



## Texas DOT launches study to evaluate need for New Braunfels Outer Loop

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Staff Writer

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) conducted a public meeting on Monday, June 25 at Canyon High School in New Braunfels, announcing to the public their intent to study the possibility of an Outer Loop for the city of New Braunfels and request input and information from locals on the proposed loop.

The New Braunfels Outer Loop Study is designated to evaluate possible corridors and locations for an outer loop within approximately a 40-mile radius around the city of New Braunfels that will encompass portions of both Comal and Guadalupe Counties.

The study will identify planning and analysis requirements needed for potential loop corridors that may be developed as a possible New Braunfels Outer Loop. The concept for the outer loop is outlined in the City of New Braunfels Major Thoroughfare Plan. TxDOT initiated their study to refine potential corridors so the city of New Braunfels can plan appropriately for the potential need for an Outer Loop.

The cities plan pro-actively takes into account the rapid growth in Comal and surrounding counties. As such the city planners are attempting to identify potential right of way needs so they can assemble an accurate construction

proposal. A proposal with accurate land, right of way, utility, interchange, bridging, and route length will facilitate budget development and project length.

The TxDOT study will seek to:

Identify a potential corridor for land (right of way) preservation.

Identify and prioritize segments of the loop that are needed sooner than others. If a loop is to be built, it will likely be implemented in phases.

Follow National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) guidelines to ensure information collected can be used for the development of future environmental documents for the segments of independent utility.

Segments of the proposed loop identified as priority will assist TxDOT in identifying project requirements for those portions of the loop that are needed sooner than others.

NEPA considerations will have to be considered for each segment or phase of the project.

\* The City of New Braunfels Major Thoroughfare Plan can be viewed at the following web link:

[www.ci.new-braunfels.tx.us/planning/compplan/ThorPlan11x17.pdf](http://www.ci.new-braunfels.tx.us/planning/compplan/ThorPlan11x17.pdf)

\* The City of New Braunfels Major Thoroughfare Plan map as well as the TxDOT survey area map can be viewed with this article.

During the public meeting, attendees were asked to sign in, were given handouts, and directed to the information stations in the auditorium. The stations addressed east and west side of Interstate 35, environmental issues, and corridor priorities. One of these handouts was a questionnaire; this two page questionnaire was both a comment card on how well they presented their information and also asked the attendees to numerically rate constraints that were most important to them. Also attendees were asked what type of roadway they thought was needed based on the presentation. (Note the five types of roadway diagrams discussed during the presentation).

At about 6:30 p.m. the actual presentation began and the program participants were introduced. TxDOT has contracted three companies to conduct this survey which began in April. Kennedy Consulting is responsible for developing survey results east of Interstate 35, RJ Rivera Associates, Inc. is responsible for developing survey results west of Interstate 35, and Turner, Collie & Braden, Inc. is responsible for environmental issues and concerns that are pertinent to the study area.

TxDOT's Judy Friesenhahn emphasized during her introduction that this study was a preliminary step in the process as well as a tool for city officials to use in preserving needed right of ways. Friesenhahn was also adamant during this meeting in stating that TxDOT did not have funds available for this project nor was there a construction project contract at this time. She wanted

everyone in attendance to understand that this is a feasibility study.

This study is scheduled to be completed sometime in April, 2008. Additional studies or evaluations may be needed for segments identified to further refine the corridors right of way width. TxDOT is seeking community involvement to better address the needs and concerns of those who might be effected by the development of an outer loop.

Your feedback is an important part of the New Braunfels Outer Loop Study and RJ Rivera Associates, Inc has been tasked to take your comments and submit them to the study team. You can access this outlet at the following:

New Braunfels Outer Loop Study  
Linda Vela, Public Involvement  
7410 Blanco Road, Suite 250  
San Antonio, Texas 78216  
Study Hotline 866-704-1114  
Study E-mail: info@nbolstudy.com

TxDOT requests that the public participate; they have provided a means to do so electronically, via voice and mail. Should you choose to participate and voice your concerns as a citizen who may be affected by the New Braunfels Outer Loop Study, then use the above listed means of contact and a study team member will reply to your comments within five (5) business days of receipt.

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