



City of Cibolo Blue Ribbon Committee

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Blue
Ribbon

Memo

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Garth Coursen, Chairman – Blue Ribbon Committee
Paul Buell, Vice-Chairman – Blue Ribbon Committee

Date: June 3, 2016

Re: Blue Ribbon Committee – Recommendation

cc: Robert T. Herrera, City Manager

The City Council passed a resolution creating a Blue Ribbon Committee on March 8, 2016 to pursue the proposal and feasibility of extending FM 1103 from the proximity of Wagon Wheel Way to IH-10.

Recommendation

By unanimous vote on May 19, 2016, the Cibolo Blue Ribbon Committee recommended the Cibolo City Council pursue extending and routing FM 1103 from Wagon Wheel Way to IH 10 via a toll road by entering into a contract and partnership with the Texas Turnpike Corporation. This effort will allow the City to accomplish and obtain a long standing goal of its Comprehensive Master Plan and Transportation Thoroughfare Plan.

The proposed toll road is in general conformance with the current Major Thoroughfare / Future Land Use / Master Plans.

Findings

The Committee reviewed and discussed several available options to construct the proposed road extension. The option of working with the private sector (Texas Turnpike Corporation), which consisted of building the extension as a “toll road”, was recognized as the most viable and timely option. This option also transferred the risk of financing the transportation project from the City. The Committee also reviewed and discussed the more traditional, publicly funded non-toll options including both a TxDOT and City project. Both options were considered to be cost and time prohibitive.

The Texas Turnpike Corporation will assume the liability risks, raise the capital needed for the construction and operations of the toll road, work closely with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to meet their administrative and road construction guidelines, meet or exceed Cibolo’s development and construction guidelines, and will enter into a development agreement with the City of Cibolo, Texas. Under this option, the City will not pledge or leverage property taxes or issue General Obligation or Revenue Bonds to construct this much needed road project. The City will not have any financial outlay towards the engineering and construction of the roadway, regardless of the success or failure of the project.

Additional considerations

1. Transparency and public input/involvement are essential. The City should hold several public meetings to discuss how the Cibolo Turnpike Toll Road may impact the community. A fact sheet (FAQ's) comprised of the Committee's project-related questions should be posted on the City's website or other appropriate forum for general public knowledge.
2. The City Council should encourage initial research, to include a feasibility study, to be undertaken by Texas Turnpike Corporation at their sole expense. Additionally, Texas Turnpike Corporation should provide a copy of the feasibility study to the City once complete.
3. The City Council should direct staff to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with TxDOT and submit a formal request to the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.
4. The City Council should consider the creation of a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone to help support the future maintenance of the toll road and capital improvements; thereby, allowing growth to pay for the maintenance over time.
5. The City Council should maintain a contractual and partnering relationship with Texas Turnpike Corporation to provide input and direction on toll rates. Additionally, a management and operating agreement should be developed between the entities to address future improvements along this transportation corridor.
6. The City should consider ingress/egress plans for future development and allowance for future infrastructure expansion.
7. In addition to current TxDOT FM 1103 lane expansions, the City should include the option for future express lanes to IH-35. This could be considered a key component on the success of the project because it may bring in the potential for a much larger consumer base. The possibility of express lanes provides a proactive approach for the future of the city. Additionally, the City should also consider obtaining ownership of FM 1103 via a "Give Back Program" as sponsored by TxDOT.
8. The City Council should consider toll relief for schools and public entities.

The City Council is to be commended for its desire to work with citizen committees to discuss this type of initiative. On behalf of the Blue Ribbon Committee, we would like to thank the City Council, City staff, and all who participated.

It has been an honor to serve and be a part of this exercise.

Sincerely,



Garth Coursen, Chairman
Blue Ribbon Committee



Paul Buell, Vice-Chairman
Blue Ribbon Committee