



Meeting minutes for:  
City Council of Liberty Hill, TX  
Special Joint Meeting between City Council and Representatives from TXDOT  
Held at Municipal Court/Council Chamber  
2801 Ranch Road 1869  
Liberty Hill, Texas 78642

June 27, 2023 1:30 PM

Council Present:

Mayor Liz Branigan  
Council Member Jones  
Council Member Crossland  
Council Member Young  
Council Member Pezold

Council Members Absent:

Mayor Pro Tem Crystal Mancilla

City Staff Present:

Paul Brandenburg, City Administrator  
David Thomison, Public Works Director  
Elaine Simpson, City Secretary  
Jerry Millard, Planning Director  
Sidney Smith, Finance Director  
Katie Amsler, Director of Community Engagement & Communications  
Mary Poche, Economic Development Corporation Director  
Shelby Claridge, Planning Technician  
McKenzi Hicks, Planner II  
Curtis Steger, Engineer

TXDOT Staff Present:

Cory Justice  
Brenda Guera  
John Peters  
Kyle Russell

## 1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Branigan established that a quorum was present and convened the meeting at 1:34 p.m.

## 2) REGULAR AGENDA

### a) Discussion and Presentation from representatives of the Texas Department of

Transportation (TXDOT) to include but not be limited to the following transportation

issues:

#### - Deceleration Lanes

John Peters, TXDOT Area Engineer spoke about deceleration lanes. The decel lanes on developments are all dependent on what type of traffic they are going to generate and what kind of use is going to be there. In TxDOT opinion any type of commercial development should have a decel lane for safety. On Highway 29 TXDOT requires any driveway that comes through our office to put in a decel lane for safety. With regards to subdivisions, condos, apartments TXDOT views as a commercial type of permit. TXDOT has 2 different types of driveway permits, we issue residential or commercial permits. Paul Brandenburg, City Administrator, commented that the City is asking the developers to pay for decel lane.

#### - Medians

Paul Brandenburg, commented about the turn lane on Hwy. 29 sometimes becomes a merge lane. Paul asked TXDOT at what time do medians go into that middle lane. John Peters, TXDOT Area Engineer, responded that right now Highway 29 is a 5-lane section and by law folks should not use the center lane to accelerate to merge into traffic. The center lane is supposed to be used by folks to decel to make the left turn movement into an establishment. John commented that in approximately 2009 Williamson County put together a feasibility study for highway 29. John mentioned that TXDOT has been in the process of negotiating a contract with a consultant to start looking at highway 29 to do a study and move forward in doing a schematic that we can use to have projects on highway 29 to maybe make it a freeway section.

Brenda Guerra, TXDOT Engineer commented that as a part of safety, sometimes we look at these 5 lane corridors, and a safety improvement program where funds are available for counter measures to address safety. As growth happens you may have conflict points at the center lane, there could be a temporary approach in trying to address some of these things. John spoke about short term fixes such as delineators and how they can sometimes create undesirable movements. Council member Pezold spoke about his concern with people not being allowed to use the center lane for acceleration, because of the congestion, that is the only way people can get out of some driveways. Council member Pezold also mentioned his concern about the alignment of Bailey Lane and the Stonewall project that the City is paying for should not be.

Cory Justice, TXDOT Engineer, responded to Council Member Pezold's concerns regarding enforcement and accelerating and using center turn lanes as acceleration. With the center turn lane, the enforcement would come in when someone gets in center turn lane and flies along with the traffic. Council Member Pezold asked when the last time TXDOT did a traffic count on Highway 29. John Peters responded that TXDOT does traffic counts every year on different roadways and locations. As for highway 29 he does not know, the counts available to the public are from 2021. The count varies, there is anywhere from 30,000 on highway 29 to 15,000 depending on where you are at. John said that the TXDOT transportation planning map has all that information on it. Council Member Pezold asked if TXDOT has any reimbursement programs? John Peters responded that he is not aware of any reimbursement programs, there is a SIB loan available through the state but that is a loan that has to be repaid back but he would get the information for Council. John Peters mentioned the HSIP program where they monitor the traffic incidents that happen yearly. As we see incidents happening, we submit them and they compete against other projects throughout the state. John Peters commented that Williamson County has been a good partner with TXDOT and their bond program is probably one of the largest in the State of Texas. Council Member Jones asked John Peters about TXDOT improvements and funding for highway 29. Would that be something we would be going to Williamson County for or would we be going to TXDOT to share the concerns on highway 29. John Peters responded that highway 29 is TXDOT but we partner with local partners such as Williamson County and CAMPO. John commented that CAMPO is the organization that controls all the federal dollars. John mentioned that TXDOT has a 10-year plan out there right now and every year we are looking ahead to add more projects. Council Member Pezold asked if highway 29 was on any of those 10-year projections? John Peters commented about the schematic for highway 29 and that it was a long-range plan. Brenda Guerra explained about the safety funds for the HSIP program. The first one is targeted funds and that is crash driven. The second opportunity is systemic and that would be improvements along a corridor. The third option is the off-system local government and that would be any off-system roads that the City of County has. The call for projects typically happens in October. Brenda said that she would look at the Bailey Lane/Loop 332 section and see what is going on there. Mayor Branigan asked Brenda how the City could get funds to add a signal at Bailey Lane/Loop 332. Brenda commented that TXDOT does not have a line of funding for signals, so we typically like to use developer funds. Council Member Young asked Mr. Peters how the City would go about getting on a list for medians. John responded that TXDOT has plans to study from the high school all the way back to the tie in is of the bypass on the east end towards 183. We will study that entire area. Council Member Young also asked if the City could get in line for a study for the speed limits. Cory Justice responded that TXDOT has already got the speed study scheduled for this fall. Council Member Jones asked when the long-term corridor study for highway 29 is supposed to take place. Mr. Peters responded that TXDOT is looking to get a consultant on board that will

hopefully start towards the end of the year and the process takes about 2 years. Councilmember Young asked what the enforcement would look like. Mr. Peters responded that TXDOT is not an enforcement agency, enforcement would be writing tickets.

Mr. Peters commented about a couple of safety projects that have been constructed that are within the City/ETJ is out on 183, we were able to add the center turn lane and shoulders out there. TXDOT also has a safety project out on west 1869 a little further out by the Cowboy Church, we are adding about a mile of left turn lanes and shoulders also. These two projects were funded through HSIP.

Mr. Peters commented about maintenance and TXDOT has an overlay project which will be re-overlapping highway 29 from 1869 out to the County line to be done this summer.

- Signal locations

Paul Brandenburg, City Administrator, asked TXDOT representatives what its standardization is for signals, how far distance wise. John Peters responded that TXDOT standard is they like to see ½ mile spacing but nothing less than ¼ of a mile. Unfortunately, due to the development on highway 29 there are signals out there that are closer than those minimum distance.

- Signal cost and installation

This item was previously discussed.

- Signal timing

Paul Brandenburg, City Administrator, asked TXDOT representatives if the signals that are being constructed, are they sensor based or are they timer based. John Peters responded that most of the signals have cameras that detect a vehicle and different programs can run on that signal during different times of the day to try to optimize them as best as possible. John commented that the traffic office has a signal team than can come out and make adjustments.

- Delineators

This item was previously discussed.

- Level of Service Analysis (LOSA)

Paul Brandenburg, City Administrator, said this item is on the City Council Agenda for June 28, 2023, dealing with Stonewall and highway 29. Mr. Peters commented that LOSA is a Local On System Agreement.

- Speed limit Studies

This item was previously discussed. Paul Brandenburg, City Administrator, commented that the last one that was done was in 2021. Councilmember Young asked if the traffic is naturally moving how low can we go down from that. Cory Justice responded it is based on the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile. Cory commented that with the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile a sample will be taken with traffic going at free flow and speed is based on that and adjustments can be made up or down. The access points, pedestrians, and accidents are also taken into consideration and use adjustment factors for that. That is how TXDOT comes up with a speed limit and it usually does not come down more than 5 mph but never goes down more than 10 mph at one study. Brenda Guerra commented that the City would have to pass a resolution to implement any reduction. Council Member Jones asked TXDOT representatives if they have long term plans for 1869. John Peters responded that right now there is nothing in the 10 year plan for 1869.

- Traffic volume studies

This item was previously discussed.

- TXDOT Projects conducted in Liberty Hill in the last three years.

John Peters updated that in the last 3 years that was a partnership agreement with Williamson County and TXDOT to do the improvements at CR 200 and highway 29. Also, the traffic signal at CR 214 and highway 29 went in. There has also been some striping refresh projects taken place on highway 29 and maintenance type operations that have taken place.

- TXDOT Projects planned for Liberty Hill in the next three years.

John Peters commented that in the next 3 years the overlay will take place from 1869 out to the line this summer. TXDOT is also finishing up a safety project on highway 183 from CR 258 to the north. There is also a signal scheduled to go in at CR 266 and Seward Junction loop and should be installed and activated by late winter. TXDOT is working with CTRMA right now where 183 and Seward Junction ties in to 183 frontage roads and signals will probably need to be installed at that location. Councilmember Pezold asked how to get HSIP funding. John Peters responded that is TXDOT safety program and Brenda Guerra explained the details.

- **Ultimate Hwy 29 Design and Buildout**

Paul Brandenburg, City Administrator, asked TXDOT representatives what the timeframe is for the Hwy 29 Design and buildout. John Peters responded that right now there is not an actual timeline because we do not have a funded project. The next step would be to move forward with the schematic and that will give us the opportunity to obtain funding either through CAMPO, federal dollars or developer dollars. Mr. Peters commented that over next few years we will know a little bit more on how highway 29 is going to look once the study is done and then the ultimate timeline. Councilmember Young commented that the LOSA has been signed and asked about the timeline for the signal at Stonewall. John Peters explained that how the LOSA will work is it will be an agreement with TXDOT and it is something that the City is in charge of. The City will hire a contractor and usually a signal can go in within 30 days and get it activated, and as for the road construction that is probably a 3-4 month timeline. Curtis Steger commented that there is already a signal at that intersection and the City is just adding one leg. Curtis commented that it is up to the City in terms of the funding available for the project to be able to determine what the schedule is moving forward. Paul Brandenburg asked about the signal at 1869/Loop 332. John Peters responded that it was a bit of a challenge because there was a lot of stuff underground that was not intended to be there. Mr. Peters responded that it was his understanding that it was moving forward but he doesn't have the latest construction schedule but would get back with Paul.

Paul Brandenburg asked how does TXDOT identify truck routes and what triggers that. Cory Justice responded that trucks are allowed to utilize the routes. There are legal weights that we are allowed to use. Mr. Justice said you can't restrict a truck off a state route. Councilmember Pezold asked if there was a way that the City could take over a portion of 1869 and if there was a route that the trucks could bypass the City on and stay out of the downtown. John Peters commented that the turnback program is something we would have to run up through administration and get their buyoff on. But that has been in discussion in the past turning part of 1869 to the City but at the end of the day we would have to have feasible route for trucks.

3.) **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Council Member Pezold and seconded by Council Member Crossland, to adjourn at 2:58 PM.

Vote on the Motion: Motion carried unanimously by a 4-0 vote. Ayes: Jones, Crossland, Pezold and Young. Nays: None. Mayor Pro Tem Mancilla was absent.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE City Council of the City of Liberty Hill, Texas on \_\_\_\_\_, 2023, on vote of 4 ayes, 0 nays, and 0 abstentions.

*Crystal Mancilla*  
Liz Branigan, Mayor

*Elaine Simpson*  
Elaine Simpson, City Secretary

