

Kendall County – Boerne – Fair Oaks Transportation Committee Minutes

**16 November 2021
2:01 – 4:12 p.m.**

In Attendance:

Don Durden, Bob Manning, John Kight, Bryce Boddie, Northern Hendricks, Jeff Carroll, Bitsy Pratt, Marcus Garcia, Bobby Balli, Ben Eldredge, Rich Sena, Jonah Evans, Gary Louie, Rankin D'Spain, Tim Bannwolf, Del Eulberg.

Not in Attendance:

Kim Blohm, Josh Limmer, Henry Acosta, Stephen Zoeller, and Steve Sharma.

Item 1: OPENING REMARKS

Don Durden opens the meeting and introduces himself because there are many members of the public in attendance. He thanks the citizens and committee members for attending. He says that as they are in the season of Thanksgiving, he is thankful that they live in a democracy where everyone is free to participate and asks that everyone be respectful.

Durden then says he will address some things that are on social media with respect and humility. He is a Kendall County resident and represents Precinct 4. He is familiar with the impact of transportation facilities and the flows on lifestyles and personal property. Because of this, he understands the fear that comes when believing your land and livelihood is at stake. He then asks those in attendance to consider and examine the records of himself and all the committee members over the course of their participation in City affairs and decide for themselves whether they are honest and sincere people. He feels confident that the public would find that to be true. He asks that no one be fearful and respond to rumors that are unfounded and encourages them to have courage. There are serious issues to face with a huge population heading this way. The Kendall Gateway, he says, is not currently on the table and never will be. However,

this does not mean that their problems are solved. He asks them to focus their energies on the problems and coming to a consensus. He invites people to express their concerns.

Bob Manning adds that many of those in the audience have been to the committee's meetings. He states that there are no agendas or hidden discussions happening behind closed doors. This has always been a conversational committee that includes the public. He asks that everyone listen to the dialogue and respect what people are saying. He notes that they had planned to be some discussion on controversial projects, but Fair Oaks Ranch was not ready with their presentation materials, and they hope to have that happen at the next meeting.

Bobby Balli speaks in response to that as a Fair Oaks Ranch representative, saying that they had hoped to present at today's meeting, but the City Manager felt that they needed to also present their Capital Improvement Plan.

Item 2: CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 19, 2021 AND NOVEMBER 2, 2021

Durden opens the floor for approval of the minutes of October 19, 2021. The minutes from November 2, 2021 are not yet available for consideration. Balli makes a motion to approve the minutes for October 19, 2021. Bryce Boddie seconds the motion. With no objections, the minutes are adopted.

Item 3: PUBLIC COMMENT

Durden opens the floor for the first public comment opportunity. He asks that each speaker keep their comments to 3 minutes and that they introduce themselves for the record when they approach the lectern.

Nolan Kuehn approaches the committee saying that he read an article that predicted Austin, TX will be America's next great bicycling City. One of the interesting initiatives was about transportation; the word "network" was used a lot and he thinks that is a keyword. He has a friend that thinks this area will be a future bicycle destination area and encourages the

committee to think in terms of creating a bicycle network. He thinks Austin is moving in the right direction and thinks perhaps it would be a good place for the committee to be doing some research as well.

Alex Rudd approaches the committee and first thanks them and expresses her support for all their hard work. Her biggest concern is that the committee be allotted time enough to make sound recommendations. She hopes they won't be rushed in making such important decisions and thinks it inappropriate that the committee be tied to a deadline because of the impact on the entire county.

Manning chimes in in response saying that because they are not a true government entity, the committee can respond. He explains that he and Durden updated Council recently on the committee's process. In all cases he says, the point was made clear that the committee is not working under a tight schedule; this is too important, and they must get it right. The committee does not feel that they are under pressure, although some sense of urgency can be helpful. Durden notes that there may be some funding opportunities that could make time of the essence.

Lance Kyle approaches the lectern. He says that transportation planning must be data driven, so he is glad to see that the agenda is rich in data. He says that today the committee will discuss new traffic data that was presumably collected by TxDOT and supplied by the City. He expresses his concern for that data to be accurate and timely. He says the Kendall Gateway Study contained flawed and stale data, and TxDOT make questionable conclusions about pass-through trip destinations with a Bluetooth-based tracking technology. Right-of-way sizes were also misrepresented he says. Applied easements were 300 feet. Environmentally sensitive areas were discounted. He explains that no geologic or recharge features were listed in the southeast quadrant. He says data collected for Main Street traffic was stale because it preceded the opening of Herff Road. Community input was limited because many entities were not notified. He says it is important to know how many traffic issues are construction-related vs. school-driven and other. He thinks if Herff Road is being underutilized, it should be optimized. He says TxDOT has a reputation for over projecting traffic counts and thinks the committee should be wary of that. He mentions a traffic counter that was installed on

Main Street and then removed after a few hours in 2018. He also says the City and County need to collect real environmental data.

Kevin Marnell approaches the committee next. He notes that there are still empty seats in the audience, and he attributes that to the time of the meetings. He thinks more people would attend if the meetings were held at a different time if the committee is looking for more of a give-take environment.

Denise Dever approaches the lectern next. Something she sent to a few of the committee members. She sat in on the TxDOT freight mobility planning. She spoke to the rule portion of the transportation committee. She says they need to know and understand that this freight planning is in place. It was part of the Gateway planning she says. She disagreed with the thought to have Highway 46 be designated as a freight mobility option from I-10 to west into Pipe Creek. She says the committee needs to be aware that this is going on and suggests looking at freight mobility planning. She doesn't want this area to turn into an area for that optimization.

Item 4: DISCUSSION OF TRAFFIC COUNTS

Durden shifts the conversation to the discussion regarding traffic count data. He says they have been working on the drafted report since the last outline was distributed. He realized as they reviewed that they need some data driven analysis. He refers the room to the "Chapter III TECHNICAL FOUNDATION" document attached to the agenda handout and reads aloud. **(INSERT LINK FOR DOCUMENT??)**

After reading, Durden says that while it is easy to see the traffic congestion issues in and around the area, he still felt that this type of information would help them come to a consensus on how to solve some of the issues. One of the questions he pondered was how the population translates to the traffic. He turns the attention of the room to some spreadsheets also attached to the agenda packet. **(INSERT LINK FOR DOCUMENT??)**. He explains that they have traffic data from the Statewide Traffic Analysis and Reporting System (STARS) which is run by TxDOT where they lay down the tubes that go across the road to count the traffic. This is done all over the state, and there are very consistent results associated with this method.

Durden says he pulled the data from 2013-2019 and 2020 for a series of major roads in the area. Looking at the spreadsheets, he notes a drop in traffic data for the year 2020, so he does not think it wise to use that data as the basis for any calculations. If the 2020 data is excluded, the other data shows an average growth rate of 3.7% per year. He feels that the data is congruent with the population growth.

Jonah Evans makes a note that in the given table of information, there was only one spot that showed negative growth and that was the north end of Business 87 and I-10—it went down by 10% from 2013-2019. Durden says that could have been due to construction, the traffic counter went bad, or some other contributing factor. He notes that that is the reason he feels more comfortable having lots of data. If there is one thing such as this that sticks out among a pool of congruent data, it makes it easier to not base decisions on one portion of the data.

Ms. Rudd in the audience asks if there is any data on the number of large trucks that through town and what their destinations are. Durden responds to her and says that these data sources have trucks, but it does not present the destination information. He notes that they plan to talk about that soon.

Next, Durden says that he pulled additional data from TxDOT's statewide plan and turns the room toward the TxDOT 2040 projections. Evans comments that the projections are remarkably consistent. Durden thinks the committee has enough information to project traffic increase, but he is unsure about the calculations. He says the committee could take that on. He says there is a lack of 2040 data though. Jeff Carroll chimes in and says that this would not be a projection, it would be an actual count. Durden notes that they have already exceeded TxDOT's projections. Carroll says the City has traffic counters where they could set them out on a Monday morning and pick them up the following Friday and use those numbers to average a day's worth of traffic.

Gary Louie says to look at TxDOT's numbers compare apples to apples. Durden notes that traffic counting is not an exact science, but rather a way to determine trends.

Rich Sena says that it is easy to see that the population will double by 2040 and triple by 2050. What they do not know is how the behavior of traffic will change over the course of that time.

Manning asks Sena a follow-up question. This data is saying the population is projected to double from 2020-2040; he wonders what the BISS demographics imply. Sena says that the moderate growth forecast doubles, but there is a stipulation that the growth will be somewhere between the slower growth and the medium growth projections which would be in the next decade.

Durden moves to page 7 of the agenda. He thinks they should cross out the 2020 and 2040 data and use the 2019 as a starting point. He checked to see if the growth rates from the low segments apply to the 2019 data by adding an average growth rate of 4.9% for two years—that provides a pretty accurate result, and the numbers are almost the same as the City traffic counts. He says there are factors that they cannot model very well but the next 3-5 years show an accurate projection.

Evans adds that the more they tinker with it, the more complicated it will get. Some things could drastically change the traffic like development of schools, stores, and other facilities. There are also TIA's for the Shoreline Park and Corley Farms subdivisions. Balli says that TIA's are just regional assumptions, but he thinks they are headed in the right direction.

Evans says that a pre-pandemic conversation that the committee had was about creating accessibility. He explains that it is nice to have extra resources considering that transportation planning is very difficult when you cannot plan for commercial development. Sena adds that it is interesting to hear that there must be a certain population density for certain developments to come to an area. He wonders if Boerne population counts will qualify the area south of Highway 46 and I-10 for grocery stores and other commercial developments. If their projections are close an accurate, that will help them determine necessary road structure.

Ben Eldredge chimes in and says that a public transportation network could emerge within the area in the next 20 years. The habit in Texas is for the individual automobile, but a need could emerge for more.

Durden mentions a data source called StreetLight. He says a lot of businesses have taken the data they found here and were able to correlate it with traffic counts. He encourages members of the committee and the public to visit the website at www.streetlightdata.com.

Item 5: DISCUSSION OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO DATE

Durden switches gears to discuss more policy recommendations for the final draft report, specifically Chapter 10.

Tim Bannwolf discusses school district projections saying that there seems to be an average annual growth rate of about 5%. He thinks that at this rate there will be a need for some new connectors across Kendall County to increase mobility, which is part of the committee's charge. In the event of splitting someone's property, they are trying to avoid doing that. He lists off policy recommendations surrounding limitations to new construction and building through landowners' properties. He feels very strongly that property owners need to be notified and informed *before* any information hits the newspapers. Speaking to Ms. Rudd's earlier comments, he notes the new UDC. That was a document that they took as much time as they needed to get it right. He knows this committee will do the same.

Eldredge said there was discussion regarding some controversial topics, and they are working on outlining the principles. Everyone has concerns, but that's where the transparency aspect comes in. He says there needs to be adequate outreach to homeowners. Some people may see an opportunity to make money off land and others will not agree with that, but he thinks there should be discussion from both sides. Manning says it would be recommended that any new road being proposed, there would be a requirement to reach out to landowners before work begins. Bannwolf says they assume the population will grow, and there are issues that need to be addressed, but this is a matter of doing things the right way.

Denise Hearst in the audience speaks up and notes that there was a public transportation system implemented in the city of Georgetown, but it has now been removed because it was ineffective. She notes that she lives out Sisterdale Highway, and much of the traffic she sees are tourists heading

to Luckenbach or somewhere else in the Hill Country. She is unsure that the numbers on that road should be seen as an accurate representation of growth in that area.

Catherine Marnell chimes in as well expressing her concerns about how resources will become limited as people continue to move to the area. The infrastructure here is not equipped for the influx of residents. She wonders how closely the committee is working with the people who are “okaying” the development in the area.

Durden turns back to Bannwolf’s point on policy, saying that these are policies that they would propose both the City and County adopt. Their recommendations call for a land use transportation complex, as many are concerned about how development will affect transportation. Some things they can do, others they cannot. He begins reading an excerpt from the Chapter 10 Policy Recommendation Draft [\(INSERT LINK HERE??\)](#).

Bitsy Pratt gives some feedback, saying that she does not think this can be a stand-alone recommendation; there needs to be some explanation of an ultimate route. She says they should talk about the cost of developing the downtown area and what those costs would be to the community in trying to find alternate routes.

Evans asks if the City were to purchase US 87 and Highway 46, would TxDOT develop an alternate route in the area. Carroll chimes in to note that the only statement he has heard is that the City taking over Main Street and part of River Road would some how be tied into creating some other place for the TxDOT trucks to go. However, he notes that this would be expensive for taxpayers so that the City could maintain it.

Balli says their goal is to provide short- and long-term transportation goals. Could they decide that a downtown study would fall under the policy recommendations because there are sidewalk, crossing, and parking issues that the committee cannot solve themselves, but it could be a proposal for the City of Boerne to take it all as one piece and do a study.

Manning says there is a need for a safety study to be done for the downtown area, pedestrians, parking, etc. Evans if cost were associated, they don’t want to put a policy in there that has a large, unintended

consequence that they aren't expecting. If they are evaluating what it would be to take on that road, the cost might be financial, but there could be others costs that as well would be associated with assuming responsibility. Pratt asks if there is a way to maintain ownerships, but not make any decisions about creating an alternate route. She asks if that would default to TxDOT. She thinks something should be written in the policy about maintaining ownerships of a decision for an alternate route and not just boot it out there back to TxDOT.

Durden says that these comments are legitimate. He suggests doing a cost analysis along with an alternative analysis and if it turns out, they should say how they will address those concerns if they are in control.

Eldredge thinks it would be beneficial to engage and collaborate with TxDOT. Durden says that can be complicated. Pratt asks if she can take on "word-smithing" a draft for that concept. Durden agrees.

Carroll notes there is a maintenance agreement with the City and TxDOT such as paint specs or light synchronization. However, anything that is proposed to TxDOT is a big effort.

Durden asks the committee to consider other policy statements, and he encourages them to come forward with updates.

Carroll begins addressing comments raised about development. The City has a Major Thoroughfare Plan in place, and there have been many versions of it throughout the years. Herff Road was mentioned earlier and is one that showed up in the 1974 version. If a parcel is sold to a developer, the ETJ extends 1 mile outside of the City limits, so the City can ask certain things of a developer to accommodate road traffic depending on how the development will affect an area—he mentions that TIA studies are an example. As development occurs, thoroughfares, sidewalks, turn lanes, and other amenities are being built. He says that there will soon be a lot of dead-end roads that connect to one another. They are currently reviewing plans for roads that will connect to Herff Ranch Blvd and Ranches at Creekside.

Item 6: PUBLIC COMMENT

Catherine Marnell steps up to the podium to continue her earlier comments, saying that she understands Carroll's comment, but she still thinks the development here is astronomical. She sees growth everywhere, and the water will not last forever. She says the quality of their life is going down. She and her husband try to avoid going into town. She wants to know who controls what is being built, what that process looks like, how are they keeping up with it all, and where she should be doing her homework.

Evans says he appreciates her comments, and a lot of people have similar sentiments. He notes that there is not much of an ability for the City or County to control development. Durden tags onto that saying that there is only so much that even he as a County Commissioner can do with the legislature. He says that it has been demonstrated that water is sourced outside of the county, and they have no control over the density of the area. He says that developers have strong property rights, and the committee is limited on what they can carry out. He encourages people to vote and get involved with representatives for their area.

Wanda McCarthy approaches the lectern with a few points to bring up, she says. She says prior to when the committee stopped meeting in 2020, they discussed how the pandemic may change the structure of how people work. The data counts somewhat project that. She thinks there will be a shift in what we call "normal", and things will not go back entirely to the way they used to be. She also wants to mention that quality of life should be considered among all the discussion surrounding road improvements, roundabouts, paint, etc. A lot of people in the community are concerned for their lives, their families, and their futures. Thoroughfares and developments have come in and pushed out to people's homes and sensitive areas. She understands there are procedures put in place, but she does not want that to be forgotten.

Vialissa Gerhard steps up to the microphone next. She says she has attended most of these meetings and even went to some of the subcommittee meetings. She notes that most people know what times they should not get into traffic, and she asks the committee to consider the bottleneck locations in the area. She says in the subcommittee meetings, there was talk about getting parents and kids to and from schools, and

perhaps some of the street counting could happen at the entrances of schools. She thinks those numbers are important. Coming up with new routes won't solve the existing problems. She says once I-10 is completed, she thinks things will loosen up.

Bill McNaught expresses his concerns next regarding the structure of the overall authorities making decisions on roads being built within Boerne and Kendall County. He asks if Boerne is looking at making changes inside its own jurisdiction, are there any powers that would inhibit Boerne from clearly making those decisions. He is unsure if Boerne can impose anything on Kendall County. If they look at AAMPO and the massive collective of power sources in Bexar County, San Antonio, etc., they all have their own interests and concerns. He is concerned that Boerne's decisions will conflict with what the Boerne citizens here want. He is concerned that Boerne will become agents of the massive collective of power that is San Antonio, and they will not allow the City to make decisions that align with the needs and desires of the community. If 80% of funding money is coming from AAMPO, they will want to have a lot of say in what's being executed. He would like to better understand how sources of power make decisions not just in the City, but also in the County and pushing outward.

Durden brings the meeting to a close. He says that there is an extra Tuesday in the month of November and asks if the committee would like to take advantage of that and have an extra meeting. The consensus is yes. There will be a meeting held on November 30, 2021. A regularly scheduled meeting will still be held on December 7, 2021.

Item 7: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourns at 4:12pm.