



# Meeting Notes

## Grayson County Tollway Project

**Date:** September 20, 2010, 6:30 p.m. **Location:** TCOG (Sherman)

**Subject:** Grayson County Tollway (GCT) Study – Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting #1

**Written by:** Noel Paramanatham, PE (TxDOT)/Mike Garrison, PE (Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.)

**Attendees:** (See attached sign-in sheet)

### Purpose of the Meeting

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

### Meeting Notes:

1. Introduction/Overview (TxDOT – Noel Paramanatham)
2. Study Context (Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc. – Mike Garrison)
3. Public Involvement/Agency Coordination (Halff Associates, Inc. – Matt Craig)
4. Alternatives Analysis Process (Civil Associates, Inc. – Naser Abusaad)
5. Mobility Plan & Other Studies (Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc. – Mike Garrison)
6. Alternatives Development / Action Items (Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc. – Mike Garrison)
7. Q&A and Breakout Workshop (TxDOT – Noel Paramanatham)

Mr. Noel Paramanatham (TxDOT Project Manager) opened the meeting and explained the process that was taking place to establish an alignment and hopefully preserve right-of-way (ROW) for the proposed corridor. Noel then turned the meeting over to Grayson County Judge Drue Bynum to offer a few comments about the project.

Judge Bynum discussed the need to plan a route, based on decisions that Denton and Collin Counties had made with the Dallas North Tollway, which now points directly towards the middle of Grayson County. He is looking for this group's input to guide the process, as they know more about the county and specific issues than anyone else involved in the project. He said that some decisions would not be popular, but would be necessary to plan for the future. Judge Bynum mentioned that one of the alternative alignments actually went through his existing property as well, so he was in the same boat as the others regarding how he should approach/accept this project. He then turned over the presentation to Brown & Gay Engineers Project Manager Mike Garrison.

Mike (BGE Project Manager) gave a brief introduction of his background, having more than 20 years of highway and tollway design experience, and having lived and worked in north Texas for the last 11 years. Mike then introduced Matt Craig, PE (Halff Associates) and Naser Abusaad, PE, AICP (Civil Associates), who will be responsible for the alignment routing process/public involvement, and environmental documentation, respectively. Mike then had the CAG go around the room and introduce themselves and the interest/organization they represented.

Mike then began a PowerPoint presentation which described the study process and study area limits, which was provided in map version to all CAG participants. He said that the point of the next 8-12 months was to work with this team and eventually the public to establish a route that was both technically and locally preferred, and that avoided natural and man-made constraints as much as possible. Mike added that funding for the ultimate facility would be a real challenge, but maybe some sort of interim facility could be developed to accommodate short-term traffic projections and enhance development, which would in turn increase traffic demand and drive development of the ultimate facility. He explained that frontage roads might need to be funded by other sources (if desired). Mike explained where in the study process they were, and that the team had just begun their study in June,

and had conducted one Technical Advisory Committee meeting with regional and local elected and appointed officials. Mike then handed off the presentation to Matt Craig who moved into a discussion of the study's public involvement process.

Matt explained that the public involvement process would move through a three-tiered approach, starting with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)—a group of staff and elected officials, then taking those ideas to a group of community leaders, homeowner associations, and special interest groups that would constitute a Community Advisory Group (CAG), and then ideas would be presented to the general public in a series of two public meetings that would be held over the next 6-8 months. Mike added that the CAG and public meetings would encompass the entire 33-mile corridor, but would have ample time for separate group discussions to focus on the north and south ends separately.

Matt presented 4 conceptual logos for the Grayson County Tollway Study, and mentioned that the Technical Advisory Committee and several members of the Grayson County RMA preferred Concept #4 (which shows an outline of Grayson County with the Grayson County Tollway Study text on top of it). Matt said that the team was looking for feedback from the GCTCAG, and also wanted them to share info with other groups that they represent to get the word out. We are especially interested in any additional constraints (family cemeteries, historic structures, etc.) that have not already been identified by published sources. Matt then turned the presentation over to Naser Abusaad, who came forward to present the environmental portion of the presentation.

Naser said that research has shown that cities in the GCT study area are projected to grow approximately 50% between 2000 and 2030, and that the US 75 corridor actually had 20% more trucks crossing the state line than on the IH 35 NAFTA corridor. This drives the Need and Purpose for the project to serve mobility for the citizens of Grayson County, and assist in addressing the increased truck traffic on US 75 and eventually SH 289 in order to facilitate travel patterns to and from the center of the DFW Metroplex.

Naser presented a graphic of the evaluation process, which looked like a funnel. He said that in the beginning we would have a large number of alternatives with broad-based estimates, but as we continued to work through our evaluation process, the alternatives would take a more refined shape, and estimates would have a higher level of accuracy. Naser then showed a matrix evaluation and the six measures that would be weighed for each of the alternatives (Engineering, Safety/Mobility, Socio-Economic, Environmental, Cost Effectiveness, and Other Features). These measures are categorized as either Natural or Human environmental impacts.

Naser said from a natural environment perspective, the existing floodplains really stood out in this study area, and would be a major factor in quantifying cost and environmental impacts of the various alignments being considered. Naser said from a human environment perspective, the hazardous material (HazMat) sites would be areas to avoid. These mostly took form as the numerous gas wells shown on the GCT Constraints Map, which were found by conducting research through known published data. He said there were also several archeological sites, cemeteries, and parks that would need to be avoided in developing our alignment alternatives.

Mike then continued the presentation by describing the alignment alternatives that had been developed to date. They started with the Gunter, Sherman, Denison, and Grayson County Thoroughfare Plans, as well as the long-range plan from the Sherman Denison MPO. Other alignments were identified by either the Technical Advisory Committee, the study team, or through previous engineering studies that were conducted throughout the southern half of the corridor. He explained that the study area was really divided at US 82 into northern and southern areas, and that they would have separate exhibits to study during the breakout session that was to follow.

During the workshop, the following points were discussed/mentioned by the various GCTCAG representatives:

- GCEC (Dennis Ferguson) did not have any comments related to the alignment alternatives, but did request an electronic copy of the alignment alternatives, so that GCEC could overlay their distribution lines for future utility coordination.
- Gunter prefers alignment S3, but shifted south to impact less properties and tie closer along SH 289 just north of the railroad tracks in Gunter.
- Walton Development is planning to send electronic files of their properties. They noted the advantages of developing a separate, parallel alignment adjacent to SH 289 to spur development.
- Katy Cummins from TCOG commented on the logos; preferred #3 (lower left). Not a fan of #4. Need a logo to market to Dallas. Upper left (#1) looks like "we're going in circles". Remove the word "study" from all the logos. Should develop a logo for the tollway to brand it. She may have her office work up an alternative to offer to the group.
- Various landowners that were present identified their property, as ones to avoid. Those identified were outside of the footprint of any alignments offered to date.
- George Schuler of the Schuler Development Company offered an alternative alignment north of US 82 that stayed west of SH 289 and passed near the Hagerman Wildlife Refuge, before traversing north of Pottsboro and running east between FM 120 and FM 406 and then tying to US 75 north of Denison. He said this alignment would better serve future growth around the prime properties of Lake Texoma.
- Business owners, School District, and Chamber of Commerce representatives from Sherman commented on the ISD boundary, development that was occurring west of US 75, and the need for additional routes in the vicinity of US 75 to act as relievers to the facility. Traci Carlson from the Sherman COC said that she would like the study team to come and speak at one of their upcoming meetings.
- Randy Reddell from Sherman ISD mentioned that his primary concern was having the infrastructure in place (including schools), if the population grew as predicted.

**Materials Distributed at the Meeting:**

- GCT Community Advisory Group Meeting No. 1 Agenda
- GCT Study Area Map

This concludes the Meeting Minutes. Our goal is to provide a complete and accurate summary of the proceedings of the subject meeting in these minutes. If you feel that any of the items listed above are not correct, or that any information is missing or incomplete, please contact Brown & Gay Engineers Inc. so that the matter can be resolved, and a correction issued if necessary. These minutes will be assumed to be correct and accepted if we do not hear from you within ten (10) calendar days from your receipt.

Grayson County Tollway Study  
Community Advisory Group  
Attendee List - 09/20/2010

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization	City	Email	Phone
Abusaad	Naser		Civil Associates, Inc.			
Burkhalter	Elaine	Chairwoman	Chamber of Commerce (Trailblazer Health Enterprises)	Denison		
Bynum	Drue	Judge				
Byrd	L.D.	President	Gunter Economic Development Corp.	Gunter	LDPreach@cs.com	(903) 821-3042
Carlson	Traci	President	Sherman Chamber of Commerce	Sherman	info@shermanchamber.us	(903) 893-1184
Craig	Matt		Half Associates, Inc.			
Cummins	Katy	Community Development	Texoma Council of Governments	Sherman	kcummins@texoma.cog.tx.us	903-813-3530
Elliott	Michael	President	Gunter Area Chamber of Commerce	Gunter	investintexas@classicnet.net	(214) 551-1383
Fisher	Eric		Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.			
Garrison	Mike	Project Manager	Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.			
Hagar	Chris		Civil Associates, Inc.			
Hensarling	Randy		Airport Zoning Commission, and President of Sherman Branch		rhensarling@landmarkbanks.com	
Hlavenka	Denise		State Farm Insurance	Pottsboro		(903) 786-5520
Horstman	Ed	President	Southmayd Industrial Economic Dev. Cort	Southmayd	ed.horstman@pwhome.com	(972) 979-4462
	Michael	President	Southmayd Community Dev. Corp	Whitesboro	mh@rakgroup.com	(214) 532-7800
Hughes	Cindy		Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.			
Hulsey	Dennis	Landowner			hulseydennis@gmail.com	
Johnson	Wally	Planner	Sherman-Denison MPO	Sherman	wjohnson@sdmpo.org	(903) 813-3531
Joseph-Williams	Robin		Half Associates, Inc.			
Kaai	Tony	President	Denison Development Alliance	Denison	tkaai@denisontx.org	(903) 464-0883
Kuykendall	Chris		Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.			
Lawrence	Bart	President	Grayson County Farm Bureau	Pottsboro	campaign@bartlawrencecc4.com	(903) 786-9887
Luce	Anthony		Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc.			
Paramanatham	Noel		TxDOT			
Powers	Mike		TxDOT			
Rabon	Jennifer	Com. Planning Mgr.	Walton DW & Mgmt.		jrabon@waltondm.com	(972) 713-0000
Reddell	Randy		Sherman ISD	Sherman	rreddell@shermanisd.net	(903) 891-6400
Schnitker	JoAnn	Landowner		Dorchester	joannschnitker@nationalcarport.com	
Schuler	George		Schuler Development	McKinney	gschuler@schulerdevelopment.com	(972) 562-7501
Scott	Kevin		Walton Development	Dallas	kscott@waltondm.com	
Selman	David		TxDOT			
Steeber	Robert	Superintendent	Southmayd-Sadler (S&S) Consolidated ISD	Sadler	rsteeber@ednet10.net	(903) 564-6051
Torbit	Matt		Double Platnum WCSD Grayson County #1		mtorbit@waltondm.com	(972) 713-0000
Watkins	Jay	Board President	Denison ISD	Denison	kwatkinsj@sbcglobal.net	(903) 465-8939
Wilson	Kevin	Superintendent	Howe ISD	Howe	kswilson@howeisd.net	(903) 532-3200