sensitive design and solutions to
8 assure a coordinated design character for the Southwest
9 Parkway. The City and Citizens Advisory Group will
10 work through these issues as the project moves to
11 schematic design.

12 Again, many people in our community never
13 thought we would see the city's proposed enhancement
14 and mitigation elements incorporated into the final
15 design of the project. But you know what, it happened,
16 and it could not have happened without team work and a
17 willingness by all the partners to get the Southwest
18 Parkway not only built, but built the right way in our
19 city, and I want to thank you all. We are pledged to
20 completing this process with our partners and the
21 citizens of Fort Worth.

22 The last thing the City would like to enter
23 into the record is a copy of the Citizens Advisory
24 Group nature and character plan. This plan formed the
25 foundation for the negotiations with our partners and

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1 resulted in the term sheet that the parties have agreed
2 to execute. It was prepared by the Citizens Advisory
3 Group with the assistance of the City's architectural
4 and engineering consultants. I also want to thank
5 NTTA's staff and engineers who, along with TxDOT,
6 participated and provided guidance to the Citizens
7 Advisory Group.

8 In closing, ladies and gentlemen, I cannot
9 tell you how important this artery is to the city of
10 Fort Worth. Over 75 percent of the voters supported
11 the bonds which fund the dollars to buy right of way to
12 build arterial connections and fund the city's
13 enhancement program. 75 percent. We are already
14 buying right of way, and we're ready to buy more. We
15 hope to complete the right of way acquisition not in 30
16 months, but in 12 months. We're ready to complete the
17 corridor master plan and have NTTA start designing this
18 roadway, and we are ready to stand with our partners
19 and show the State of Texas what can be accomplished
20 when people work together with a common goal and a
21 common vision to do what I say so often, the right
22 thing for the right reason. We are excited about this
23 parkway. We are excited about addressing the future
24 transportation needs of this city, and we hope you
25 share that enthusiasm. God bless you and God bless our

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1 city.

2 MS. CHAVEZ: Thank you very much, Mayor.
3 Before we start the public comment, I would like to
4 recognize some of the elected officials that are
5 present here. The mayor has already recognized some of
6 the council members that are here. I'd also like to
7 recognize the mayor of the City of Burleson -- I think
8 he's still with us -- Mayor Shetter. Thank you for
9 being here. Also, the mayor of the City of Cleburne,
10 Mayor Reynolds, I believe, thank you for being here.
11 And also from our state offices -- I believe he's still
12 here, I thought I saw him earlier -- State
13 Representative Lon Burnam. Representative Burnam, are
14 you still here? Outside? Gone. Okay. Also from the
15 office of Senator Brimer, Walter Craig. Walter, are
16 you still here? Okay.

17 With that, I would like to go ahead and turn
18 it over to Charles, and he'll be calling on the various
19 folks that have signed up to speak. Thank you.

20 MR. CONRAD: I will first call upon the
21 individuals who have previously indicated a desire to
22 make a statement. Please come forward to the
23 microphone and give us your name and then your
24 statement. Please limit your statements to a maximum
25 of four minutes. To assist you, we have provided a

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1 timing device that will give you three minutes of green
2 time and one additional minute of yellow time. The red
3 light will indicate the four minutes have expired. We
4 want to give everyone who desires to make a statement
5 the opportunity to speak, so please be considerate of
6 your fellow citizens.

7 This time is for statements only. Statements
8 will be reviewed and responded to in the written
9 summary and analysis of this hearing. If you wish to
10 present more information, we will be glad to receive it
11 in writing through Friday, December 31st, 2004 to
12 become a part of the hearing record.

13 All statements will be considered -- all
14 written statements will be considered along with the
15 oral statements given tonight. In order to move the
16 hearing along, I will read two names at a time. This
17 will allow the second person to approach the speaker
18 stand and be prepared to immediately make a statement.

19 The first person who is registered to speak
20 is Joe Staley. Mr. Staley has asked to speak for two
21 different individuals.

22 MR. STALEY: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, my
23 name is Joe Staley -- Joe H. Staley, Jr. I'm an
24 attorney from Dallas, Texas, and even though I served
25 as general counsel for the Turnpike Authority for 35

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1 years, I'm not going to let any cats out of the bag
2 tonight. I'm just going to talk about two clients that
3 I'm representing at this time.

4 I want to thank the FHWA, NTTA and TxDOT for
5 hearing me this evening to represent my clients, Rall
6 Ranch and Fort Worth Country Day School. I appreciate
7 being able to address the environmental concerns as
8 they may apply to both of their tracts of land. In
9 several instances, the issues of concern for them
10 overlap, and to separate them would be repetitious.

11 The Fort Worth Country Day School property is
12 located just north of Interstate 20 with the
13 intersection at 183 east of Bryant-Irvin Boulevard.
14 Rall Ranch is located east of Harris Parkway with this
15 intersection at Dutch Branch Road. Both of my clients
16 would like initially to thank FHWA, TxDOT and NTTA for
17 its consideration of their written statements filed
18 with you concerning the preliminary Environmental
19 Impact Statement previously issued. They feel that
20 there are a number of their issues which have been
21 addressed. However, there is a -- it is their feeling
22 that there are significant matters at hand which affect
23 their properties which have not been addressed in the
24 Final Environmental Impact Statement which we are
25 addressing tonight.

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1 These entities have both had the most recent
2 Environmental Impact Statement analyzed, and their
3 respective reviews find that neither are addressed to
4 the extent that they feel they should be at this time
5 in the environmental process.

6 First I'd like to address the Rall Ranch
7 problems. The bottom line is that the report says
8 their wetlands, wildlife and jurisdictional water
9 concerns are premature and that they will be dealt with
10 at a subsequent stage of project design. This is
11 hardly a viable solution because it's one which is
12 already out of sync with the planning stage of the
13 implementation of development which are going on and
14 which affect the property. It is extremely difficult
15 for a developer to go forward with its design and
16 construction of facilities when FHWA, TxDOT and NTTA
17 have not rendered a final environmental plan which
18 applies to a significant amount of property and must be
19 considered in the development.

20 The bottom line is that the fundamental
21 fairness to the land owner dictates that the
22 environmental impacts on the subject property as well
23 as the effects on the habitat downstream be analyzed
24 sooner rather than later. Otherwise, both the
25 governmental entities and the developer could suffer

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1 significant environmental impact damages as well as
2 potential exorbitant costs to cure.

3 To put it bluntly, my client feels to
4 interject a mere statement that analysis is premature
5 and it will be dealt with at a subsequent date is
6 hardly a proper analysis or a viable solution. Rall
7 Properties would like very much to cooperate and create
8 a water network that is a compliant amenity and which
9 assists in the protection and maintenance of water
10 quality flowing downstream as well as preserving the
11 present wetland network. However, it is its feeling
12 that the unreasonable means that have been suggested in
13 the report for addressing the issues at hand force the
14 potential for achievement of this because of untimely
15 initiation of environmental planning. It is therefore
16 the request of Rall Properties that the specific
17 environmental concerns related to this act be addressed
18 specifically at this time. Rall Properties is anxious
19 to cooperate and to assist in coming forward with a
20 viable and mutually acceptable plan.

21 As to the Fort Worth Country Day School, it
22 has much the same problems with the FEIS as Rall
23 Properties in that it feels that the noise attenuation
24 factors that are applicable to its facilities have not
25 been adequately addressed for this stage of the

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1 environmental study. It applauds the fact that the
2 DEIS has been changed in its analysis of the school and
3 the surrounding residential neighborhood as NSE,
4 category B, which acknowledges frequent outdoor
5 activity and allows for an outside noise maximum of 67
6 decibels. However, the new Environmental Impact
7 Statement identifies four noise receivers at the
8 Country Day School, yet traffic noise levels are only
9 provided for two of those receivers, and even though
10 the FEIS states that the predicted noise increases
11 would be more than 10 decibels and that abatement
12 issues would be considered, yet those measures are not
13 addressed, even in a cursory manner, not
14 specifically -- and not specifically delineated.
15 There's also a problem in that one section of the FEIS
16 refers to four receivers at the school while another
17 section refers to the six receivers at the school and
18 provides no specific results from the six receivers.
19 In the new report as opposed to the preliminary EIS,
20 the analysis is holey of executed noise levels the
21 EIS -- in the EIS. This needs to be taken into account
22 and both inside and outside noise levels need to be
23 reviewed. Presently, this means for attenuation does
24 not appear proper. It doesn't meet the standards of
25 the acoustical performance criteria design requirements

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1 and guidelines for schools as it is required to do.

2 The report shows a sound wall barrier -- and
3 I'm sorry I'm running a little over, but I've got two
4 clients rather than one, so if you will give me a
5 little more time. The report shows a sound wall
6 barrier of 12 to 16 feet height from ground level, but
7 there is no present calculation provided as to the main
8 lane elevation of the new road of the height from the
9 pavement to the top of the wall. There is no
10 explanation as to why the wall is 1,000 feet long. It
11 does not match up with the school or its facilities and
12 may not be a sufficient length to achieve an acceptable
13 standard of noise attenuation. To say the FEIS is
14 vague in terms of its effect of the Country Day School
15 would be an understatement, and the disregard of the
16 noise retainers -- receivers only fans that flame.

17 As I stated previously, the school
18 appreciates the fact that it's been categorically
19 removed from E to B, however, it feels it should be
20 involved in the determination of noise attenuation to
21 its property with the State in order to ensure that the
22 school children who are in attendance are able to
23 properly learn. Even the State's own noise
24 projections, the decibel levels for learning appear to
25 be borderline. This a matter which can be addressed

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1 and hopefully an agreeable solution reached, however,
2 the endeavor to do so should be now, not after the
3 design and installation of an inadequate attendant
4 facility.

5 I appreciate most sincerely being heard
6 tonight. Also, my clients appreciate your attention.
7 Both will be filing reports with you. Thank you very
8 much.

9 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. The next two
10 names, first is Ted Reynolds, and number two on the
11 stand is Brian Rowe.

12 MR. REYNOLDS: Good evening. I'm Ted
13 Reynolds, the mayor of Cleburne. I have with me
14 tonight Councilman Daniel Griffith, our Deputy City
15 Manager Larry Barkman, and our Public Works Director
16 Russell Schreiber. I will keep my remarks very brief.

17 We are all delighted to be here to lend our
18 whole-hearted support for the entire 121 project. It
19 is absolutely essential to our city's continued growth
20 and for our economic vitality. And I'd like to take
21 this opportunity to thank TxDOT, the NTTA, the City of
22 Fort Worth and all the other governmental entities and
23 private individuals who have worked so hard on this
24 project. Thank you-all very much.

25 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. We have Brian

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1 Rowe. And then next up will be Ron King.

2 MR. ROWE: I would like to present a
3 summary -- a transcript of my comments for the record.
4 To whom should I give these? My name is Brian Rowe. I
5 have a bachelor of science in general biology, a master
6 of science in civil engineering with an environmental
7 emphasis, and approximately 20 years' experience in
8 environmental affairs, including environmental
9 assessments, the Corps of Engineers Section 404
10 wetlands permits and the floodplains.

11 My comments tonight have to do with the
12 following statement in the Final Environmental Impact
13 Statement. It states that the southern alignment of
14 the project will cross Blackland Prairie and it lists
15 the dominant plants as big bluestem, yellow Indian
16 grass, little bluestem, switchgrass, and grama grasses.
17 These are very typical of the western edge of the tall
18 grass prairies. And the Blackland Prairie can be
19 loosely defined as an area with tall native grasses,
20 with soils that are dark gray or black in color,
21 typically vertisols or mollisols or alfisols.

22 This particular area of Blackland Prairie is
23 within the geographic area known as the Fort Worth
24 Prairie. And I'm doing this as an individual, and I'm
25 sorry I don't have any Microstration or AutoCAD

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1 capabilities at home. I do have an exhibit some of you
2 might be able to see a little bit. This is simply a
3 Texas Parks and Wildlife Department map, and I'm
4 showing those of you in front -- thank you very much.
5 Those of you in the front half can probably see this.
6 The orange colored area here is the Fort Worth Prairie.
7 It's an area of approximately 1.8 million acres within
8 Montague, Cooke, Wise, Denton, Parker, Tarrant, Hood,
9 Johnson and Hill counties. Now, I've looked at the
10 North Central Texas Council of Governments' aerial
11 photographs which are available online. I have driven
12 extensively throughout this prairie, and I have
13 interviewed several people that are knowledgeable on
14 prairies to try to locate large prairie remnants. The
15 pins -- just ignore these other pins. Those are other
16 prairie remnants.

17 But prairie remnants, either virgin,
18 recovered or restored, over 1,000 acres in size I have
19 shown with four pins, and I'll begin with the north and
20 go to the south. The top one here is in Montague
21 County. It's the Meador Ranch. Bill Tom Meador and
22 his sister own that. It's approximately 2,000 acres,
23 never been plowed. The next one is the Lyndon Johnson
24 Grassland. It totals approximately 20,000 acres, of
25 which the largest contiguous area is 7,000 acres. The

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1 third one here is the -- what I'm going to call the
2 North Tarrant -- North Tarrant area. It is in the
3 northern part of the county just west of Highway 287.
4 It consists of three ranches, approximately 8,000 acres
5 of prairie total. One of the ranches is currently
6 under construction for residential development, so it
7 won't be prairie probably much longer. And then
8 finally we have this one down here. I'm calling it the
9 county corners area because it's in the corners of four
10 counties, Tarrant, Parker, Johnson and just a tiny,
11 tiny bit of Hood County. This is the area that our
12 project would cross, and it contains the largest
13 contiguous area of prairie in the entire Fort Worth
14 Prairie area. Let's see. It's threatened by urban
15 development with up to 10,975 acres of prairie on two
16 ranches currently slated for development. According to
17 the Fort Worth Reporter Telegram, one of them, the
18 Walsh Ranch development, quote, promises to be Fort
19 Worth's largest single development ever and would mark
20 the City's first movement into Parker County if annexed
21 as expected, and it would increase Fort Worth's
22 population by an estimated 45,000 people. That's this
23 one right here. It wraps around the west side of Fort
24 Worth and sort of -- and the tail end of it on the
25 southeastern side is east of Lake Benbrook where the

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1 southern part of the Southwest Parkway or Highway 121
2 is proposed. Thank you very much. I appreciate the
3 spontaneous volunteers to hold that up. Can you-all
4 hear me? Okay. I'm not very experienced with
5 microphones.

6 The right of way may contain one or more of
7 the following G1G2 habitat types. How much time do I
8 have left?

9 MR. CONRAD: It's red.

10 MR. ROWE: About one minute, two minutes?

11 MR. CONRAD: The four --

12 MR. ROWE: Four minutes?

13 MR. CONRAD: No, the four minutes is up.
14 It's red.

15 MR. ROWE: Okay. Anyway, there are three
16 habitat types that are listed as -- by the Texas Parks
17 and Wildlife Department as being either imperiled or
18 threatened globally, meaning there are -- and also in
19 the state, meaning that within the state there are no
20 more than six to twenty known occurrences.

21 It appears my time is up. If you want copies
22 of this, I have about six or eight copies here. I've
23 also submitted my transcript for the record and you'll
24 probably be able to read it in the record later on.
25 Thank you very much.

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1 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. I have Ron King,
2 and then next up will be Eva Bonilla.

3 MR. KING: Ron King, 7033 Lomo Alto. I
4 represent the Park Palisades Homeowners Association.
5 We do support what the mayor said about needing this
6 southwest tollway. We do live amongst all the traffic
7 that's at Hulen and Bryant-Irvin and know it's needed.
8 However, this needs to be built in a reasonable manner.
9 We've worked with TxDOT and with Fort Worth and with
10 the engineers, and to date, all of our recommendations
11 and all of our concerns have been ignored.

12 First of all, what buffer is going to be
13 placed between the highway and our neighborhood? TxDOT
14 just said we're going to put a berm there for you.
15 What they didn't say is that there's a 30-foot high
16 bridge right jammed up against our neighborhood. How
17 are you going to put a berm there against that? That's
18 30 feet. That's at the top of our houses there.

19 Second, the visual impact statement said
20 there's not a visual problem there. You're
21 neighborhood is 300 feet from this highway. How can
22 that be if the east right of way line is the same as
23 the west property line of our neighborhood? That is
24 zero feet. I don't even need a calculator for that.
25 That's zero feet from our neighborhood. It goes on to

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1 say, well, that's not a problem either because this
2 highway faces your backyard. I doubt there's a single
3 person in this -- in this room who has a single family
4 residence who doesn't make extensive use of their
5 backyards. That -- that argument is not good. And
6 finally, the visual impact statement says, well, even
7 if there is a visual problem, your neighborhood --
8 residential neighborhood fences will block that. How
9 can a six or eight-foot fence block a 30-foot high
10 bridge and highway embankment? That's completely --
11 completely absurd.

12 Finally, our comments concerning the size of
13 the median adjacent to our neighborhood was also
14 completely ignored. Our neighborhood has the widest
15 median of all of this whole project. We didn't ask for
16 it. I know our councilman didn't ask for it. What we
17 know is that the council did approve that. That's what
18 they wanted. This is not something that's a design
19 criteria. This is something to create a park in
20 between the main lanes. That's not acceptable. What
21 that does is jam this highway up against our
22 neighborhood.

23 We would like to ask again for several
24 things, and we've asked in a reasonable manner before
25 and we've been completely ignored, and we want to be

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1 heard. First of all, move the highway as far to the
2 west in this right of way as possible. Look at the
3 maps. There's plenty of room to do that. The response
4 from TxDOT is we're just not going to do it. No reason
5 given, we're just not going to do that. Second, narrow
6 the median to 25 feet. That is a reasonable median for
7 a state highway. If there's problems with crossover
8 traffic, put a median barrier in there. We're more
9 concerned about this being jammed up against our
10 neighborhood than we are about this being parkland in
11 between the main lanes. The purpose of a state highway
12 is to get traffic from point A to point B efficiently
13 and quickly, not to provide a parkland in a median.

14 Finally, we also want you to lower Dutch
15 Branch. We were told before by the engineer this is
16 possible, this is -- we can do this. Now, hey, we're
17 not going to do that. No reason why, we're just not
18 going to do that. That would lower the bridge and keep
19 it lower than the tops of our houses. But TxDOT says
20 no, we just cannot do that.

21 Finally, we think that you need to move the
22 intersection of Dirks and Altamesa and State Highway
23 121 to the south. You're proposing a huge bridge on
24 Altamesa over 121. This boxes our neighborhood in. It
25 deletes access to the properties that can develop north

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1 of Dirks and Altamesa, and it also just makes a higher
2 ramp off of 121 -- off of Altamesa onto 121. That
3 further creates no -- no -- no ability to provide these
4 berms for our neighborhood. Thank you.

5 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Eva Bonilla and
6 Margaret DeMoss.

7 MS. BONILLA: Hi. I'm Eva Bonilla, and I
8 am the president of the Fort Worth League of
9 Neighborhood Associations, and we also want a Fort
10 Worth road. The Fort Worth League of Neighborhood
11 Associations supports the construction of the 121 --
12 the Southwest Parkway only if there is alleviation of
13 adverse impacts on neighborhoods.

14 Over the last few years, leaders and the
15 members of the neighborhood associations have
16 participated on committees, attended public hearings
17 and given general input in regard to the development
18 and building of this road. We request that the Final
19 Environment Impact Study capture the long involved
20 public process in which we, the neighborhoods, have
21 poured so much time and energy.

22 The Fort Worth League of Neighborhood
23 Associations believes and suggests the following. This
24 road should respect all neighborhoods. The overall
25 design should positively enhance the aesthetics of this

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1 road and minimize the impact on existing neighborhoods.
2 Serious consideration should be given to the design
3 aspects such as noise pollution, light pollution,
4 minimize on and off ramps and frontage roads, accent
5 natural beauty and green space. We encourage
6 decorative physical enhancements and landscaping to
7 put -- to place less impact on neighborhoods and
8 improve roadside appearance. The Southwest 121 must be
9 built, and we realize that, to relieve traffic
10 congestion in Fort Worth. Traffic should be allowed to
11 flow at appropriate speeds and in an expedient manner.
12 We urge sensible and economic use of funds to build
13 this road.

14 We believe that the City of Fort Worth, the
15 Texas Department of Transportation and the North Texas
16 Tollway Authority have received and implemented quality
17 public input into the design of this road. We urge
18 continued citizen input through the Citizens Advisory
19 Group for both the design and the construction phases.
20 The impacts to our neighborhoods are numerous and
21 should be addressed in the Final Environment Impact
22 Study. Why were they not considered in this report?
23 Thank you.

24 MR. CONRAD: Margaret DeMoss and Charles
25 Blanton.

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1 MS. DeMOSS: I'm Margaret DeMoss and I
2 reside at 3451 Green Arbor Court, and I represent the
3 Overton Woods Homeowners Association. I commend the
4 officials involved in the preparation of the FEIS and
5 appreciate their attention to detail in responding to
6 many of the comments submitted regarding the DEIS.
7 However, we still continue to be concerned about
8 negative impacts on the values of existing residential
9 property, on our health, and on the natural
10 environment. We still want the road to be slower,
11 lower and greener.

12 Number one -- the first paragraph. To
13 mitigate the negative effects on the health of humans,
14 wildlife and vegetation, we would like, number one, to
15 protect the wildlife and their habitats, including any
16 waterfowl refuge, during construction and relocate
17 them, if necessary, outside the right of way. The
18 previous speaker addressed this, but the FEIS
19 conclusions on endangered and threatened species are
20 based on insufficient data. Number two, protect trees
21 located outside the right of way and, when possible,
22 where the median is wide enough, inside the median.
23 Number three, replace all trees removed within the
24 right of way and those damaged outside the right of way
25 with large hardwood specimens along the project.

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1 The FEIS states that 37 acres of trees might
2 be removed during construction. Those trees are
3 currently cleaning the air that we breathe. Just for
4 your information, those 37 acres of trees, according to
5 the U.S. Forest Service, are providing enough oxygen
6 every day for 666 people. Those 36 acres of trees
7 absorb enough carbon dioxide in a year to equal that
8 produced from driving a car nearly one million miles.
9 They remove 96 tons of carbon each year and on and on.
10 We need those trees replaced.

11 Number four, limit the speed limit to 50
12 miles an hour, which would reduce air and noise
13 pollution. Number five, prohibit truck -- prohibiting
14 truck traffic along SH 121 could also reduce air and
15 noise pollution.

16 In order to mitigate for the effects of
17 noise, light, and visual pollution which can reduce
18 health, quality of life and our property values, number
19 one, we would like to see installation of additional
20 landscaping along the road and at intersections; number
21 two, that the design of bridges, walls and railings be
22 context sensitive respecting the residential and wooded
23 nature of the section of the road; number three, we
24 would like to see a justification in the next report
25 for the toll booths at Arborlawn that are required and

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1 to design this with the lowest profile possible with no
2 additional height added as an architectural feature;
3 number four, install low mass cutoff lighting along the
4 road where it is required, especially at the Arborlawn
5 interchange, to mitigate for light intrusion into the
6 anticipated residential development adjacent to the
7 road; number five, keep the main lanes as low as
8 possible, preferably depressed, south of the river to
9 I 20; and number six, acquire and clear a right of way
10 to accommodate no more than two lanes each way as
11 deemed adequate in the traffic analysis.

12 Subsequent speakers are going to address
13 three other issues that we think need to be continued
14 to be monitored and additional studies need to be made
15 on. Those are, number one, lighting, number two, air
16 quality, and number three, the secondary and cumulative
17 negative effects of induced traffic and development.
18 Thank you.

19 MR. CONRAD: Charles Blanton and Joe
20 Monteleone.

21 MR. BLANTON: Good evening. My name is
22 Charles Blanton, and I'm the president-elect of the
23 Overton Woods Homeowners Association. We've been
24 involved in this process since its inception, and I'm
25 going to supplement my oral comments with a written

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1 statement pursuant to the deadline.

2 I do want to thank TxDOT and the other
3 members of the group for allowing public comment on the
4 FEIS, and I want to be clear that while we support the
5 need for this road, we want to mitigate its
6 environmental impact on our neighborhood. The FEIS
7 does not sufficiently address the highway's impact on
8 Overton Woods. The SH 121 corridor abuts our
9 neighborhood over a significant distance. As a result
10 of this proximity, SH 121 will have a greater impact on
11 us not only resulting from traffic on the road itself,
12 but also from secondary and cumulative effects of the
13 induced land use changes. Since SH 121 itself is built
14 in an undeveloped area, the FEIS largely ignores these
15 effects. We believe this to be an incorrect treatment.

16 The cumulative and secondary effects on our
17 neighborhood include but are not limited to increased
18 noise, light pollution and vehicle exhaust pollution.
19 These impacts must be mitigated by the use of noise
20 barriers and buffers along the eastern side of SH 121
21 between the Trinity River and IH 20. Low mass lighting
22 should be used in this same area to mitigate the light
23 pollution caused by SH 121. Traffic control devices
24 need to be implemented in our neighborhood to mitigate
25 the cumulative and secondary effects of increased

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1 traffic flows caused by the induced development along
2 SH 121.

3 The FEIS disregards induced land uses by
4 concluding that the land would develop anyway. The
5 facts about this area's zoning will rely on this
6 conclusion since it was substantially zoned single
7 family prior to SH 121 discussions. All the areas
8 between the proposed SH 121 and Bryant-Irvin road have
9 been recently rezoned as commercial, including the
10 existing private school property. The statement in the
11 FEIS concerning future development is also not
12 internally consistent within itself as the FEIS
13 predicts increased employment, increased tax revenues
14 of over a billion dollars, and an economic impact of
15 over 25 million as a result of the toll road.

16 The City of Fort Worth also contradicts this
17 theory of no induced land use. In order to pay for
18 their share of the roadway, they agreed to a special
19 tax area to produce a growth of some \$800 million in
20 valuation in that area that's vacant right now, and the
21 City of Fort Worth has designated these increased tax
22 revenues to pay for SH 121.

23 If you look at the road maps of this area, it
24 will show you that most of those cars -- a lot of the
25 cars that are coming from the east to this new engine

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1 that's going to pay for this whole road for Fort Worth,
2 they are going to come -- a lot of them are going to
3 come right through our neighborhood, and this hasn't
4 been addressed. After all, you know, a developer is
5 going to build different things next to a neighborhood
6 road than they will next to a toll road.

7 The secondary and cumulative effects of
8 increased traffic caused by the building of SH 121 must
9 be mitigated in the Overton Woods neighborhood. Thank
10 you.

11 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Joe Monteleone
12 and Wendy Davis.

13 MR. MONTELEONE: I am Joe Monteleone,
14 3305 Moss Hollow, Fort Worth. I represent the Overton
15 Woods Homeowners Association. We appreciate the
16 extended public process afforded by you, NTTA and the
17 City. Our association has and will continue working
18 with you to build our parkway while mitigating the
19 environmental impacts implicit in such a massive
20 project. To evaluate the parkway's impacts on us, we
21 have participated in all public process agencies,
22 attended many meetings, prepared an analysis, and
23 expressed our support as well as concerns.

24 We endorse all of the general environmental
25 concerns, but more importantly, we've asked, how will

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1 the parkway affect our health and that of the
2 generations to follow? We hired Blackburn Carter law
3 firm to answer our questions and are represented by
4 James B. Blackburn, Jr.

5 Blackburn Carter is a firm of attorneys and
6 engineers specializing in environmental law and
7 impacts, particularly air pollution. We asked them to
8 evaluate the DEIS for the potential impacts on us and
9 the community at large. Mr. Blackburn submitted his
10 findings and comments to TxDOT on our behalf. In
11 summary, he stated, one, the DEIS does not include an
12 analysis of particulate matter air pollution; two, the
13 DEIS does not analyze health effects associated with
14 the exposure from highways; and three, the DEIS does
15 not discuss health effects of diesel carcinogens.

16 The significance of these comments is that
17 particulate matter air pollution is one of the most
18 important pollutants from a health effects standpoint.
19 The concern is about the effects of small particles
20 that can go deep into the lungs. Mr. Blackburn also
21 points out that an environmental document is supposed
22 to inform the public about any important issues so they
23 can be considered in the decision-making process and
24 that there may be ways to address -- address these
25 problems if they are brought to the attention of those

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1 in charge. However, if the document is silent or if a
2 finding of no significant impact is made, then the
3 decision-maker would be justified in thinking that
4 there are no major problems.

5 We believe and we submitted that the DEIS was
6 deficient in this and other regards. Mr. Blackburn's
7 comments and a purported response are included in the
8 FEIS. Based on his advice and opinion, it is our
9 position that the FEIS does not adequately address our
10 comments on the DEIS. Mr. Blackburn has analyzed the
11 FEIS and concludes that rather than attempting an
12 analysis of the particulate matter and air toxic
13 impacts, the FEIS ducks the issue and concludes the
14 impacts were unable to be calculated at the project
15 level and are a regional problem beyond the scope of
16 the FEIS. Mr. Blackburn will submit written comments
17 by December 31 and address these and other impacts.

18 We entered into an agreement with the City of
19 Fort Worth about the parkway's configuration in our
20 area. Those terms were included in the City's
21 Resolution 2923. We were again assured by the City on
22 December 7th, last week, that our configuration and
23 agreed-upon terms would, in fact, be included. We
24 expect the agreed-on terms to be included in the final
25 design and that all environmental impacts will be

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1 measured based on them either in the FEIS, ROD or other
2 controlling document. We will use all means legally
3 available to us to assure that our comments are
4 adequately addressed. Thank you.

5 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Wendy Davis and
6 Jon Nelson.

7 MS. DAVIS: My name is Wendy Davis. I'm
8 on the Fort Worth City Council, and I represent
9 District 9. I'd like to make a few comments going back
10 in time a bit to the citizen input process that we've
11 had on this roadway.

12 As a member of the city council, I've had an
13 opportunity to be a part of a resolution in favor of
14 this road system. I've also had an opportunity as the
15 Vice Chair of the Regional Transportation Council to
16 voice my support for this roadway. Having said that,
17 though, is not to say that it has yet answered all of
18 the citizen concerns that have been voiced. Those
19 concerns began with Louise Appleman's committee, the
20 Citizen Advisory Committee, in 1998, and I was one of
21 the citizens on that committee prior to my election to
22 the council. Because of the work of that committee, a
23 ground swell of public activity occurred which resulted
24 in the City hiring outside experts to come in and
25 advise us with regard to the design of this roadway,

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1 and as we know, that resulted in the creation of a
2 Project Development Team, which, of course, included
3 representatives from TxDOT, from NTTA and from the City
4 of Fort Worth as well as a number of interested
5 citizens and other stake holders. The result of that
6 Project Development Team's work cannot be overstated,
7 and I want to make sure that we include in the record
8 an acknowledgment of what that resulted in.

9 Number one and probably most significant was
10 a redesign of the Forest Park interchange, a
11 significant redesign from that design which was
12 originally proposed; number two, a depression of the
13 roadway in areas near neighborhoods and particularly
14 near the Fort Worth Country Day School campus; number
15 three, a change of the location of exit and entrance
16 ramps, and, of course, as the Overton Woods
17 neighborhood acknowledged, an agreement by the City to
18 change a particular intersection which would have been
19 harmful to them. There, of course, was also an
20 enhanced design, increased landscape buffer areas, and
21 enhanced landscape to protect many of our neighborhoods
22 from the impacts of this roadway, and, of course, most
23 recently through the work of Bill Meadows, who is our
24 appointee to the NTTA board, a change in the design
25 speed of the roadway, which will, of course, further

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1 enable our ability to create those enhancements.

2 The work of that Project Development Team, of
3 course, has been carried forward by the Citizens
4 Advisory Group, and Elaine Petrus has ably chaired that
5 group and helped our neighborhoods remain a part of the
6 process to assure that their concerns are being
7 reflected as we go forward. I think that we all have a
8 great deal to be thankful for in terms of where we are
9 today compared to where we began, but I do represent
10 three neighborhoods in particular that I feel have not
11 had their concerns adequately addressed. Those
12 neighborhoods are the neighborhoods of Mistletoe
13 Heights, Sunset Terrace, and Alamo Heights.

14 Beginning with Alamo Heights, Alamo Heights
15 is a neighborhood which is just to the north of where
16 the toll road goes through along the Vickery Road
17 alignment. Proposed near that neighborhood is a very
18 large toll plaza with a number of toll lanes and a
19 maintenance facility, and I feel that the Environmental
20 Impact Statement has failed to adequately recognize the
21 cumulative impacts of both that maintenance facility
22 and the toll plaza in terms of the noise, the vehicle
23 exhaust, and the light pollution that will occur in
24 that neighborhood area. I believe that mitigation of
25 those negative impacts needs to occur, particularly

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1 through a decorative masonry wall. I know at this
2 point in our term sheet we have included landscaping
3 enhancements to separate that neighborhood from the
4 toll road, but I do not feel that that's adequate to
5 resolve the cumulative impacts.

6 The Sunset Terrace and Mistletoe Heights
7 neighborhoods are very similar in that both are
8 historically designated neighborhoods, and, of course,
9 have the protection of the federal and state laws under
10 4-F review in the federal system and other protections
11 under the state system. In both of those, I feel that
12 the Final Environmental Impact Statement has not
13 adequately measured the cumulative impacts of noise,
14 light and vehicle exhaust pollution to those
15 neighborhoods. I know and, of course, recognize as
16 part of the city council that in our term sheet we have
17 recognized some mitigation for the Sunset Terrace
18 neighborhood that recognizes our concerns about those
19 impacts, but I do not feel that the Environmental
20 Impact Statement document adequately addresses it as it
21 should.

22 With Mistletoe Heights, we have not even in
23 the term sheet been able to assure what I believe is a
24 necessary protection of that neighborhood. It doesn't
25 go far enough. Again, landscape buffers protect the

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1 neighborhood, but we do not have any kind of intention
2 expressed in that term sheet for a masonry wall to
3 protect the neighborhood from the noise and the
4 pollution effects that are occurring from the
5 cumulative impacts of being so close to 121, to the
6 Rosedale and Vickery exit areas that currently exist,
7 to I 30, which currently exists, and the frontage roads
8 that exist in that area.

9 I would ask that the cumulative impacts to
10 these two historic neighborhoods of all of those road
11 systems be recognized and that mitigation be provided
12 in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. Thank
13 you.

14 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Jon Nelson and
15 James Toal.

16 MR. NELSON: My name is Jon Nelson, and
17 I'm chairman of I-Care. You know, historically, the
18 only question with regard to highways was how fast can
19 we build them. The result was many times, it was
20 little, if any, public participation, and that
21 participation was perfunctory at best, and the result
22 of that was urban blight and a permanent damage to the
23 quality of our lives. I recognize that times are
24 changing. We now realize that highways are not just
25 concrete. What they represent is a quality of life

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1 issue both for those who use the road and those that
2 live nearby. And so the question of mitigation becomes
3 primary. It's not just pouring concrete anymore. It's
4 how to mitigate the impacts of every highway in every
5 state that has ever been built and that ever will be
6 built, because the fact of the matter is that simply
7 because of the size and location of a highway, there is
8 going to be a potential negative impact. It's
9 inescapable. And the primary purpose of those involved
10 in this highway, in this parkway, ought to be
11 mitigation. It's our job, it's your job, it's the
12 public's job to make sure that what is built and what
13 is designed has as least impact as possible.

14 We have lived too long in this city to see
15 something built which will be negatively impacting
16 generations to come, because once the road is built,
17 there is no turning back. You can't undo something
18 that's been done. And so in this particular project,
19 there are potentials that must be met. For instance, I
20 think this document fails to take into consideration of
21 the history of this project, the history of the
22 communication between all involved, the history that
23 says we want something built that's meaningful and that
24 allows us to live our lives in as much peace and quiet
25 as we can. This document fails to take into

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1 consideration the community enhancements that have gone
2 on specifically in this document. The document fails
3 to take into consideration the wetlands issues, which
4 have been discussed in detail. It fails to take into
5 consideration that there are two neighborhoods that
6 have just been discussed that are eligible for historic
7 significance and the 4-F implications of that and the
8 terms of potential constructive use because of the
9 impact of the noise and lighting. And lastly, it fails
10 to take into consideration Alamo Heights and the real
11 impact of this parkway to that neighborhood.

12 You know, you have a choice. You can build
13 something that would create a permanent blight on this
14 city or you can build something that will be a monument
15 to the collective wisdom of the human beings that sit
16 in this audience and live in this city, a monument that
17 says we want something that is environmentally
18 sensitive and takes care of our needs. And so in final
19 analysis, that's a decision that you have to make.

20 Having said that, in all of the years that
21 I've been dealing with issues of public transportation,
22 you have been the most sensitive one I have ever seen,
23 and so I have faith that you and your cohorts will, in
24 fact, do the right thing. Thank you.

25 MR. CONRAD: James Toal and Jerre Tracy.

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1 MR. TOAL: Thank you very much. I'm
2 James Toal. I'm representing the Tarrant Regional
3 Water District tonight.

4 As most of you know, the river has become
5 very popular in Fort Worth as to a very attractive
6 greenbelt used by thousands of citizens. We would like
7 to thank the Highway Department, the City and the
8 Tollway Authority for working with us, allocating \$4
9 million from this budget to help with partial
10 mitigation of impacts on the river. That money will be
11 used by the Water District to redevelop the trail
12 system under the bridges, extend the trail system to
13 neighborhoods in the corridor. It will also be used to
14 construct new trail heads under the University Drive
15 area and the Stonegate Boulevard area, and it will
16 provide a much needed pedestrian access to
17 neighborhoods near the zoo -- the so-called zoo bridge.

18 However, we have reviewed the Final
19 Environmental Impact Statement and we do find some
20 issues that we have concerns with, and we would like to
21 go over those with you tonight. And we will be
22 submitting these in writing prior to the deadline. We
23 think it's very important that all bridge structures
24 over the river preserve the view of the river by having
25 some open bridge railing design so that we do not

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1 obstruct the view of the greenbelt from the new highway
2 or new parkway. We would like to do everything
3 possible to keep maximum light and air above the
4 bridges to the ground in the trail greenbelt area, for
5 example, by splitting the bridge structures between
6 directional lanes to provide maximum air and light from
7 the so-called median area.

8 We also would like for you to maintain a
9 clear span of the river so we don't have columns going
10 down into the water or into the slopes of the river
11 itself. We'd like for you to include a design
12 professional as designated by the Water District to
13 work with your design team on the design of these
14 bridge structures so that we can be assured that they
15 adhere to each design request.

16 Under the bridges, we would like for you to
17 incorporate color, public art or other elements that
18 mitigate a dark, enclosed feeling for all the people
19 using the trail. In the case of bridges near
20 University Drive, it's probably going to be necessary
21 to include this lighting underneath I 30 and under the
22 Rosedale/Vickery bridge as well because that has become
23 quite a span of multiple bridges.

24 We need for you to look with special care
25 about landscaping around the bridges across the river

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1 and select plants that are suitable for the light
2 that's left under and near the bridges. Please be
3 careful to stabilize the bank areas underneath the
4 crossings so that we don't have erosion and select
5 materials that are compatible with the aesthetics and
6 natural conditions of the river.

7 And then once you're finished with the
8 project, please include parking areas under the bridges
9 near University Drive and Stonegate Boulevard so that
10 we can enhance the use of the trail heads at those
11 locations. And finally, during construction of the
12 parkway itself, please make sure that all the people
13 using the trail have safe detours to continue the
14 greenbelt so that the greenbelt trail system stays in
15 use all the time during construction.

16 The Water District looks forward to working
17 with you on this project. As you know, we'll be
18 cooperating -- they will be cooperating with right of
19 way, particularly at your request. Thank you very
20 much. We will submit our -- our comments in writing.
21 Thank you.

22 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Jerre Tracy and
23 Ken Shetter.

24 MR. TRACY: Good evening. I am Jerre
25 Tracy, Executive Director of Historic Fort Worth, Inc.,

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1 1110 Penn Street, Fort Worth, Texas. Historic Fort
2 Worth is a 501(c)(3) charitable membership organization
3 that is dedicated to preserving Fort Worth's unique
4 historic identity through education and leadership. We
5 applaud the City of Fort Worth and especially our mayor
6 for including so many citizens in the process to
7 mitigate adverse impacts to the historic sections
8 adjacent to SH 121T, and we encourage the City to
9 continue with citizen input through the Citizens
10 Advisory Group and others.

11 After reading the Final Environmental Impact
12 Statement's evaluation of the potential impact on
13 SH 121 on historic resources, our organization would
14 like to make the following comments.

15 One, it appears that the evaluation of
16 historic resources within the area of potential effect
17 was based on data that is nearly 20 years old. As a
18 result, there may be other properties that could be
19 listed on the national register. We would like some
20 assurance that all properties eligible for listing on
21 the national register are included in the Final
22 Environmental Impact Statement. Two, based on its
23 proximity to State Highway 121, we remain concerned
24 about the amount of consideration given to the proper
25 mitigation to avoid adverse effect on the Sunset

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1 Terrace neighborhood and would like some assurance of
2 additional work towards this mitigation. Three, two of
3 the alternatives, B and D, have been determined to have
4 potential adverse effects on the national register
5 eligible properties. Specifically cited are the Holly
6 Water Treatment Plant, the Lancaster bridge and the
7 Mistletoe Heights Historic District. Those impacts
8 would lead to Section 4-F evaluation. Again, we remain
9 concerned that this evaluation is based on
10 documentation that is nearly 20 years old and that
11 other national register eligible resources may exist.
12 Four, should Section 4-F evaluation occur on any
13 historic resource, Historic Fort Worth respectfully
14 requests to be included in the mitigation process.
15 Five, we agree that the Texas Historical Commission's
16 finding of no adverse effect on alternative routes
17 other than B and D is contingent on TxDOT's
18 consideration of minimizing or avoiding increases in
19 traffic, noise and light pollution in historic areas.

20 Thank you so much for the opportunity to
21 speak tonight.

22 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Ken Shetter and
23 James Dennis.

24 MR. SHETTER: Mr. Conrad, Ms. Chavez, my
25 name is Ken Shetter, and I'm the mayor of Burleson.

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1 I'm here on behalf of the Burleson City Council and the
2 citizens of Burleson. In attendance with me tonight
3 are Council Member Matt Powell, our City Manager, Bill
4 Davidson, and our Deputy City Manager, Curtis Hock.

5 I first want to thank TxDOT and the NTTA, the
6 City of Fort Worth and the citizens of Fort Worth for
7 all of the hard work that they have put into this
8 project. I also want to let you know that the citizens
9 of Burleson and the citizens of Johnson County have
10 also been committed to the project and have put in a
11 considerable amount of work as well. In Burleson, we,
12 in fact, went as far as to annex the 121 corridor that
13 runs -- that ran through our -- what was our ETJ in
14 order to protect and ensure the appropriate development
15 of this important transportation corridor.

16 I'm here tonight again to thank you and to
17 lend support to the project, and I have for the record
18 a resolution that was passed this past Thursday by
19 unanimous vote of the Burleson City Council. It reads
20 in part, the City of Burleson supports and endorses
21 this State Highway 121 project, IH 30 to FM 1187, and
22 the locally preferred alternative with the nature and
23 character elements recommended by the Fort Worth
24 Citizens Advisory Group, and the City of Burleson urges
25 the project partners to proceed expeditiously with the

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1 development of SH 121. Thank you.

2 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. James Dennis and
3 Cassie Hicks.

4 MR. DENNIS: A long time ago, the City --
5 I'm James Dennis, and I just represent myself in the
6 south part of town -- southwest. A long time ago, Fort
7 Worth had a plan back in the 1950's to improve the
8 access to the downtown area to kind of circle around
9 town, a wider circle that is now Loop 820, and they
10 started and got going pretty good. There were going to
11 be four ways, north, south, east, and west and angles
12 off to the side, Airport Freeway and 287 to the
13 southwest, and they built them. It came along pretty
14 well in the early 1960's, and they built a good part of
15 820 on the east side of Fort Worth. Then they went to
16 sleep. They had a hard time coming on around. They
17 had to wait about five years to build a bridge over
18 Lake Worth. They had to hassle with a lot of people to
19 build the 820 going west and bring this around.

20 This loop also included Jacksboro Highway,
21 which I was interested in when I moved here 30 years
22 ago and had been for years before, and the southwest
23 loop, which is Southwest Boulevard, we're talking now.
24 The original plan was to leave off I 30 at Montgomery
25 Street and go southwest. That would have interfered

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1 with the rodeo and athletic fields district, and so it
2 came to a halt then. The Star Telegram ran editorials
3 against the southwest loop or Southwest Boulevard. The
4 chamber of commerce didn't do anything. It all sort of
5 died. The highway department had a plan, and it is
6 sad. The highway department builds roads where people
7 request. The City of Fort Worth had requested this
8 route, the highway department did preliminary planning,
9 and then the City goes to sleep. Fort Worth was built
10 for transportation. We're a suburb to Dallas. We
11 build our roads where everybody can go to Dallas and
12 work in the morning. They can come back from Dallas in
13 the evening. We can go to Dallas for the activities,
14 and we neglect ourselves.

15 Fort Worth, to grow, has to be to the
16 southwest and to the northwest. Fortunately, some
17 Dallas people came in and are building up in the
18 Alliance area. We need to take care of ourselves and
19 we need to build this loop. Every progress -- bit of
20 progress that you make in the city, some people are
21 going to be discomfoted. It seems like the main ones
22 discomfoted by this particular project is an area
23 between University and Hemphill Street from about TCU
24 up to I 30. They've done most of the complaining. But
25 we need to get on with the street and think of the

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1 pollution and lessening it out in the south area out in
2 Bryant-Irvin and I 30, out in Granbury Road, Hulen.
3 All that area out there, they've got pollution
4 problems, too, and they need to get some help here. We
5 need to get the road built, and hopefully they can get
6 it built by 2008 like they say. Thank you.

7 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Cassie Hicks and
8 Greg Hughes.

9 MS. HICKS: I'm not nearly as eloquent as
10 Wendy Davis or Jon, but I'll give it a shot. I'm
11 Cassie Hicks, president of the Alamo Heights
12 Neighborhood Association, and we need a wall. The
13 Alamo Heights neighborhood represents 1,345 households,
14 and according to the U.S. Census averages, this is over
15 4,700 individuals. This is 4,700 men, women and
16 children who live between the constant noise and
17 congestion of I 30 and the West Vickery junkyard to the
18 traffic and light pollution of the Central Market
19 complex on Hulen to Montgomery Street. We are a
20 neighborhood under siege. The FEIS does not
21 sufficiently address the highway's impacts on the Alamo
22 Heights neighborhood. As mitigation for these impacts,
23 the Record of Decision should include commitments to
24 provide a decorative screen wall complete with
25 extensive landscaping for the entire toll plaza complex

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1 from Montgomery to Hulen Street.

2 As recently as October of '04, NTTA made
3 known its desire for a maintenance facility in this
4 area. It's now rumor that they want to build a public
5 storefront at this location to sell their toll tags.
6 We feel that not nearly enough information has been
7 shared by this facility to allow us to evaluate it or
8 interpret impacts on this area. We need a wall.

9 We need to see more specifics in the design
10 plans which are buying off on the project. It's not
11 enough to expect us to trust the agencies and see how
12 things unfold. We got burned on that when I 30 was
13 redone. On the issue of trust, the ROD should commit
14 TxDOT and the NTTA to work with the City and citizens
15 group in developing the final design for the project.
16 We believe that there are enough issues and the concern
17 with enforcement is strong enough that these issues
18 ought to be addressed in a separate detailed and
19 binding agreement between TxDOT, NTTA, and the City of
20 Fort Worth. We still need a wall.

21 Alamo Heights is a hard-working, blue collar,
22 multi-ethnic neighborhood. We do not have a historic
23 designation or a federal F-4 protection. We need our
24 city to be our advocate. We're not asking for access
25 to the toll plaza, even though you don't have that.

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1 We're not asking for access to walking trails or a
2 trail head, even though millions will be spent for
3 other neighborhoods to have that access. We need a
4 wall to mitigate light, sound, and sight pollution.

5 From the focus group on sustaining the
6 neighborhoods presented by the City planning department
7 in October of 2004, sustainable neighborhoods retain
8 their value over time while protecting the environment
9 and enriching the lives of their inhabitants,
10 development that meets the needs of the present without
11 compromising the ability of future generations to meet
12 their own needs.

13 From the City's 2004 comprehensive plan land
14 use, to encourage compatible infield development to
15 preserve and protect residential neighborhoods, promote
16 neighborhoods to building through comprehensive and
17 coordinated infrastructure. We need our city to cowboy
18 up, put feet to the words that's written and to make
19 sure that the very thing that makes Fort Worth one of
20 the most livable cities is protected. And we need a
21 wall. Thank you.

22 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Greg Hughes and
23 then Robert Bass.

24 MR. HUGHES: Good evening. My name is
25 Greg Hughes. I live on Stadium Drive here in Fort

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1 Worth. I went through the Draft Environmental
2 Statement pretty closely and submitted comments on it.
3 I've also gone through the current proposed Final
4 Environmental Impact Statement, and it's interesting
5 how different the documents are.

6 The traffic data presented in the Final EIS
7 was collected and analyzed years before the draft was
8 written, yet none of it was presented for comment until
9 the EIS presented now. So what that means is that the
10 public was not given the right to examine and comment
11 on the traffic projections. So those are very
12 significant in terms of their analysis.

13 None of the wetland areas have been
14 documented or analyzed in the EIS, although I think
15 they have been there during that time, and the public
16 has had no opportunity during this comment period to
17 look at anything in the EIS that described that. So
18 due to the poor overall quality of the EIS, which was
19 also commented on by several other people who looked at
20 it -- and their comments were in the final -- I don't
21 believe this really could count as the final draft.
22 What we really need is -- it shouldn't be a final. We
23 need a draft that really represents what's going into
24 the final, and that's how people are able to comment on
25 it.

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1 Separately, the Final EIS does not address
2 the total project. It continues segmentation.
3 Segmentation is where you break the project up into
4 several pieces, analyze it separately, and you never
5 analyze the whole. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals
6 made it very clear in 1985 that that practice is not
7 proper, and we are under the area of the Fifth Circuit
8 Court of Appeals. So what it means when you break the
9 project up -- and the break-up of it is the Johnson
10 County portion. It's not mentioned anywhere in here
11 except a little hand wave when you say, well, it's
12 different because it's not funded the same. That's not
13 what the environmental impact is about. It's what is
14 the totality of the project, what does it do, and
15 that's why the Court held you have to analyze it
16 together. What it means is since this final ignored
17 the comments that went into the draft about the same
18 subject is that the cumulative impacts are not being
19 evaluated, and that means that this particular document
20 is going to be wide open to any kind of adverse court
21 ruling. So it just kind of means there's a lawsuit
22 waiting to happen.

23 The Environmental Impact Statement predicts
24 explosive growth due to the project, yet predicts an
25 air quality improvement. This conclusion is not based

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1 on any documented analysis and, in fact, flies in the
2 face of common sense. There are no employment centers
3 associated with this project or planned south of I 20.
4 There is a lot of growth. It's all residential. All
5 of those people will commute to jobs downtown, in the
6 Alliance corridor, Arlington, wherever it is they're
7 going to go, but they are not going to be commuting
8 short distances right in their own area. That will
9 represent and create a net increase in nitrous oxides,
10 et cetera, and that was not addressed.

11 The cost effectiveness of the project wasn't
12 covered either, and that's not normal for an
13 environmental impact anyway, but we have zero sum gain
14 going here. We only have a certain amount of money
15 available to do improvements in transportation. We
16 have some areas in Tarrant County that are crying out
17 for congestion mitigation. TxDOT will spend \$300
18 million to build two interchanges for this project.
19 \$300 million, I think, might rebuild the entire I 35
20 corridor where we have two lanes in each direction, we
21 have multiple head-on accidents because we have too
22 narrow a median, and the traffic is jammed constantly.
23 We have other places to spend \$300 million besides
24 this. But we will relieve a little traffic.

25 When you look at the traffic counts in this

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1 document and you really analyze them and do some
2 percentage looks, you see that Hulen south of I 30, the
3 traffic will be reduced by six percent. Bryant-Irvin
4 south of I 20 will be reduced by 11 percent. This road
5 does not strip all the traffic off those streets. It
6 removes a small portion. Oakmont, though, Oakmont will
7 see a 45 percent increase in traffic, and you will see
8 its level of service go from what it is now, wide open,
9 to E, which is considered unacceptable.

10 Interstate 30 where this road terminates at
11 the north end will already, without this road, be at an
12 unacceptable level of service, and this is according to
13 the TxDOT document, by the way. When you add in the
14 Highway 121 traffic, it becomes a complete gridlock.
15 So what this means is that this highway will encourage
16 and speed people straight into a traffic jam, but they
17 will get too it more quickly. I will submit written
18 documentation as well. Thank you for the opportunity.

19 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Robert Bass and
20 Michelle Key.

21 MR. BASS: I'm Robert Bass. I'm the
22 developer of Rall Ranch, L.P., which is the owner of a
23 substantial portion of the right of way between Oakmont
24 and Dirks Road. As a former highway commissioner, I
25 commend the TxDOT and the leadership of District

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1 Engineer Maribel Chavez with working and collaborating
2 with Fort Worth to design a more suitable road
3 consistent with the PE -- PDT recommendations adopted
4 as policy by the City of Fort Worth. My comment -- I
5 have comments on Rall Ranch specifically and the
6 project in general.

7 I have hired consultants to look carefully at
8 the Rall Ranch site, and they have characterized an
9 important functioning wetland, water quality and
10 wildlife habitat resources. It's essential to deal
11 with the runoff from growing developments around the
12 area, and it is important to protect the water quality
13 downstream, which includes the city park and the Clear
14 Fork of the Trinity River, which is already listed as
15 an impaired waterway. TxDOT planning so far has
16 ignored this resource and the highway as proposed will
17 take wetland area and add contaminated runoff without
18 making any commensurate contribution to the quality and
19 function of wetlands on the Rall Ranch. The DEIS does
20 not acknowledge this resource or attempt to protect,
21 enhance or use it at the design level, and the FEIS
22 makes the same mistake. It is not significantly
23 modified in the response to my detailed comments that I
24 submitted for the DEIS. I am concerned that this
25 omission is not unique. No other segment gets any more

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1 thorough treatment in the FEIS, including the Trinity
2 River crossings.

3 Accordingly, Rall Ranch offers a window into
4 a global deficiency of the FEIS. If the agency
5 involved in this project were serious about contact
6 sensitive design as they proclaim in the FEIS, this is
7 an obvious spot to practice with they preach. In
8 building a road through a functioning wetland network,
9 the design should minimize impacts to the network as
10 much as possible, preserve and enhance the remaining
11 wetland network, and at swells, restore remaining
12 wetlands adjacent to the road, et cetera, and work
13 to -- work the remaining wetlands into a landscaping
14 plan for the roadway as well as adding appropriate
15 upland plantings.

16 There is a right way to do this, and it's not
17 all that tough. It is not addressed in the FEIS. I
18 believe these issues can still be addressed in the
19 Record of Decision and the Interlocal Agreement
20 Amendment between TxDOT, the City and NTTA, and they
21 must be in order to enable Rall Ranch Properties to be
22 comfortable with and supportive of the project.

23 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Michelle Key and
24 Quentin McGown.

25 MS. KEY: My name is Michelle Key, and I

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1 live in the Mistletoe Heights neighborhood at 2222
2 Mistletoe Avenue, and I also serve on the Citizens
3 Advisory Group for SH 121. I attended and made comment
4 on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and I
5 would like to say that this document represents an
6 overall improvement to the draft. I do, however, want
7 to make two general comments and then address briefly
8 some of the specific issues related to Mistletoe
9 Heights. I've prepared a more detailed written
10 statement which I will be submitting.

11 First, generally, as has been mentioned by
12 previous speakers, the FEIS still fails to incorporate
13 the very long and involved public process. Many
14 understandings were reached and significant compromises
15 made during these processes which have spanned over
16 several years. I'm very concerned that without their
17 specific incorporation into this step of the project,
18 some of those commitments may be lost. Second, the
19 FEIS lacks adequate design specifics to address its
20 impact. This omission makes the lack of incorporation
21 of the public process, which did reach a conclusion on
22 many design elements, even more serious.

23 As to Mistletoe Heights, as has been
24 mentioned, the FEIS still does not sufficiently address
25 the total impact on our neighborhood, and more notably,

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1 does not outline the specific mitigation for that
2 impact. Mistletoe Heights, a neighborhood of over 400
3 homes, has historic designation providing protection
4 under federal laws, including Section 4-F, given the
5 neighborhood's proximity to the proposed project. It
6 also has an 80-plus-year history of established
7 residential land use.

8 What we asked for in our public comment to
9 the DEIS was an overall impact statement in detail on
10 specific mitigants to the undeniable noise, light,
11 visual and vehicle exhaust impacts to our neighborhood.
12 We ask and still need this impact to be considered
13 cumulatively given the significant roadway, highway,
14 and railway structures already in place. By my count,
15 at the conclusion of this project, there will be a
16 total of 24 lanes of vehicular traffic and a railroad
17 track immediately adjacent to our neighborhood. At a
18 minimum, to preserve the historic housing stock found
19 in our neighborhood and protect the current property
20 values, we need one extensive landscaping and
21 appropriately lowered and directed lighting to mitigate
22 the visual impact; and two, a noise mitigation wall or
23 other appropriate sound barrier, which while not
24 detailed in the FEIS, I was pleased to hear mentioned
25 from the podium by Mr. Conrad.

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1 We are also concerned about security lighting
2 and other aesthetic improvements under the proposed
3 bridges and elevated roadway sections near the access
4 point for our proposed pedestrian crossing from
5 Mistletoe Heights to the Trinity Trail System. The
6 addition of State Highway 121 very close to extensive
7 bridges and elevated roadway sections over the trail
8 will result in an even longer tunnel effect there,
9 creating serious security concerns for the trail's
10 users and for our neighborhood.

11 In summary, based on these and other open
12 issues in the FEIS, the Record of Decision for this
13 project should include commitment on mitigation
14 measures such as noise, walls, lighting and landscape
15 and should commit TxDOT and NTTA to continue to work
16 with the City and its appointed citizens groups in
17 developing the final plan for this project. This will
18 ensure follow through on the work that we have all done
19 together in good faith to date and produce a mutually
20 acceptable design project with appropriate mitigation
21 to the neighborhoods which will be significantly
22 impacted. Thank you.

23 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Quentin McGown
24 and Randy Means.

25 MR. MCGOWN: Thank you. My name is

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1 Quentin McGown. I'm here representing Sunset Terrace
2 Neighborhood Association. I really want to start
3 by reiterating the thanks that we all have for the
4 amazing transformation in the process as we move along
5 with the design of this roadway. Thank you. Thank
6 you, Ms. Chavez, very much for your participation in
7 this.

8 Representing the neighborhood, many of our
9 concerns have already been expressed tonight, and I'll
10 have some, I hope, more coherent comments in writing
11 that I will provide before the 31st. But, first,
12 there's still in the FEIS a nebulous determination of
13 the northern terminus of the facility. Occasionally
14 it's referred to as beginning at I 30, sometimes at
15 Forest Park, sometimes at Summit Avenue. I think the
16 net result of that lack of clarity has been leaving
17 particularly Mistletoe Heights and Sunset Terrace as
18 moving targets and really diminishing in many ways the
19 response to some of our concerns. For example, on page
20 4.6 of the FEIS, the landscape map actually has no
21 designation the residents use whatsoever for Sunset
22 Terrace and leaves the -- our northern end of the
23 facility out entirely. We were also not included in
24 the cultural resources listing, and again, I think it's
25 a consistency issue that needs to be addressed in the

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1 Record of Decision, because that study begins at Forest
2 Park Boulevard and eliminates most of the northern end
3 of the facility. But the point of our major concerns
4 is the complete avoidance in the FEIS of the very
5 specific comments we made during the comments on the
6 Draft EIS, and that was dealing with the constructive
7 use of potentially eligible for national registered
8 neighborhoods. The 4-F analysis relies solely on the
9 physical taking of the property as outlined in the
10 Final EIS, and because the determination was made that
11 there was no physical taking of the historic
12 neighborhoods, that there was no need for a 4-F
13 evaluation.

14 The specific DEIS comments requested --
15 concerned the review of constructive use. Again, there
16 was no acknowledgment of that constructive use or that
17 constructive use can occur. In our opinion, as we
18 noted in the comments for the DEIS, the cumulative
19 proximity impacts of this and other projects represents
20 substantial impairment to the established use of the
21 historic neighborhoods of both Sunset Terrace and
22 Mistletoe Heights, and we do feel that those need to be
23 addressed because they have not been.

24 Following up, too, on our specific request
25 for air and noise modeling sites, as indicated on the

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1 map on page 545, there were five sound receptors that
2 were placed in Sunset Terrace, each of them placed on
3 the inside of the neighborhood as far away from the
4 facility itself as possible. But because there's no
5 supporting data in the DEIS or the FEIS to indicate at
6 what times of day those tests were done, when the
7 models were done, if they actually followed the
8 regulations to take those tests at a time at the
9 highest and loudest use. So we still feel that there
10 are substantial holes and that there were very earnest
11 concerns that we expressed in the draft comment period
12 that were not addressed at all in this final impact
13 statement.

14 And as we look at the issues as Wendy pointed
15 out earlier that the City has recognized our concern
16 for sound mitigation, particularly a barrier wall for
17 Sunset Terrace, it was not addressed at all. The sound
18 study, in fact, said that there were no receptors --
19 eligible receptors in the neighborhood and base their
20 determination that there could be no mitigation based
21 on the fact that we have no receptors. We think we
22 ought to have those receptors.

23 Again, I want to thank you-all for the
24 process, but understand that those of us on the
25 northern end of the facility living in these historic

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1 neighborhoods that by and large predate any freeway
2 system by more than 50 years, that we consider what
3 we're asking not enhancements, but true mitigation.
4 We've seen a consistent erosion of central city
5 neighborhoods, and we're hoping that with this project
6 we will be able to stop that and begin to reverse the
7 trend so that the central city can once again become a
8 viable and attractive place for people to live and
9 work. Thank you very much.

10 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Randy Means and
11 then Tom Reynolds.

12 MR. MEANS: Thank you. My name is Randy
13 Means. I live in the Berkeley Place neighborhood. I
14 currently represent nobody but myself, but I
15 participated extensively in some of the PDT public
16 hearings that occurred before this.

17 I would first offer -- it's not appropriate
18 to this -- I would first offer my thanks to anybody
19 that was involved in the agreement that's tentative or
20 however permanent it is about the 50-mile-per-hour
21 designed speed limit. Whoever is responsible for that,
22 I sing your praises and I hope it gets locked into
23 stone. Anybody that acts to undermine it, I will curse
24 your name.

25 As to the FEIS, I want to offer the criticism

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1 that I do not believe it makes sufficient use or
2 adequate use of the extensive citizen contributions
3 that were made through the entire public design team
4 process, the PDT process that has been described
5 earlier that occurred before the current CAC or
6 whatever it was created. And one specific example, to
7 get specific, I'll focus on the noise abatement area.
8 When you get to the noise abatement section of the
9 current EIS, it says that there are several solutions
10 possible. Number one, we establish that the roadway is
11 by definition going to create noise. It's going to
12 create a problem because of that. That's just a fact
13 of life that Mr. Nelson refers to. So what are the
14 possible solutions? The report says traffic management
15 is one solution, traffic control devices. Well, we
16 can't use that. That's not appropriate in this case.
17 It says another solution is vertical alignment and
18 horizontal alignment of the roadway, but we can't
19 change that in this case. That's not available to us.
20 A buffer land is the third possible solution, but we
21 can't use that. That's not available here. So what is
22 the most common solution? Noise barrier walls. But
23 then it goes on to say that a complete noise barrier
24 would impede access to this roadway. So then if we
25 punch a bunch of holes in that noise barrier to create

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1 access, then you've got a barrier that has no effect
2 because it has too many holes in it to allow access to
3 the road. I think that that area is a specific example
4 of how this report fails to acknowledge and make use of
5 the PDT work, because history -- if you go back to
6 those records of the PDT work, the PDT established
7 pretty much the design philosophy of this roadway.
8 Number one, it was not intended to create a way to
9 provide another artery to develop a bunch of traffic
10 into these neighborhoods and to support another
11 commercial corridor with strip centers lining a bunch
12 of frontage roads on a new highway. The purpose of
13 this road is to suck traffic off of those existing
14 neighborhood arterials, those existing neighborhood
15 roads, pull that traffic off of the burdened Hulen and
16 the Bryant-Irvin area that suffers currently and to
17 minimize -- number one, it's going to be a limited
18 access roadway with a minimal number of access points
19 in it. Number two, the emphasis was the minimal number
20 of access -- or frontage roads, rather, to prevent the
21 growth of the strip center frontage road business
22 blight that grows up and down a typical old style
23 highway that we've grown up to love and hate as
24 Mr. Nelson reminded us about.

25 So the PDT process -- if you take advantage

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1 of what you have available, you would recognize that
2 the criticisms you make of the noise barriers were
3 solved, because this is not an access problem, and it
4 also fails to consider the possibility that the barrier
5 walls can be staggering at the various ramp entrances
6 and exits that you have to have on this roadway. So
7 access is not the problem that prevents the use of
8 noise barriers, and visibility of businesses along the
9 side of the report says it would be a problem if we use
10 these barriers. That's not a problem either because
11 the whole design of this road is not to encourage that.

12 And finally as to one of the areas, to get
13 more specific, to focus on the Mistletoe wall that the
14 report proposes. It strikes me as strange that the
15 roadway is going to come along and create its own
16 problem. The roadway is going to create the additional
17 noise. But how are we going to solve it? The roadway
18 is not going to be designed in a way to prevent the
19 noise. We're going to make Mistletoe take the existing
20 landscaped berm area that they have and make them cut
21 that out or cut out a portion of it, eliminate some of
22 the trees that they currently have and replace that
23 with a wall. So the roadway creates the burden, but
24 the neighborhood has to bear the burden of any
25 mitigation. That's not where that burden should be

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1 placed. The mitigation should be placed on the
2 roadway. Any sort of barrier that's used or any sort
3 of mitigation that's used to minimize the noise impact
4 should be on the roadway, not on the surrounding
5 neighborhood that has to come along and solve the
6 problem created by that. I guess that's it. Thank
7 you.

8 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Tom Reynolds and
9 Lisa Lowry.

10 MR. REYNOLDS: Tom Reynolds, Sunset
11 Terrace. I also serve on the Citizens Advisory Group
12 for 121. There was one marked improvement in the FEIS
13 from the DEIS regarding my neighborhood, Sunset
14 Terrace, and that pertained to the comment regarding
15 lighting standards, which reads: With regard to the
16 proposed 121 construction connection near Summit
17 Avenue, the existing high mass lighting is proposed to
18 be replaced with low mass lighting. Thank you--all very
19 much. I would suggest that that is defined a bit more
20 as to -- I would suggest there are five high mass
21 lights, three west of Summit Avenue bridge and two
22 east. I would suggest that all five of them be
23 removed. High mass lighting is wonderful for all the
24 fly-overs and under roads and all the spaghetti that I
25 believe it was designed to light for nighttime travel.

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1 It is highly inappropriate for anything near
2 residential. But this is a marked improvement from the
3 DEIS.

4 The existing land use map, chapter 4, page 7,
5 shows nothing east of 11th Avenue north of I 30. It
6 does a wonderful job in showing all of the existing
7 land uses. Sunset Terrace is not there, neither is
8 St. Paul Lutheran Church, neither is the home for
9 children, neither is Harold Park. There is sort of a
10 black hole.

11 There is a great inconsistency as has been
12 pointed out in the FEIS, roughly 50/50 as to what the
13 northern terminus actually is. About half the time --
14 actually, probably a little more than half of the time
15 it appears to be at Forest Park. I would suggest that
16 with -- I believe that the rendering over there shows
17 19 lanes of traffic at Summit Avenue when this project
18 is completed. So I would advance the notion that not
19 only is this bound to be a terminus as people who are
20 going to the hospital are going to be getting off there
21 and people going out of town are going to be going
22 there, people going home are going to be getting off
23 there, that what is done there should be appropriate,
24 it should be right. We have a 106-year-old home there,
25 and all the rest are slightly younger than that. It

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1 should be beautiful and it should be a gateway. It
2 should be a gateway and it should be treated as one.

3 The Cultural Resources Assessment was
4 conducted from Forest Park Boulevard to 1187. Again,
5 we're at the black hole there again. Chapter 4, page
6 41, the National Register of Historic Properties
7 listing potentially eligible sites, the only one that's
8 listed is 5098 Sunset Terrace. Our whole neighborhood
9 is eligible. This was brought to your attention prior
10 to the DEIS and certainly during the DEIS, and it does
11 not show up anywhere in the FEIS. Chapter 5, page 34,
12 and I quote, other than the Trinity bicycle/pedestrian
13 trail, there are no publicly-owned lands or parks or
14 recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuge that
15 could be classified as Section 4-F lands within the
16 project area. Well, again, not if you discount our
17 neighborhood and we're at that black hole again. If,
18 on the other hand, you do consider us, which I believe
19 is appropriate, Harold Park is a public park. We do
20 have several historic sites. We are national register
21 eligible. And I do believe that this equates the
22 necessary and required 4-F documentation. Chapter 5,
23 page 35, and again I quote, with regard to Section 4-F
24 properties, historic resources could be potentially
25 impacted under alternative B and D, but would not be

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1 impacted under alternative A, C or C/A. Not true for
2 reasons already given.

3 Air quality -- well, we don't have time for
4 that. That will be in my written comments. Section 5
5 regards reasons why a noise barrier would not be
6 reasonable or feasible for the receivers at the Sunset
7 Terrace. A fascinating exhibit in the FEIS is that map
8 pertaining to the noise receivers. They were all
9 placed in Harold Park, two full blocks north of the
10 access road and on the other side of all of our houses.
11 Now, I believe that the way that this was supposed to
12 be conducted -- the noise research is supposed to be
13 done, it's supposed to be in the highest impact area,
14 the noisiest, in other words, and during rush hour
15 traffic.

16 And lastly, the FEIS mentions that there is
17 no -- there's no direct impacts in that there are no
18 direct takings of property. That's true. However,
19 there's no consideration for constructive use. There's
20 no consideration for cumulative impacts, which once
21 again, all of us in the neighborhood brought to
22 you-all's attention during the DEIS prior to the DEIS
23 being submitted. So I would say thanks for the lights.
24 All the other issues remain the same as they were in
25 the DEIS.

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1 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Lisa Lowry.

2 MS. LOWRY: Good evening. My name is
3 Lisa Lowry. I reside in Mistletoe Heights. After
4 reviewing the Final Environmental Impact Statement that
5 was sent to my home, I still have concerns about this
6 project. The overall issue of mitigation of adverse
7 effect on neighborhoods along with detailed -- design
8 detail is weak throughout the entire document.

9 My neighborhood of Mistletoe Heights is a
10 locally designated historic district as well as a
11 national register eligible historic district. This
12 entitles Mistletoe Heights to all protections provided
13 by Section 4-F of the Department of Transportation Act.
14 Questions concerning impact of noise, light, air
15 pollution and aesthetic damage to our neighborhood have
16 not been sufficiently addressed. There has been
17 tremendous input from Mistletoe Heights and other
18 impacted neighborhoods regarding the importance of
19 extensive landscaping, appropriate lighting and
20 sensitively designed noise barriers at all previous
21 public meetings. However, when reviewing the Final
22 Environmental Impact Statement, one gets the impression
23 that these critical mitigation issues are considered
24 frivolous and optional. To guarantee that these
25 important mitigation measures become reality, an

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1 essential step should be to create a separate detailed
2 and binding agreement between the City of Fort Worth,
3 TxDOT and NTTA. Continued input from the Citizens
4 Advisory Group is also critical. This would not only
5 ensure impacted neighborhoods of a mutually accepted
6 design project, but would demonstrate that our concerns
7 were heard and answered. Thank you.

8 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. J.D. Granger.

9 MR. GRANGER: Thank you for letting us
10 speak. My name is J.D. Granger. I'm here on behalf of
11 Streams and Valleys and the Trinity River Vision.

12 I've been a member of Streams and Valleys now
13 for I don't know how long, ever since Elaine helped me
14 get on there years ago, but I have been a part of the
15 Trinity River Vision since its very inception.

16 Ms. Chavez, I don't know if you've had a chance to go
17 look at that project, but it is phenomenal. It's a
18 project that's won many awards because of its public
19 process. We had a couple hundred meetings to make sure
20 we heard from our citizens because we were worried
21 about quality of life issues in doing this project, and
22 that's what we're really concerned about.

23 Our project is very different than the
24 Southwest Parkway just because of the function that we
25 approached our projects. I understand the Southwest

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1 Parkway -- in TxDOT, your function -- or your goal is
2 function. But with Streams and Valleys and with
3 Trinity River Vision, we're not just concerned with
4 function, we're also concerned with quality of life.
5 Every neighborhood that's been in here today, every
6 group and every citizen that's concerned how it impacts
7 their neighborhood, we all have the same concerns. It
8 goes back to the quality of life. We all understand
9 what this project is to provide, provide a function,
10 but the concern that I had as a member of Streams and
11 Valleys and as a person who has worked on the Trinity
12 River Vision project for so long is how this project,
13 Southwest Parkway, impacts the Trinity River Vision and
14 the whole Trinity River corridor. All of us as
15 citizens here in Fort Worth are very concerned about
16 our quality of life, and we really look at the river
17 with that concern.

18 This project, the Trinity River Vision, has
19 had fantastic support city-wide because it's one that
20 doesn't just provide a function, it also does look at
21 quality of life, and that is our concern with this
22 project. It's to make sure when the parkway, as it
23 addresses the Trinity River corridor, that it addresses
24 it in a way that minimizes the negative impact in any
25 way possible. It's an area that we in Fort Worth are

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1 now taking great pride at. When we look at this area,
2 we're looking forward to what it provides. So our
3 concerns surround that area right there. It's a
4 fantastic corridor and gateway to the Trinity River
5 Vision and also to the rest of the downtown areas. So
6 as far as how this project starts to enter that area,
7 those are our concerns and the like.

8 I think James Toal outlined most of the
9 things that we think could improve how the parkway
10 actually addresses the river, and so I'm not going to
11 go back through those. In fact, I do have a letter
12 here that was written almost two years ago that
13 outlines almost these very same concerns, which I know
14 you-all have been looking at very carefully. So thank
15 you very much for doing that. I know it is new to
16 TxDOT, and I do appreciate all that you've done on
17 this. Here's some of the same concerns which were
18 provided in the record. In saying that, I just want to
19 say please -- the same as with our neighborhoods, the
20 same that all, I think, the citizens here are asking
21 for, is any project that may potentially have a
22 negative impact on quality of life, please look at it
23 carefully. We understand there's a function to be
24 served by this project. We do thank you for listening
25 to all our concerns. Thank you for your concern

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1 regarding the river, too. Thank you for letting us
2 speak.

3 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. That's all that
4 I have that has signed up to speak. At this time we
5 will open the floor to anyone else that would like to
6 make a statement. Is there anyone that would like to
7 make a statement?

8 MS. RHOME: Sir?

9 MR. CONRAD: Yes? Would you please come
10 to the mike and give your name and make your statement.

11 MS. RHOME: My name is Beth Rhome. I am
12 here concerning property we have on the west -- on
13 Vickery. I'm wondering how many of you are here for
14 that reason, because you're going to be told to leave
15 town on the south side of Vickery, and I didn't hear
16 any discussion about concerns of people who have that
17 to look forward to. That's one environmental impact if
18 you think about it, because a lot of people have
19 businesses -- lifetime businesses there. They have
20 given service from there. They would have continued to
21 give service. And although we like things beautiful
22 and perfect and nothing that looks like it might not be
23 too desirable, we have to get our cars fixed. We have
24 to get our clothes cleaned. We have to do these things
25 somewhere. If you're going to wipe everything out that

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1 is of service to the community, what kind of community
2 do you have?

3 Then on the second part that I'm talking
4 about, I didn't see any concern that they've taken 40
5 years to keep us in limbo and to cut off any plans and
6 dreams that we had for -- for this. I'm speaking about
7 my son who loved that area and wanted to -- to fix a
8 place to have a garage there and his dad helped him,
9 and he has since passed away because he had polio. He
10 didn't have time to wait for all of this beautiful air
11 and -- it's all great, but how long can it take? How
12 long can we wait? We were 50 when this started. We're
13 on the -- one of us is 80 and the other is 76, and now
14 we have to do something about it. And then our fear is
15 that, well, you let this -- you know, this go on and
16 you're really not of value anyway because nobody wants
17 to be a business in here and you can't pass it on
18 because who wants to put a business here and have it
19 wiped away by this road?

20 And I think that it's fine to have the
21 communities represented. I don't know that communities
22 can be represented by one person or even five people.
23 I think the communities are diverse, and some people
24 feel one way and some another, and for someone to say,
25 well, I represent a certain community, I have my doubts

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1 about that. But who represents the concerns that we
2 have about being uprooted? And I want to -- to stress
3 the fact that the right of eminent domain is a
4 frightening thing. This is our second time to have
5 experienced it, and little concern was given to
6 explanations of when they're coming, what they will do,
7 and whether we will be taken advantage of because we
8 have been put off so long, even though, you know, we
9 just have to say, okay, you have the right of eminent
10 domain, we just have to leave or we have to sell it to
11 you, we have to -- even sometimes they said, couldn't
12 you give it to us, you know? And so I think that
13 something should be done to ask those people who along
14 Vickery are involved and giving up their properties so
15 that this can happen and the people on the other side
16 whose businesses are going to be damaged while they're
17 doing this construction. And even after it's done,
18 that's -- they need more than a wall. Thank you.

19 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Does anyone else
20 desire to make a statement tonight? Yes, ma'am?

21 MS. LAWRENCE: I may need to move this
22 microphone up again. Good evening. I'm Elizabeth
23 Lawrence, and I live at 5909 Beverly Drive East, and
24 that is right adjacent to the Trinity River just west
25 of where 183 and 20 fork, and I've lived there for 14

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1 years. I moved there from between Burleson and Joshua.
2 And the reason I chose that particular place to live is
3 because it had access to so much beauty, so many loving
4 places to walk, so much undeveloped land. As I've
5 lived there, I've watched so much of that change, so
6 many of the places that I used to go to drive by and go
7 "ah" and relax a little on my way to town are now gone.
8 One of those places is now Chapel Hill. One of those
9 places was a beautiful meadow and a creek that is where
10 Lowe's is now. That whole bluff behind the Tom Thumb
11 on Bryant-Irvin that's now apartments, I used to walk
12 up there and see fox and deer. And so I now can see
13 through my window the sign for Hooters. So you know
14 how close I am to where the toll road is going to be.
15 And I recognize that there are many other concerns here
16 besides the concern that I'm voicing, but I think that
17 it's important to many of us to be able to see beauty,
18 to be able to see open spaces. Someone spoke earlier
19 about the impact of the trees on our physical health,
20 but I think there's also an impact of the trees on our
21 mental health. When I drive in to town, I come down
22 Bryant-Irvin usually and then I take Vickery, and
23 Vickery is a really peaceful road most of the time.
24 People don't go too fast. There are not too many
25 traffic lights. There are businesses that are --

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1 belong to the people that have lived there for years
2 and years, not the big chains that have come in.

3 So my concerns -- where I live, I get the
4 noise from 183 and the noise from 20, and that's
5 changed a lot in 14 years. I'm concerned about the
6 noise from the toll road, concerned about the air
7 quality, how that will be affected. I'm also
8 concerned -- most of you know that there's a back way
9 that you can get down to Dirks Road without even
10 getting on Bryant-Irvin. I'm not going to tell you
11 about it if you don't because it's through a
12 neighborhood and there's speed bumps. But it used to
13 be very easy to go south on Bryant-Irvin. As you know,
14 it's no longer easy. Perhaps the toll road will
15 improve that situation. I don't think so. I think
16 that Bryant-Irvin and Hulen are going to be just as
17 congested, and I think it's going to be virtually
18 impossible for people like me who live west of
19 Bryant-Irvin to get across to Hulen on Oakmont or on
20 Overton Ridge without even more time than it's now
21 taking. I'm just looking to see if I've covered
22 everything.

23 I've also heard that it's -- that the toll
24 road will increase the population growth in our area,
25 and that was in a Star Telegram article about a month

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1 ago, and that's of great concern because we already
2 have inadequate roadways, I think, the kind of roadways
3 that are just for local traffic for that area.

4 I thank you for letting me speak, and I hope
5 that this works out well.

6 MR. CONRAD: Thank you. Does anyone else
7 desire to make a statement? If not, I will call on
8 Ms. Chavez to close the hearing.

9 MS. CHAVEZ: Thank you, Charles. Again,
10 thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, for being
11 here and for making comment. We -- as Charles stated,
12 we will be taking comment up until the end of the
13 month. I believe it's the 31st. So, please, I
14 encourage you, for those of you that would like to make
15 further comment, to take that opportunity and let us
16 hear from you. And with that, thank you very much for
17 being here, and we adjourn this hearing.

18 (HEARING ADJOURNED.)

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1 STATE OF TEXAS)

2 COUNTY OF TARRANT)

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4 This is to certify that I, Dawn Baldwin, a
5 certified shorthand reporter, reported in shorthand the
6 proceedings at the Texas Department of Transportation
7 Public Hearing on December 13, 2004 at 7:00 p.m., and
8 that the foregoing 111 pages contain a full, true, and
9 correct transcription to the best of my ability of said
10 proceedings.

11 GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE on this
12 29th day of December, 2004.

13

14

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