



"City of Choice"

Memorandum

To: Cibolo City Council Members
From: Mayor Dunn
Date: 8/17/2016
Re: Response to TURF Flyer
CC: Robert T. Herrera, City Manager

Last week, the City Manager forwarded to you a copy of a publication which was sent out by Ms. Terri Hall. In light of the fact that we are in the very preliminary stages of studying the proposal for the Cibolo Parkway as a potential solution to a critical infrastructure issue facing our city and are awaiting feasibility studies for further evaluation, I was surprised by some of the information contained within that flyer. In particular, I am concerned by the number of wildly misleading or outright false statements made in the flyer. Because of the inaccuracies of that flyer, I felt it necessary to address some of Ms. Hall's comments with members of the City Council.

There is no date on the flyer prepared by Texans Uniting for Reform and Freedom and the author is not identified. The flyer purports to provide information regarding the Cibolo Parkway project and appears to have been prepared after the July 26th public hearing. As you may recall, the City Staff presented an overview of the project, its potential impact on the community, and potential issues that could arise as a result of moving forward with this project at that hearing. Upon reading the flyer, it was clear that the information presented and discussions held at the July 26th public hearing are being presented in a misleading fashion or were clearly false. The purpose of this correspondence is to correct the misinformation contained within the flyer.

The Cibolo Parkway project is not a new concept. The extension of FM 1103 from the vicinity of Wagon Wheel Way to Interstate 10 has been contemplated for over a decade with preliminary planning and conceptual routing being proposed as early as 2006. During this time period, the City of Cibolo has expected that the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) would be responsible for making this extension a reality. However, after over a decade of continuous and intensive efforts by city officials, members of the community, and our elected officials at the county level and within the state legislature, we are no closer to having TxDOT and the AAMPO undertake this project now than we were in 2006. Because we have repeatedly been met with a frustrating lack of progress on this critical piece of infrastructure that has been identified for years as a key component to the development of a well-planned city with an efficient and effective transportation network that promotes the safety and welfare of our citizens along with an attendant healthy economic development, particularly south of FM 78, the City Council directed the City Manager and Staff to begin exploring potential options to make this extension of FM 1103 a reality. Along with the option of funding by TxDOT and the AAMPO, the City Manager has identified the options of the City of Cibolo using municipal bonds or using private financing to advance this project.

In order to explore the option of using private financing, the City began discussions with Mr. John Crew with Public Werks, Inc. Public Werks is a financing company that specializes in helping public sector entities build critical public improvements that those public entities cannot accomplish on their own. For example, if the City of Cibolo were to use municipal bonds to finance this project, our property tax rate would increase dramatically and would virtually eliminate our ability to issue additional bonds for other critical public improvements for many years to come. Public Werks arranges financing through private investors to fund projects so that municipalities such as ours can address very large infrastructure problems that we normally could not address on our own, projects that normally require involvement and funding from the state level. Public Werks is **NOT** a construction company and will not construct this project. Rather, Public Werks raises the funding necessary to design and construct the project, and hires other companies to do the actual design and construction. For this project, the City of Cibolo would require that the Cibolo Parkway project be designed by a professional engineering firm experienced in road construction in such a way that it complies with both TxDOT design and construction standards and the City's Unified Development Code. Furthermore, the city will require that this project be constructed by reputable contractors with proven track records on other, similar projects.

Eminent Domain for Private Gain

The flyer suggests that eminent domain or the threat of eminent domain will be used to undervalue property and take it from residents without the benefits of due process. **This is simply NOT TRUE.**

As we began the exploration of this concept, both the City Staff and the Blue Ribbon Committee we appointed have looked at a number of alignments that would have the least impact on landowners. The current alignment concept focused particularly on following property lines so parcels of land would not be "orphaned" and avoiding parcels of land where homes or other structures are present. Furthermore, City Staff has and will continue to hold discussions with land owners along the conceptual alignment to discuss its potential impacts to their land should the project move forward. **The entire point of this process has been to provide the land owners a clear and accurate understanding of this proposed project and to gain feedback with regard to minimizing any impacts to those landowners.**

The tool of eminent domain is an option that governmental bodies such as the City of Cibolo may use to acquire land for projects that are of benefit to the public and this power has been used by the city in the past. For example, the city utilized eminent domain to provide for a wastewater line that now provides service to the Turning Stone Subdivision and other future developments along the northeastern portion of our city. Cibolo used eminent domain to acquire the right of way along Green Valley Road to allow for the widening of that road in front of the new Cibolo Valley Elementary School to improve traffic flow and safety at that location. Cibolo also used eminent domain to provide for drainage improvements along the Town Creek watershed which aided in protecting homes in the Buffalo Crossing Subdivision from flooding by allowing for the reconfiguration of the flood plain.

While eminent domain is a tool that the City of Cibolo may use, the City Council has repeatedly and as a matter of public record made it clear that the use of this tool is a last resort. In every case where the city has used eminent domain, the city has and will always attempt to reach a mutually beneficial agreement with any landowner. Furthermore, the city has never paid less than fair market value as determined by a certified appraiser and agreed upon by a court of law to a landowner when eminent domain has been used. In fact, the City of Cibolo must comply with the rules promulgated by SB 18 as passed by the Texas Legislature in 2011. Those rules are as summarized below:

- There must be a public and record vote to initiate eminent domain proceedings.
- Private property can be condemned only for public use, not private use.
- A governmental or private entity may not take private property through the use of eminent domain if the taking: (1) confers a private benefit on a particular private party through the use of the property; (2) is for a public use that is merely a pretext to confer a private benefit on a particular private party; [or] (3) is for economic development purposes, unless the economic development is a secondary purpose resulting from municipal community development or municipal urban renewal activities to eliminate an existing affirmative harm on society from slum or blighted areas; (4) is not for a public use.
- Condemning entities must make a bona fide offer in writing and, if not, must pay the landowner's expenses and attorney's fees.
- Landowners will be compensated for damages from a loss of direct access to their property. Landowners will receive relocation assistance when forced to move off their property.
- Entity must obtain a written appraisal from a certified appraiser of the value of the property being acquired and the damages, if any, to any of the property owner's remaining property.

As can be clearly seen, this project has been identified as a clear and necessary public use for over a decade and is being pursued by the City of Cibolo in an effort to plan and prepare for the projected growth of our city. Also, it should be noted that state law precludes the use of eminent domain for private gain and **DOES NOT** allow for a governmental body to "forcibly take someone's land for your own personal profits" as suggested by the flyer. **Finally, should the use of eminent domain take place as a part of this project, it will be at the SOLE DISCRETION of the Cibolo City Council in accordance with established state law.**

Profiting off Congestion

Cibolo was recently identified as the 3rd fastest growing small city in the nation. This, coupled with the growth experienced throughout the San Antonio Metropolitan Area, has led to significant roadway infrastructure and mobility challenges. The AAMPO, a federally created authority, is tasked with creating and administering a comprehensive regional transportation program. This organization decides which roadway projects are given priority and which are funded.

The AAMPO is governed by the Transportation Policy Board (TPB) which is composed of 21 voting members. These members include representatives of Bexar County (4 members), the City of San Antonio (6 members), the Advanced Transportation District (1 member), the Alamo Regional Mobility Authority (1 member), TxDOT (1 member), VIA Metropolitan Transit (1 member), the Greater Bexar County Council of Cities (1 member), Guadalupe County (1 member), the City of Seguin (1 member), Comal County (1 member), the City of New Braunfels (1 member), the Northeast Partnership (1 member), and the Kendall County Geographic Area (1 member). This membership is responsible for evaluating projects, placing them on the list of projects that the AAMPO would like to accomplish, and allocating funding to those projects. While the extension of FM 1103 from Wagon Wheel Way to Interstate 10 has been placed on the list of projects and funding has been repeatedly sought, the TPB has never considered this project to be a high enough priority to allocate funding.

The City of Cibolo has worked diligently with the various members of the TPB to allocate funding to the extension of FM 1103. The city has also repeatedly engaged elected officials from Cibolo and surrounding cities, and county and state officials to address this project, citing the importance of this infrastructure to both regional mobility and the safety of people living south of FM 78 with regard to how quickly emergency services can access points south of FM 78, without success. The repeated results of our efforts has been for TxDOT and the AAMPO to tell us that funding is not available and that it will likely be 20 to 25 years before funding may

become available for this project. As stated before, the lack of progress in convincing TxDOT and the AAMPO to fund this project has resulted in the need for our city to pursue alternative funding mechanisms for this project. The use of private financing is one such mechanism under consideration by our City Council.

Because the use of private financing would necessitate the use of tolls, Ms. Hall raised a concern regarding the possible inclusion of a non-compete clause with this project at the July 26 public hearing. This concern is again raised in the flyer where it is taken further, indicating that through a non-compete clause, Public Werks will force an increase in congestion on city roads that are free to force traffic onto Cibolo Parkway so that “your free routes stay slow to get you to take their private toll road”. Council made it clear in our response to this question at the July 26 hearing where this became a part of the public record, that **the City of Cibolo will not accept a non-compete clause as a part of any development agreement on the Cibolo Parkway project. Furthermore, the City will not enter into an agreement that restricts our ability to implement projects that enhance the mobility of our community, either now or in the future.**

First Responders

It is well known that any response by police, fire, and EMS to emergencies south of FM 78 can be delayed by trains running through downtown Cibolo and Schertz on the Union Pacific rail line. The flyer offers the suggestion that existing gas taxes should be prioritized to build these proposed projects and indicates that these overpasses only cost between \$6 and \$10 million. **Unfortunately, the assertion that existing gas taxes can simply be prioritized to fund an overpass for \$6 to \$10 million is flat out wrong.** First, that funding would have to be allocated by the AAMPO and TxDOT, which again runs into the problems that Cibolo has had for at least the last decade in getting any funding allocated to projects which are a priority to our city. Second, the assertion that an overpass would only cost \$6 to \$10 million understates the actual cost dramatically. Based on the city’s consultation with professional engineers, the total cost for an overpass structure with adjoining roads and ramps would likely exceed \$20 million.

The next issue that the flyer does not address is where such an overpass would be built. City Staff has identified three locations where such an overpass could be built to address the issue of trains cutting off first responders. These locations include Main Street, Country Lane, and FM1103 at its intersection with FM 78. In evaluating these options, the following issues become clear:

- The placement of an overpass on Main Street at FM 78 would destroy the city’s Downtown District and would require the purchase of private homes on either side of the structure. This is a costly proposition and could potentially hurt the homeowners as well as hamper the revitalization of downtown and restrict economic development.
- The Country Lane location would disrupt the homes located along that road and would require the bridge to be built over a major flood zone. Furthermore, the roadways leading to the location of an overpass on Country Lane are narrow and subject to flooding, which would severely restrict the ability of our public safety divisions to access the overpass.
- The location at FM 1103 and FM 78 is probably the best location as there is sufficient space throughout this intersection for construction of the bridge structure and ramps. However, this would still require funding of at least \$20 million dollars.

As was stated above, it is unlikely that the AAMPO and TxDOT would allocate \$20 million or more to the construction of an overpass to allow for emergency vehicles to pass over the Union Pacific rail lines based on our previous attempts to secure funding for projects in our area. As a result, the only other source of funding outside of the use of private sector funding would be for the City of Cibolo to pass municipal bonds. If bonds were passed to fund a \$20 million overpass project, the result would be a property tax increase of approximately 8 to 10 cents over the

current tax rate. It should also be kept in mind that, while our taxes would go up, this would only solve the problem of crossing over the rail lines while a train is passing through the city. The construction of any overpass without significant connector roadways **WOULD NOT** address the additional concerns of access south of FM 78 during flood events. Furthermore, the construction of such an overpass would not meet the City's Master Plan goals of enhancing access to the southern areas of the city and enhancing the mobility of the city as a whole.

Toll Collection Nightmare

The flyer suggests that the Cibolo Police Department will be used to enforce the collection of tolls for a for-profit, private company and also indicates that your vehicle registration can be blocked and your vehicle impounded. The flyer also states that toll agencies assess exorbitant fees and that many toll bills are erroneous. However, the City of Cibolo will require as a part of any agreement for this project that toll fee collection is the sole responsibility of the toll operator. The Cibolo Police Department **WILL NOT** be responsible for collecting tolls. The Cibolo Police Department may provide police patrols on this roadway during operations; however, the City will insist that a contractual provision be included in any agreement that requires the toll operator to bear the expense of such patrols so that the taxpayer does not bear that cost.

With regard to any fees and fines assessed for motorists who fail to pay tolls, such fees and fines are similar to those that would be paid on any other debt where payment was not made. For example, fees and fines are assessed when credit card payments are not made or where traffic citations are given and not paid. For unpaid traffic citations, cases are turned over to collection firms and an additional fee equal to 30 percent is assessed on top of any other fines or fees. It should be understood that, despite the claim otherwise made by the flyer, the use of this roadway would be at the discretion of the driver and there will always be free alternatives available. These alternatives would not be any more congested than they would be if the Cibolo Parkway was not constructed. Accordingly, motorists who willingly take the Cibolo Parkway and do not pay the tolls would be subject to the same conditions that someone would face if they used their credit card and did not pay their bills when due.

Devaluation of Property

The flyer makes the statement that "Most won't pay the toll except during peak hours, and it could devalue residents' property values if the only practical way in and out of the city to jobs in San Antonio will cost them hundreds of dollars every month in tolls". The truth is, the Cibolo Parkway can provide an **ADDITIONAL** means of getting into and out of Cibolo, along with those roads that are already available to our citizens and are used every day by them.

Today, our citizens drive into and out of Cibolo along FM 1103, Cibolo Valley Drive/Wiederstein Road, FM 3009, and Haeckerville Road. Farm-to-Market 3009 is already configured with two traffic lanes in each direction with a dedicated turning lane along its entire length and with traffic signals to regulate the flow of traffic. The intersection of FM 3009 with Interstate 35 is configured with an overpass that carries two lanes of traffic in each direction with dedicated left turn bays and U-turn lanes. Farm-to-Market 1103 **WILL BE UPGRADED** by TxDOT from Wagon Wheel Way to Interstate 35 regardless of whether the Cibolo Parkway project is undertaken or not. The upgrade of FM 1103 is expected to begin in early 2018 and will include two traffic lanes in each direction with a dedicated turning lane along its entire length and traffic signals to regulate traffic flow. This upgrade will also include the expansion of the overpass at FM 1103 and Interstate 35 to include a bridge with two traffic lanes in each direction, dedicated left turn bays. With regard to Cibolo Valley Drive/Old Wiederstein Road, the cities of Cibolo and Schertz are in negotiations on how to fund the upgrade of that road from the Cibolo city limits where there are two traffic lanes in each direction with a dedicated turning lane to Interstate 35. Both cities are working with TxDOT and the MPO to secure funding to upgrade the overpass at that intersection as well. Finally, the engineering is underway to enhance Haeckerville Road along much of its length. The

City of Cibolo recently passed a bond to fund the reconstruction of a significant portion of this roadway and has also partnered with Guadalupe County to reconstruct portions of this road that are within the city's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction but outside of the city limits. **As can be seen, there are and will continue to be a myriad of practical ways in and out of Cibolo regardless of whether the Cibolo Parkway is built or not and efforts are and will continue to be made to reduce congestion on ALL roads within our city. The question is how do we construct a major piece of infrastructure that creates a high speed, high capacity thoroughfare that connects the north and south sides of the city AND facilitates the healthy economic development of the area south of FM 78. This is a question of how we plan for growth that we know is coming in the future and take steps to address these identified transportation issues now while they are still manageable rather than waiting for them to become major problems with very limited and expensive solutions.**

With regard to healthy economic development, the flyer insinuates that the City of Grand Prairie was once a thriving suburb of Dallas but that the construction of the SH 161 tollway turned that city into an undesirable place to live, bringing lower property values and crime. **This insinuation is false.** Grand Prairie was ranked as the 10th Safest City in Texas for cities with populations over 100,000 in 2014. Police reports for Grand Prairie indicate that there has been a 37% decrease in crime since 2010 and only recorded 4 homicides for the entire year of 2014.

To follow up on this issue, Mayor Pro Tem Hogue and I contacted the Mayor of Grand Prairie to learn from him what he thought the impacts of having that toll road were. He indicated that the road helped to stimulate economic development and did not devalue properties along the road. Furthermore, the Mayor of Grand Prairie was angered by the negative comments and untruthful characterizations being made by TURF about Grand Prairie.

An additional example of positive economic impact made by a tolled road is provided by Cedar Park, Texas. In an article attached to this memorandum, the Toll Road 183A is described as having provided explosive growth along the 183A corridor in Cedar Park. According to the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, the 2014 sales taxes within a half-mile of the 183A Toll Road increased from \$2.2 million to \$4.3 million (46% increase) since 2010. The hotel fund in the 183A area increased by \$240,000 since 2010, which is also a 46% increase. Property values within 1000 feet of this corridor grew to \$476 million (66% increase) over the period between 2007 and 2014. Values along adjacent roadways also were reported to have increased by \$290 million (139%) over the same time period.

Solutions Proposed by Flyer

The TURF flyer proposes the two following solutions:

1. Make TxDOT use the money the voters gave them (Prop 1 in 2014 and Prop 7 in 2015) to expand FM 1103 to I-10 and make it a freeway. If you tie it into the I-35 expansion project and offer it as an alternative route to I-10 as opposed to I-35, it could also help you access these funds since Governor Abbott has prioritized these new funds to address 100 Most Congested Roads (I-35 being one of them).
2. Ask the MPO to prioritize this project as a freeway. Mayor Dunn sits on the MPO Technical Advisory Committee and Guadalupe County, City of Seguin, City of New Braunfels, and Comal County (along with City of Boerne) can form a voting bloc on the MPO to propose this as a means to help alleviate I-35 congestion, which impacts all of these local governments.

In stating these as solutions, it is as though TURF holds the rather unflattering opinion that such thoughts may have never occurred to either this or previous councils, nor to elected officials at the county and state levels, or even the thousands upon thousands of us who call Cibolo home. We as a community, and in conjunction with our neighboring communities, the county,

and our state level elected officials have been asking TxDOT for years to allocate funding to projects that we see as critically important, including this project, to no avail. We all have also been asking the AAMPO to prioritize this project for years and we have worked diligently to try to build voting blocs on the Transportation Policy Board of the AAMPO that could make such a priority a reality. This is the primary reason that I serve on the AAMPO Technical Advisory Committee: to help better represent our community and the very real and pressing needs that we have to the Transportation Policy Board in the hopes that we will be able to set this and other projects in our community as a priority of the AAMPO. However, when looking at the composition of the Transportation Policy Board, it is clear that even if every member suggested by TURF was united as a voting bloc, that number of votes would fall far short of the number of votes necessary to set this project as a priority. The TURF flyer makes the statement that "One thing's certain, as long as a toll road is on the table, TxDOT will not release any existing taxpayer funds to help alleviate congestion". In retrospect, it does not appear that TxDOT or the AAMPO will make this project a priority **REGARDLESS** of whether tolls are on the table or not.

Closing

In summary, the proposed Cibolo Parkway will not be a private road: It will be a publicly owned toll road that is financed and constructed by the private sector. A toll fee would be charged only to users who access the toll portion of the road. Toll fees collected from those who choose to use the Cibolo Parkway will be used to reimburse the Texas Turnpike Corporation for providing the capital to build and manage the Cibolo Parkway project. **No city, county, state, or federal dollars are being proposed or anticipated to fund this project.**

The proposed Cibolo Parkway project is only one of a number of alternatives the city has been contemplating and continues to explore. As representatives of our fellow citizens of the City of Cibolo on the city council, we have been entrusted with the responsibility of planning for our city's future. We have an obligation to fully explore the alternatives that are available to us to address the various issues that we face as a city, including this alternative. Clearly, our transportation infrastructure has been and continues to be a critical issue that will not improve with time unless we take carefully considered and well-planned steps to address our continued population growth and need for healthy economic development. In order to take those carefully considered and well-planned steps, we have a duty to carefully evaluate the alternatives before us, including the proposed Cibolo Parkway. Only then can we make well informed decisions on how best to proceed with addressing the transportation issues we face. **Simply because we are evaluating this project as an alternative does not mean that we have already decided that this project is the best fit for our city. It only means that we are working to make sure that we completely understand the pros and cons of this project so that we can make an informed decision. As was stated before, the City of Cibolo continues to pursue other alternatives, including the securing of funding allocations from TxDOT and the AAMPO. Ultimately, this is a local issue that must be decided by the citizens of Cibolo and the Cibolo City Council.**

Sincerely,



Allen Dunn
Mayor

Enclosure(s)

Why residents should say 'No!' to a private toll road

John Crew and his company of investors have never built a single road. Once Texans find out what a private toll road will do to their communities, they kick them out. Below we give you some of the reasons why...

Crew & Co. cannot build a completely private toll road as they claim. What they intend to build is more like a Public Private Partnership, notorious for their sweetheart deals that smack of crony capitalism. The private entities team-up with the power of big government giving the private operator guaranteed profits on the backs of taxpayers.

John Crew & Public Werks need the taxpayers/government for four things:

1. Eminent domain
2. Non-compete
3. Taxpayer subsidies (to guarantee their loans, hence guarantee their profits)
4. Toll collection & enforcement

Eminent domain for private gain

John Crew and his investors at Public Werks/Texas Turnpike Corporation were chased out of East Dallas when he tried to build the Blacklands Tollway from Garland to Greenville. His company had the power of eminent domain then. We made sure the Texas legislature stripped that power from them, but they still have access to eminent domain by having the city or TxDOT do their dirty work for them.

Just like with the Blacklands project, Crew promises they'll only use eminent domain as a last resort. Well, guess what? He can remove those obstacles with the mere threat of eminent domain. The way these private firms operate is to give landowners a lowball offer and tell them either accept it or TxDOT will take it using eminent domain and pay you even less! It's real easy to get landowners to sign settlement agreements when you have access to the governmental power to forcibly take someone's land for your own personal profits. It's still eminent domain for private gain and Texans should NOT tolerate it!

Profiting off congestion

Congestion-weary commuters sometimes experience 45 minute commutes just to get to I-35. But rather than make TxDOT do its job and address congestion with our existing tax dollars, the residents of Cibolo are being asked to lose their land to a private, for-profit toll company in the name of congestion relief.

Think about it, will Crew's toll road make money if your free routes are uncongested? No. He only profits if all of your alternatives stay congested. One way these companies ensure your free routes stay clogged is through non-compete agreements. This prevents the city and/or TxDOT from expanding your free routes for the life of the contract in order to guarantee the profits of the private investors. That means Wagon Wheel, Weil Rd., Arizpe Rd., Lower Seguin Rd., Country Ln., Haeckerville Rd., Stolte Rd., Pfannstall Ln., Bolton Rd., and any free roads the private developer deems a threat to its profits.

Another way these private toll companies profit from congestion is to manipulate speed limits on your free routes. For SH 130, Cintra offered to pay \$100 million to TxDOT if it increased the speed limit on Cintra's tollway up to 85 MPH — the fastest in the country, which required a change in state law that TxDOT managed to secure for its own financial benefit. TxDOT then REDUCED the speed limits on the adjacent freeway, Hwy 183, from 65 MPH down to 55 MPH. These companies will stop at nothing to ensure your free routes stay slow to get you to take their private toll roads.

Taxpayers on the hook for the losses

Just like he did in East Dallas, Crew is also promising the Cibolo City Council that no public money is involved. An open records requests with the Blacklands project revealed,

Proposed Cibolo Toll Project

View larger: <http://www.texasurf.org/images/pdf/cibolo-tollroad-map2.jpg>



Crew sought a federal taxpayer-backed TIFIA loan and low interest, tax-exempt bonds, which is also backed by the taxpayer. So we can't trust what he says! We're to believe that he and his investors are willing to risk \$110-\$150 million of their own money for a toll road that exclusively serves the residents of a small Texas city, when by comparison, there's not one toll project in all of San Antonio that was found to be financially feasible. Something doesn't smell right.

Tolls won't stay \$2.10 a trip. When you give a private company a government-sanctioned monopoly, you'll be John Crew's personal ATM for your lifetime! Tolls will never go down and they certainly won't end. Compare \$.30 per mile in tolls to the \$.01-.02 per mile cost of driving a gas tax funded freeway and it's clear gas tax funded roads are far more affordable to drive than a monopoly granted to a private entity. Taxpayers can't pressure a private company if the tolls get too high. It's worse than taxation without representation, it's crony capitalism! Elected officials will hide behind the contract they signed outside the public's view, and drivers will be stuck paying whatever the private toll operator demands.

Devalue your property

Most won't pay the toll except during peak hours, and it could devalue residents' property values if the only practical way in and out of the city to jobs in San Antonio will cost them hundreds of dollars every month in tolls.

Continued...

The city of Grand Prairie was once a thriving suburb of Dallas until TxDOT built the SH 161 tollway through their community. Grand Prairie quickly became an undesirable place to live. Homeowners that refused to pay tolls in order to get to work sold their homes right away. When property values took a dive, in came the renters, which brought crime, drugs, and other social problems. Now a city that never had a crime problem today experiences multiple murders every month in their once safe neighborhoods.

What about Abbott's promise to fix roads without tolls?

John Crew has hired Rick Perry's former campaign consultant and former Chairwoman of the Texas Transportation Commission, Deirdre Delisi, to promote his private toll road and penetrate inside Cibolo's city government.

We obtained emails through an open records request that show Delisi Communications and Delisi herself have provided the city talking points and FAQs on the proposed toll road. Her firm specializes in public relations and was involved in the recent media coverage. Crew is hoping to cash-in on her connections to government and TxDOT in order to railroad this project through Cibolo.

We also found through an open records request that the city has met with Cintra, the operator of the bankrupt private toll project SH 130. Another email shows John Crew and his Delisi Communications consultants drafted a letter for Mayor Allen Dunn to get him to ask anti-toll Senator Donna Campbell to support their private toll project.

Our new Governor Greg Abbott has promised to go a different direction and fix Texas roads without new taxes, fees, debt or tolls. Hold Governor Abbott to his promise and keep Cibolo residents free from the bondage of paying tolls for their lifetimes.

Toll collection nightmare

Do you really want your law enforcement to spend their time policing a private toll road in order to enforce the collection of tolls for a for-profit, private company? State law allows them to block your vehicle registration or impound your vehicle if you owe unpaid tolls. Toll fines and fees have become very controversial around the state as toll agencies tack on exorbitant fines and fees and refuse to negotiate, financially ruining many Texans. Under threat of not being able to register their vehicle (affecting one's ability to drive legally), drivers are forced into payment arrangements that span years! Many toll bills are erroneous. Texans have been double billed, had fines tacked on when they have active TollTag accounts, and have been billed even when they haven't used the road. Many don't receive a bill until they're already in collections. Cibolo residents should not be eager to open this Pandora's box. Go to Texas Toll Road Class Action Lawsuit on Facebook to read thousands of personal stories of the toll billing nightmares across Texas.

First responders

As you've heard from EMS, there's a concern about the slow response time in getting to I-10 due to the trains. Delays can be up to 30 minutes. However, there's a simple solution for that — build overpasses. It doesn't have to be a toll road to get that done. If it's truly an issue of EMS response times and risk of life or limb at stake, then

prioritize existing gas tax dollars and get it done. Overpasses would cost between \$6-\$10 million each. TxDOT has funds earmarked for safety for this reason.

Solutions

1. Make TxDOT use the money the voters gave them (Prop 1 in 2014 and Prop 7 in 2015) to expand FM 1103 to I-10 and make it a freeway. — If you tie it into the I-35 expansion project and offer it as an alternative route to I-10 as opposed to I-35, it could also help you access these funds since Governor Abbott has prioritized these new funds to address 100 Most Congested Roads (I-35 is one of them).
2. Ask the MPO to prioritize this project as a freeway. Mayor Dunn sits on the MPO Technical Advisory Committee and Guadalupe County, City of Seguin, City of New Braunfels, and Comal County (along with City of Boerne) can form a voting block on the MPO to propose this as a means to help alleviate I-35 congestion, which impacts all of these local governments.

Pay-to-play

One thing's certain, as long as a toll road is on the table, TxDOT will not release any existing taxpayer funds to help alleviate congestion. **Public Werks and TxDOT want you to pay more so TxDOT can spend your existing tax money elsewhere!**

MOBILIZE AND ENGAGE

Texans Uniting for Reform and Freedom (TexasTURF.org) and **Texans for Toll-free Highways** (tollfreehighways.com) started right here in San Antonio and we have over a decade of grassroots experience advocating for taxpayers and fighting unwanted toll roads across the state. Please sign-up to receive our email alerts and stay engaged — neighbor to neighbor!

For more information go to:



www.TexasTURF.org

Defending Our Property Rights & Freedom to Travel



www.TollfreeHighways.com