

Brenham City Council Minutes

A special meeting of the Brenham City Council and Washington County Commissioners Court was held on March 21st beginning at 3:00 p.m. in the Brenham City Hall, City Council Chambers, at 200 W. Vulcan Street, Brenham, Texas.

City of Brenham City Council Members present:

Mayor Milton Y. Tate, Jr.
Mayor Pro Tem Andrew Ebel
Councilmember Susan Cantey
Councilmember Keith Herring
Councilmember Albert Wright
Councilmember Clint Kolby

Members absent:

Councilmember Danny Goss

Washington County Commissioners Court Members present:

Judge John Durrenberger
Kirk Hanath
Don Koester
Joy Fuchs
Candice Bullock

Members absent:

None

Others present:

City Manager James Fisher, Deputy City Secretary I Kacey Weiss, Deputy City Secretary II Karen Stack, Director of Tourism and Marketing Jennifer Eckermann, Fire Chief Ricky Boeker, Public Works Director Dane Rau, Assistant City Manager of Public Utilities Lowell Ogle, Development Services Director Lori Sanguedolce, Susan Cates, Melinda Gordon and Caz Muske

Citizens present:

Ross McCall, James Brown, Brent Smith, Tom Whitehead, Doug Marino, Allison Kurwitz, Steve Higgins and Chad Bohne

Media Present:

Arthur Hahn, Brenham Banner Press; and Josh Blaschke, KWHI

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
2. **Invocation and Pledges to the US and Texas Flags – Mayor Pro Tem Ebel**

WORK SESSION

3. **Discussion and Presentation of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Regarding Future Transportation Needs in Washington County and the City of Brenham, and Associated Issues**

Development Services Director Lori Sanguedolce presented this item. Sanguedolce introduced Doug Marino, Director of Transportation Planning and Development from the Bryan District of TxDOT. Marino introduced Allison Kurwitz, Planning Engineer, and Chad Bohne, Deputy District Engineer. Marino explained that this discussion would address the interchange at U.S. Highway 290 and State Highway 36.

Marino discussed the meeting overview:

- Why are we here? Kickoff the project development – collaborate with local officials
- Project Background – Discuss project constraints, needs and goals
- Concepts Overview – Share preliminary concepts
- Next Steps and Timeline – Project development process
- Open Discussion and Questions – Show expanded view of concepts and gain as much feedback as possible

Kurwitz stated that the main needs of this project are to reduce congestion, improve safety and maintain connectivity. Kurwitz explained that the project goals include adding travel lanes, modernizing design, providing ramp connections to local roads, as well as to minimize the impact to adjacent properties.

Kurwitz explained that three concepts were developed: Concept A: a diverging diamond interchange, Concept B: a southern direct connect and Concept C: a split, northern direct connect.

Kurwitz stated that the diverging diamond interchange is highly efficient in traffic handling, maintains a similar footprint as existing, there is no change to connectivity, includes traffic signals and impacts businesses on U.S. Highway 290.

Kurwitz advised that the southern direct connect provides U.S. Highway 290 direct connection (no exit), has a medium sized right-of-way footprint, impacts businesses on U.S. Highway 290 and impacts landowners. Kurwitz added that the connectivity is maintained, but does change. Marino stated that this concept would be a better approach.

Kurwitz explained that the split, northern connection provides U.S. Highway 290 with a direct connection (exit, no stop), is the largest right-of-way footprint, impacts business on U.S. Highway 290 and impacts landowners. Kurwitz noted that the connectivity is maintained, but does change. Marino said construction and cost would be of the biggest concern with this design.

Marino stated the next steps and timeline include:

- Review feedback
- Continue evaluating and refining concepts
- Develop outreach plan and identify stakeholders
- Determine alternatives
- Hold public meetings
- Select and develop final design
- Tentative start of construction: 2025

Councilmembers asked numerous questions about each concept and leaned toward the southern direct connection. Marino stated that design is the most traditional one and would be beneficial from an economic standpoint, as it would open access points. Marino added that TxDOT would be responsible for a large portion of the compensation to affected landowners.

Kurwitz explained that these concepts would continually be revised based on feedback from the public, as well as several more meetings with stakeholders.

The meeting was adjourned.

Milton Y. Tate, Jr.

Mayor

Kacey A. Weiss, TRMC

Deputy City Secretary I



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