

INTERIM REPORT

OF

THE

**WISE COUNTY LONG RANGE PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

June 13, 2006

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	Page 3
Mission Statement	Page 5
Committee Chairs	Page 6
Board of Directors	Page 8
Committee Guidelines	Page 9
Interim Report	Page 11
Report of Youth Committee	Verbal
Report of Social Services Committee	Page 14
Report of Government Committee	Page 16
Report of Infrastructure Committee	Page 18
Report of Industrial and Economic Development Committee	Attachment
Housing Development Committee	N/A
Environmental Committee	N/A

Wise County Long Range Planning Committee

Executive Summary

Full interim reports have been submitted by the following committees:

Youth
Industrial Development
Social Services
Infrastructure
Government

Reports from the following committees have not been received:

Housing Development
Environment

Committees based their work on interviews, presentations, previous studies and citizen input. These reports are the first in a series of reports that will be developed as the committees continue their work.

The Board of Directors has received the resignation of Bob Bolan as a member at large. Efforts are underway to select a new member to be elected at the next scheduled meeting of the Board.

It was apparent that the growth and future of Wise County will depend on a change of focus from our elected officials. The needs of the County will require additional participation in the NTCOG and a focus on issues that will impact the future of the County. It was a common theme among the interim reports that our Commissioners must be freed from direct job specific supervision to provide more opportunity for policy, planning and lobbying efforts for funding sources.

Concerns were also voiced clearly over the land use and impact of the oil and gas industry in general and the proliferation of waste disposal wells in the County. Damage to roads and the impact of heavy trucks must be addressed on a level that included State participation.

Participation in joint planning organizations is required so Wise County can have a say in the future plans of the State and surrounding counties and cities. The encroachment of Fort Worth is of particular concern. Efforts must be made to work closely with EDCs in each participating city. Plans for the County must include city input.

It was interesting to note that the citizens do not think our County roads are a high priority, yet our elected officials spend the vast majority of their time on that issue.

The future of Wise County is bright. We have economic and natural resources unlike other counties of our size. We have unparalleled growth and an oil and gas industry that contributes tax base of a significant size. We also face the challenges of managing the growth, providing for the services our youth and aging population will require and making sure our natural resources are protected and made available for long term use.

The issues faced by the citizens of Wise County can only be addressed with careful planning and a focus that does not exist today. It is the hope of the Long Range Citizens Planning Committee that the ideas and suggestions of this and future reports be strongly considered by the elected officials of the County and that the input of the citizens continue to be the major factor in all decisions.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Joling". The signature is stylized with a large initial "J" and "L".

Long Range Planning Committee
Jim Joling, Chairperson

Wise County Citizen's Planning Committee

MISSION STATEMENT

Wise County Citizens are concerned about the future of the County and the impact of growth, changes in economic drivers, and the quality of life for the Citizens. The absence of any long range plan or planning document for the County to use for the establishment of goals, objectives, laws, rules, guidelines or proposals is of concern to the Citizens of Wise County. A group of Wise County Citizens met to form a Committee to help develop a long term planning report to be presented to the public, Wise County Commissioners Court, County Agencies, Wise County Municipalities and Business Organizations and Business Leaders in the County.

It is the Mission of the Wise County Citizen's Long Range Planning Committee to:

- Organize subcommittees focused on key components of the County that will have a direct impact on the quality of life of the Citizens of Wise County.
- Undertake studies and gather data to provide input for the creation of a long range planning document.
- Involve Citizens, business groups, County Agencies, Elected Officials and all available sources of input and advice.
- Not be limited by existing laws, rules or financial considerations when formulating ideas or making recommendations.
- Prepare interim reports to be released to the Public and Elected Officials for review and comment.
- Prepare recommendations for consideration by Elected Officials, Business Leaders and Organizations, Civic Groups, and the Citizens of Wise County to assure planned growth for the benefit of the Citizens.
- Remain an ongoing group for continued study and recommendations.

Wise County Citizen's Planning Committee

Sub-Committees

Infrastructure

- Roads
- Parks
 - The Arts
 - Community Heritage
- Trail System
- Transportation (TxDOT coordination)
- Airport
- Rail

Chairperson Jerry Frank

8100 Lomo Alto
Dallas, TX 75225

Phone (214) 522-8122
Cell (214) 538-3663
Email
jeromefr@sbcglobal.net

Youth Services

- Activities
- Parks and Recreation Facilities
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- After School Activities
- Youth Court

Chairperson Kim Tinkham

494 CR 4591
Boyd, TX 76023

Phone (817) 291-8465
Email
kim@wiseyouthtoday.com

Environment

- Water Resources
- Water District
- Sewage Planning
- Air and Noise Pollution
- Oil and Gas Industry impact

Chairperson Mike Georgia

2502 CR 4421
Rhome, TX 76078

Phone (940) 627-7572
Cell (940) 389-3987
Email
mgeorgia@advancedaerobic.com

Housing Development

- Zoning issues
- Attraction of Developers
- Service requirements
- City vs. County

Chairperson J.K. Miller

207 W. Main St.
Decatur, TX 76234

Phone (940) 627-3500
Cell (214) 803-3400
Email jkmiller@jkmiller.net

Industrial Development

- Zoning issues
- Economic Development Board
- Infrastructure requirements
- Land availability/suitability
- Attracting development

Chairperson Charles Cocanougher

1100 E. Business 380
Decatur, TX 76234
Phone (940) 627-3143
Cell (940) 393-1313
Email cocaprop@ntws.net

Government

- Structure
- Community involvement
- Service vs. cost
- Tax Structure
- Inter-governmental cooperation
- State and Federal representation
- Emergency Services

Chairperson Linda Ortberg

262 CR 4655
Phone (817) 489-2316
Cell ((817) 515-4780
Email
Linda.ortberg@tccd.edu

Social Services

- Services Needed
- Community involvement
- Services in Place Now
- Cost v. Benefits
- Inter-agency cooperation
- State and Federal Support
- Family Emergencies

Chairperson Betty Russell

Email enr58@hotmail.com

Wise County Citizen's Planning Committee

Board of Directors

Chairperson

Jim Joling
PO Box 1137
Boyd, TX 76023

Phone (940) 433-2729
Cell (940) 389-3739
Email jim@brayerhill.com

Member at Large (1)

Open

Vice Chairperson

Pete Rivera
2865 N. Trinity
Decatur, TX 76234

Phone (940) 626-4735

Member at Large (2)

Tim Fletcher
PO Box 33
Slidell, TX 76267

Phone (940) 466-9191
Cell (94) 393-3625

Secretary

Ken Dodson
405 Parkwest Court
Decatur, TX 76234

Phone (940) 627-3581
Email krdodson@wisetitle.com

Wise County Citizen's Planning Committee

Sub-Committee Guide

Getting Started

Contact citizens that may have expertise or an interest in your sub committee's topic. Seek out experts in the subject matter that may wish to participate. Call on current and former leaders in the community to ask for the names of individuals who they think can add to your committee. This will also help to gain support for your report later.

Meeting format

Meetings can be very casual or more formal as needed. Some meetings may be done as research nights on a PC or at the Library. Other meetings can be conducted with expert witness testimony or by open community forums. Written questionnaires can also be used to gather data for research. Use your own judgment and creativity.

Meeting Locations

Meetings can be held at the Courthouse, at the Public Library in Boyd or Decatur. Also, the Boyd Community Center can be used at no charge. Most banks will allow use of their meeting rooms for civic groups as well. Other cities may also allow use of community centers at no charge. Meeting times can be set to accommodate the majority of the committee members. Early evenings or Saturday mornings are usually best.

Communication

Communication with your committee members is very important. Email works very well and is very fast and inexpensive. However, not everyone has email. Caryn in Judge Chase's office (627-5743) can mail out letters for your committee and make a reasonable number of copies as needed. The *Wise County Messenger* and the *Bridgeport Index* have been very supportive and will most likely print notices of your meetings in their community calendar or community events sections at no charge.

Time Frames

This is a long term planning process. However, we do need to show progress as the County's growth is continuing and if we do not present a plan to the Commissioners, Fort Worth will be doing our planning for us. Initial reports should be ready by the end of the year. Interim reports should be ready by mid December. These are by no means the end of our work or the final submission. We need a blueprint for the plan and we should be able to present one to the Commissioners to begin 2006 out with positive thinking.

Report Format

The final report will be a combined report of all the subcommittees and will be modified in a unified format. Each subcommittee's report can be tailored to meet their needs and the format of their meetings and the format of their research.

Each report should state the objectives of the sub committee, the topics that were studied, the methods that were used to gather data, the sources of the data (e.g. expert witnesses, research materials, etc.) and a summary of conclusions. The body of the report should show the data, the conclusions based on data and needs of the County and then recommendations based on data and need. You do not have to cost justify the recommendations or do you have to research your recommendations as to how they can be implemented. That will be the work of the Commissioners. Obviously, recommendations should be within the authority of the County of Wise unless you believe that State or Federal action is warranted, and then note that County lobbying action is required.

Nothing is off limits. We need all the creative ideas we can get.

Our County has doubled in size in 15 years and it will continue to do so again. Fort Worth is already heading past Highway 114 and will soon make a turn to the east. We cannot afford to lose control of our destiny. We have great natural resources, wonderful green spaces and potential to grow in a way that will protect the lifestyle we all enjoy here in Wise County without sacrificing the growth that we know is coming our way.

You have the opportunity to help shape the next 100 years of Wise County and your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Wise County Long Range Planning Committee

Interim Summary Report

June 13, 2006

This report consists of the top priority recommendations made by the sub committees. A copy of each submitted report follows for review. Each sub committee made recommendations independent of each other and formed these recommendations based on the data collected during the course of their activities.

Youth Committee

- A Youth Advocacy Center should be established at the County level to support the needs of the youth of Wise County by coordinating services for youth encompassing preventative as well as rehabilitative. This Center would also serve as the point of contact for information, education and distribution of materials throughout the county to be used by schools and various service organizations. Plans to bring in organizations such as YMCA, Big Brothers & Big Sisters, Girls and Boys Clubs of America and other service, mentoring and social organizations designed specifically for the youth can be housed in this facility. The establishment of a county funded Teen Club that would start within this Center and later with funding and City donations branch out into the different communities is needed.
- A strong Drug Awareness and Drug Enforcement program must be established to support the efforts of education and peer support. Drug law enforcement alone will not solve the nature of the drug experimentation and peer pressure our youth face today. This program needs funding and must be done in cooperation with law enforcement, school agendas, private businesses and social service programs. The punishment for drug dealers and drug manufacturers that make, sell and distribute drugs near children and to children should bear the highest punishment. We must send out a message to those who come into our county because of its easy accessibility to 'privacy' to make, sell or distribute drugs that they will be caught and punished severely in our county. We need to take out billboards and newspaper advertising that say just that.

Industrial and Economic Development Committee

- The County should encourage economic development through the use of existing EDCs and the possibility of establishing a County EDC. The County should make responsible economic enticements only with the establishment of a County policy which clearly spells out the requirements for any grants or tax abatements.
- The County should be aware of all environmental issues that could be created by industry that exists or may be attracted to the County. The County should promote the efficient use of our natural resources including encouragement of the desalination of salt water produced by the gas and oil industry as an alternative to shallow well disposal of this material.

Social Services Committee

- The needs of our most vulnerable citizens need to be addressed by the County. There are several agencies and school sponsored programs to support the youngest citizens. There is no formal coordination of all the programs and services available. The committee recommends the creation of a Child Advocacy Center, combining the services of DFPS and Law enforcement with counseling and medical services.
- Hire a qualified social worker to interface between various institutions encountering those in need. Needs assessments and the ability to work between agencies would reduce the fall out rate and increase support by a full time, qualified social worker.
- Create a single point of contact for information and referral for Wise County Citizens. The United Way attempts to provide a contact point for citizens seeking help but is limited to staffing and knowledge. The County should establish a full time “help line” resource to make sure those in need get to the right contact for the help they may need. Volunteers could man this position, but the County needs to establish the contact methods and support this administratively.

Infrastructure Committee

- Planning of regional transportation and infrastructure happens at many levels in the State. NTCOG is a valuable resource to make sure Wise County’s needs are considered. Membership and attendance at all NTCOG functions by representatives from the County must be made a regular part of the governing process. Membership and attendance at the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) sessions is also critical to the future of Wise County. Commissioners should attend all sessions and provide input for Wise County needs and take back ideas for use in the management and planning of the County. Commissioners should work closely with TxDOT to make sure County issues are served in a timely manner and with appropriate priority.

- The committee strongly recommends to the commissioners the formation of a permanent open space steering committee, with the charge to further investigate and formulate a plan for the effective use and protection of our public open spaces, and to create coalitions with regional public organizations such as NTCOG and interested private non-profit groups as the Chisholm Trail Legacy National Park exploratory committee to plan and develop a strategy for enhanced public use.

Government Committee

- Based on the highest priority recommendations made by other committees above, it is clear that our elected officials, including Commissioners, must devote more time to the issues of County management and planning. Currently, Commissioners are housed in areas close to or within County maintenance barns. They have direct reports concerned with road building and maintenance. The Committee strongly recommends that the “Unit” system whereby county road construction and maintenance would be centralized under the supervision of a qualified engineer. This could be accomplished by a vote to adopt Chapter 252.001 of the Texas Transportation Code, Systems of County Road Administration, Adoption of Ex Officio Road Commissioner System. Or, under Section 252.301, the Citizens could petition the Commissioners to force this issue to a public vote prescribed by Subchapter A, Chapter 41 of the State Election Code. Removing the burden of road maintenance will free up Commissioners to concentrate on the long term business and planning of the County.
- The County will have to plan for expanded emergency service as population and traffic continues to grow. It is the recommendation of this committee that a standing committee on emergency services be established to provide advice and help develop a long term plan to meet new emergency challenges.
- Establish a plan and execute a strategy to lobby State Representatives to make sure Wise County is receiving appropriate shares of revenue and to pass legislation that would aid in delivering services to the citizens in the form of land use, road use and environment issues.
- Consolidate county offices into a user friendly complex or building to better serve the needs of the citizens and save duplicated administrative duties.

Housing Development Committee

- No report submitted

Environmental Committee

- No report submitted

SOCIAL SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE

TO: THE WISE COUNTY CITIZEN'S LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

FROM: SOCIAL SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCLUSION IN LONG RANGE PLAN

DATE: 6/19/2006

GOAL: TO IDENTIFY NEEDS IN THE SOCIAL AND HUMAN SERVICES WHICH MUST BE ADDRESSED TO ENSURE AND MAINTAIN THE QUALITY AND STANDARD OF LIVING FOR CITIZENS OF WISE COUNTY.

MEMBERS: BARBARA LOE, SANDRA POYNER, BETTY RUSSELL, CHARLOTTE WALKER.

EXPERT INPUT FROM: JIMMIE ARMES, W.A.R.M BOARD OF DIRECTORS; MARTHA SHIFLET, TEXAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES; MARTIN WOODRUFF, UNITED WAY OF WISE COUNTY; MEMBERS OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES GROUP OF WISE COUNTY; MEMBERSHIP OF THE WISE COUNTY HEALTH GROUP

RECOMMENDATIONS:

I. ADMINISTRATION OF SOCIAL SERVICES:

A. HIRE A QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKER TO INTERFACE BETWEEN VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS ENCOUNTERING THOSE IN NEED. THIS WOULD INCLUDE MEDICAL FACILITIES, SCHOOLS, AND SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES.

B. CREATE A SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT FOR INFORMATION AND REFERRAL FOR WISE COUNTY CITIZENS

C. CREATE A VOLUNTEER CENTER TO MATCH THOSE IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE WITH INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS.

D. SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE MAINTENANCE AND WIDE-SPREAD DISTRIBUTION OF THE WISE COUNTY RESOURCE DIRECTORY NOW AVAILABLE ON THE UNITED WAY WEBSITE

E. ENCOURAGE COUNTY GOVERNMENT TO EMPLOY A FULL-TIME GRANT WRITER.

.

II. SERVICES TO THE INDIGENT:

A. SUPPORT W.A.R.M. IN EXPANDING SERVICES AND HIRING A FULL-TIME DIRECTOR.

B. WORK WITH THE WISE COUNTY MEDICAL HEALTH FORUM IN PROVIDING CARE FOR THE UNINSURED AND UNDERINSURED.

C. MAKE AVAILABLE A SHELTER FOR THE HOMELESS, POSSIBLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH AN EXPANDED W.A.R.M.

III. SERVICES TO CHILDREN:

A. CREATE A CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER, COMBINING THE SERVICES OF DFPS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT WITH COUNSELING AND MEDICAL SERVICES.

IV. SERVICES TO THE ELDERLY:

A. ENCOURAGE VOLUNTEER GUARDIANSHIP ORGANIZATIONS TO ESTABLISH GROUPS IN WISE COUNTY

B. REINSTATE A FULLY-STAFFED OFFICE OF ADULT PROTECTION SERVICES.

V. MISCELLANEOUS:

A. CONTINUE AND INCREASE AS NECESSARY SUPPORT FOR NONPROFITS SUCH AS CASA, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TASK FORCE, STAR COUNCIL AND OTHER SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS THAT MAY DEVELOP IN RESPONSE TO NEED.

B. WORK WITH THE AMERICAN RED CROSS TO ESTABLISH THEIR PERMANENT PRESENCE IN WISE COUNTY

C. WORK TOWARD A PROACTIVE DRUG AND ALCOHOL COUNCIL AFFILIATED WITH THE TEXAS COMMISSION ON DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

D. WORKING THROUGH THE TRANSPORTATION SUB-COMMITTEE, SEEK TO PROVIDE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION THROUGHOUT WISE COUNTY.

E. WORKING THROUGH THE HOUSING SUB-COMMITTEE, SEEK TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE LOW-COST HOUSING IN WISE COUNTY.

October 21, 2005

To: The Wise County Citizen's Long Range Planning Committee

From: Government Sub-Committee

Members: Linda Ortberg, Government Sub-Committee Chair
Willard Howell
Kevin LeBeau
Betty Russell

As the Government Sub-Committee for the Wise County Long Range Planning Committee, we respectfully submit our recommendations for consideration.

In order to fully understand current county government structure and roles, we have consulted with various Wise County officials, have researched the current county government structure and have determined that the following items need to be considered in the development of the Wise County Long Range Plan.

I. Items pertaining to prudent business practices for all County Government Offices

1. Initiate the "Unit" system whereby county road construction and maintenance would be centralized under the supervision of a qualified engineer. This could be accomplished in one of two ways.

First, as adopted in the Transportation Code – Chapter 252.001. Systems of County Road Administration. Adoption of Ex Officio Road Commissioner System. Paragraph (a) The Commissioners court of a county may adopt this subchapter by an order made at a regular term of the court when all the members are present.

Secondly, Section 252.301. Adoption of County Road Department System. Section b. The commissioner's court shall submit the question of whether to adopt this subchapter to the voters of the county if it receives a petition signed by a number of registered voters of the county equal to at least 10 percent of the number of votes received in the county by all the candidates for governor in the most recent gubernatorial election. The court shall order the election to be held on the first authorized uniform election date prescribed by Subchapter A, Chapter 41, Election Code that occurs after the 30th day after the date the petition is filed with the court.

2. Construct a central courthouse annex to house the offices of all elected officials in the county. Construction of the new building to be paid for in part by disposition of properties currently housing these various offices.

3. Centralize all real and commercial property tax collection under the authority of the Wise County Appraisal District.

4. Create a sub-committee on emergency services under the auspices of the Wise County Long Range Planning Committee.

5. Fine tune county septic and subdivision regulations to incorporate the maximum authority allowable under Texas law.

II. Items pertaining to Wise County Citizen Awareness of County Government Limitations to control growth.

6. Petition state legislators to support increased ordinance and zoning power for the county.

7. Educate citizens as to the role and limitations of county government regarding population growth and control.

8. Create a position of election supervisor for the county.

III. Miscellaneous

9. Inquire into the history and current disposition of funds received by the county from the federal government in lieu of property tax on the National Grasslands.

10. Create a study of the regulations concerning water quality and usage.

Respectfully,

Linda Ortberg
Government Sub-Committee Chair

Infrastructure Committee

An exponential growth sprint driven by the appetite for annexation by the City of Fort Worth and the mobility and environmental issues of the Metroplex has overturned traditional assumptions about the role of edge growth, rural county Commissioners Courts. For our Wise commissioners to truly experience this change in their bones, and as this reports first recommendation, we request that they sit in open session with the citizens, Chamber of Commerce and elected city officials of South Wise County and spend one hour with the most resent City Map of Fort Worth including its current ETJ and annexation agenda. (exhibit2) To do so, one will hear the beginning cries of a “Stop Fort Worth” movement.

The sounds of the concerns are many; “the city mill rate is what \$1.56/thousand”; “I don’t want to drive to downtown Fort. Worth for zoning approval or to pay for my building permit”; “we are not a bedroom community”; and “I want to read about my city council in the Messenger not the Star”. The words are more than opposition to Urban sprawl and its dominant culture, there is a compelling call for the preservation and promotion of the rural character and its values found in Wise County.

Our committee heard the stories from those citizens who appreciate the working of the land, pay close attention to the weather, and the preservation of open space. Those who live and participate in the local economy; sit with their neighbors on local hospital boards, and promote local equestrian arena projects. They quietly take pride when high school graduates leave for college, are successful in careers and yet return to the country and add new ideas and sweat to the local leadership pool.(note3)

The administrative solution for stopping Fort Worth is relatively straight forward. Individual land owners need to voluntarily select the ETJ of the city they prefer, and those cities’ ETJ must not have any gaps for Fort Worth to slip through. (4)

The leadership needed to communicate the urgency and vision must be county wide.

The specific areas of County Roads and Regional Mobility, Rail and Airport, and Recreation and Open Space fall under the scope of study of the infrastructure sub-committee. This interim report has not yet dealt with the critical concerns regarding water and waste management. Nor has it studied adequately salt water injection wells. (note5) The committee held four study group sessions and two recommendation meetings on these issues. The agenda, minutes, and collected support data found in the exhibit index (1) should be carefully read as they are the substantive meat of this report.

Very few of the big ideas identified for Wise County in this report can be solved by volunteer citizens and businesses alone. Although the citizen’s advocacy will always raise the issues to a higher level of awareness, it is the art of the politician to galvanize the unified political voice that is needed to speed up the bureaucratic governmental system and to wisely direct the needed funding.

It is the belief of this committee that the Commissioners Court seeks to improve and strengthen its governing efforts by making them more focused, directed, and intentional. It is in this spirit that the committee has identified the following “Big Ideas” and submits for the commissioner’s consideration the following recommendations.

County Roads and Regional Mobility

The County must push forward in establishing a long-term land plan for the location of future roads and a prioritized list of maintenance projects. The plan must incorporate the needs and desires of the community and communicate them to those with the power to make land-use decisions. These people include land owners in strategic growth locations, mineral rights owners, major developers, and the elected city officials.

As issues relate to the continued building, repair, and maintenance of the County roads and bridges, it is recommended the County adopt the “unit” system, (6) which would allow an engineer to respond with projects identified in a growth plan from a community-based strategic dialogue. It is the committee’s belief that the Unit Management System will help the Court to improve its ability for:

- 1) Earlier identification of growth areas and prioritizing of needs
- 2) Management of equipment and personnel
- 3) Communication and coordination with TxDOT
- 4) Freeing up of commissioners time from job supervision, and more opportunity for policy, planning and politicking for funding sources.

It certainly is no surprise that the citizens’ hot button, as it relates to roads and traffic, is the aggregate truck traffic. Road safety, maintenance, and traffic congestion are all found in the antidotal reports concerning the heavy haulers. This report fully recognizes the economic importance of the aggregate industry to the County, but driving and road issues can still be improved. In fact, we found some traffic congestion along 114 will soon be alleviated by the completion of the HWay 380 and 1810 projects but few citizens were aware of it.

The committee strongly recommends that the County implement a public campaign to inform people of the county’s plans to carry out road improvement projects with the cooperation of TxDOT. Celebrating the benefits that the projects will bring, should help build patience during the construction period. For example a joint PR and ribbon-cutting ceremony will increase both citizen and trucker awareness of the new FM1810. Orchestrated news about completed roads, increased traffic enforcement, and additional stop lights should help change driver route patterns from the quarries, and alleviate congestion in Boyd and Aurora on 114.

TxDOT also requests the County’s assistance in a Drivers Awareness and Education campaign relating to the safety problems and special experience needed when interacting with the truck traffic

Relationship building between the County and TxDOT on issues as above will allow for greater cooperation on long term critical priorities as the acceleration of: (exhibit 7)

- the interchange project for 380 and 287
- the completion of 380 west to Denton
- 114 from Rhome to Bridgeport
- the planning and design of the TRANS-TX Corridor Project(9) within Wise

The Trans-TX project and the Regional Mobility and Air Attainment issues (exhibit 8) for the 16 North Texas Metroplex counties require immediate and sustained attention from Wise County. In order for the county to get its minds and hands around these issues we recommend the creation of a standing strategic planning committee whose primary function will be the liaison between the county and its membership in the North Texas Regional Council of Governments (NTCOG) and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

Rail and Airport

Greater participation in NTCOG will also assist exploring the possibility of creating more rail-related service industries in the County, as well as expanded use for the Airports.

Our subcommittee was the first to view the Freight Bottleneck Study (exhibit 10) now being presented by COG. Certainly Tarrant County is evolving into one of the nation's leading inland "agile ports" and opportunities to serve Union Pacific and Burlington Northern should come our way.

The committee recommends that the County support Bridgeport's landing strip expansion to accommodate the requests of Devon. There also appears to be a growing market for recreational flight training, as well as the new Small Jet Taxi industry. (11)

Recreation and Open Space Planning

The committee made an effort to carefully review and to test the "Harvard Study" vision and recommendations regarding county wide open space planning and a county wide trail system linking the LBJ Grasslands to Lake Bridgeport and Eagle Mountain (12). This idea began to become clearer and bigger, as we saw it in light of the regional open space plan already in place by NCTCOG and the Trinity Trail program in Fort Worth (15).

We started with two straight forward questions: Wise County is made up of 905sq.miles roughly 579,000 acres. If 46,000 acres/8% were reserved and developed as interconnected public recreational open space, trails and lakes, if this were doable, would it in fact be an unique amenity for the county as well as for the region?

Given that Lake Bridgeport is roughly 13,000 acres and the LBJ Grasslands 20,000 acres and these land bases are already public assets, the project began to feel doable. It would mean linking these natural features along the Trinity River and Big Sandy Creek.

The grasslands are unique as one of the largest preservation areas in the entire region and indeed the state. This committee concurs with the Harvard study that a cohesive county wide open space

network plan can well bring recreational, ecological, educational and economical benefits to the citizens of Wise County. Unique benefits that are also compatible with the current major economic drivers of the county gas production and aggregate mining. Unique benefits that promote the rural character and values of the county.

This committee strongly recommends to the commissioners the formation of a permanent open space steering committee, with the charge to further investigate and formulate the plan, and to create coalitions with regional public organizations as NCTCOG and interested private non-profit groups as the Chisholm Trail Legacy National Park exploratory committee who will join in the effort to build it.

Exhibit Index and Notes

-1 Open meeting Agenda and Minutes:

Nov 22 “Update on the North Texas Regional Response to the Trans-Texas Corridor 35

Dec 13 “Open Space: Is it an Infrastructure Asset”

Dec 22 “Regional Mobility Initiatives and the Freight Rail Bottleneck Study”

Feb 1 “Up date of the Current TxDOT Project in Wise County”

-2. Current City Map of Fort Worth

-3. From afternoon talks with many self proclaimed Wise County “grey hairs”

-4. From interviews with Rhome and Aurora city officials.

-5. “What we are doing with that leftover salty water is our sin to this good earth” a conversation with Wayne B

-6. Transportation Code Systems of County Road Administration-Chapter 252.001 and /or 252.301

-7. TxDOT power point report 2/1/06 Bill Nelson, PE presenter

-8. NCTCOG regional transportation council priorities, visuals and maps

-9. TxDOT Expressway Newsletter Nov.18 2005” authorized to negotiate advance acquisition of right ways for SH114.”

Jan.18 2006 “Increased national and international advocacy of I-35 and TTC-35”lllll

-10. NCTCOG Regional Mobility Initiative –Freight Bottleneck Study Jan18, 2006

Jason Haskin, Transportation Planner

-11. NY Times Feb.28, 2006 Tiny Jets may usher in new era, F.A.A says.

-12. Harvard Studies:

Wise County: A strategic growth plan. May 2002

Wise Growth: Embracing the Future Today May 2004

Developing a National Park for North Texas May 2005

-13. Wise County Long-Term Planning Symposium March 10, 2005

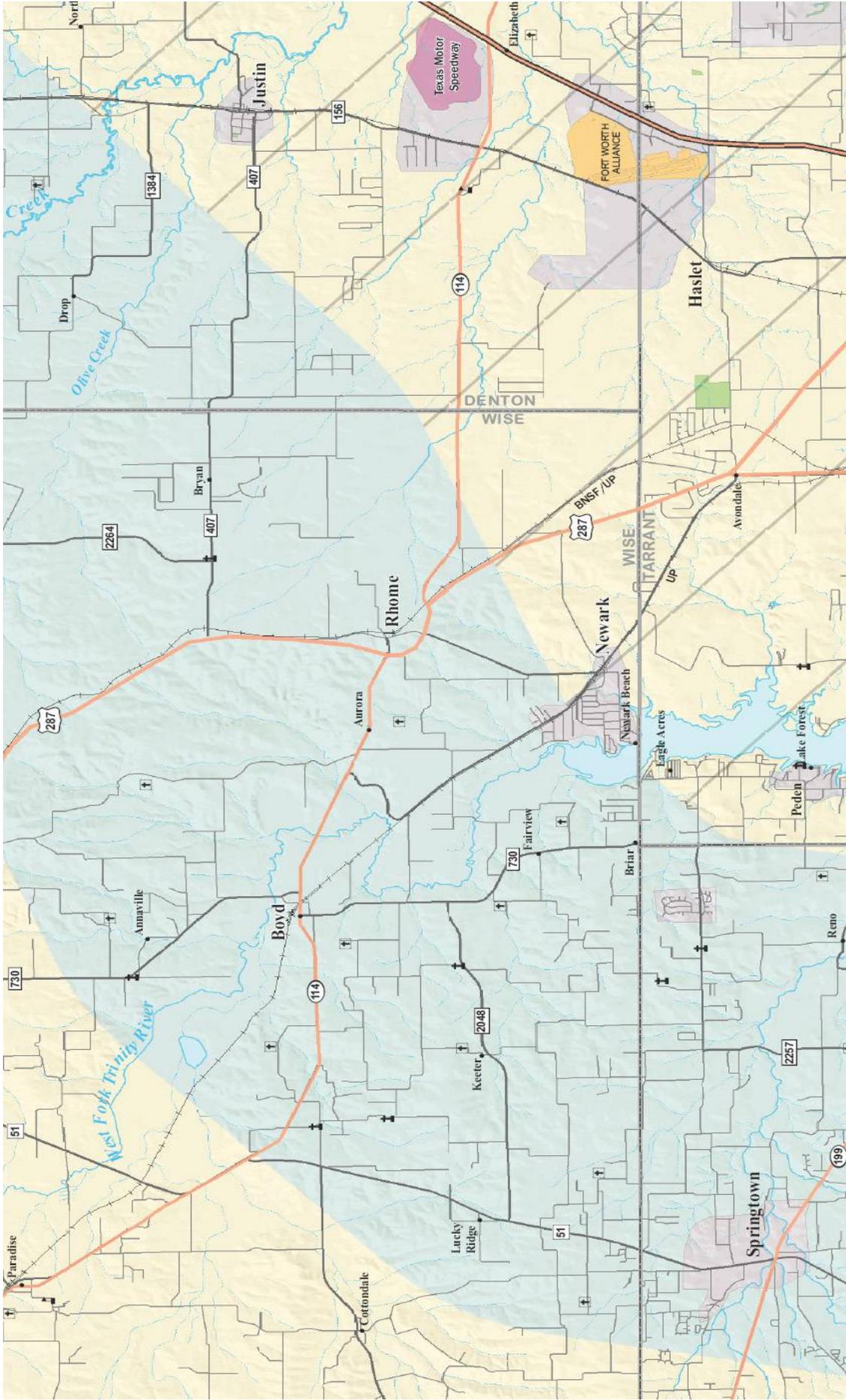
Tapes and notes from the panel discussion:

Subdivision Ordinances and Drilling Procedures

Wise Economic Development

Grasslands and a Countywide Trail System

-14. Wise County Messenger – reports and reviews.



Paradise

51

730

Annaville

Boyd

114

Coronadale

Lucky Ridge

2048

Koeter

730

Fairview

Briar

51

Springtown

199

2257

Reno

Peden

Lake Forest

Engle Acres

Newark Beach

Newark

Wise

Tarrant

Up

BNSF / UP

287

Avondale

Haslet

Denton

Wise

114

Elizabeth

Texas Motor Speedway

Fort Worth Alliance

156

Justin

407

1384

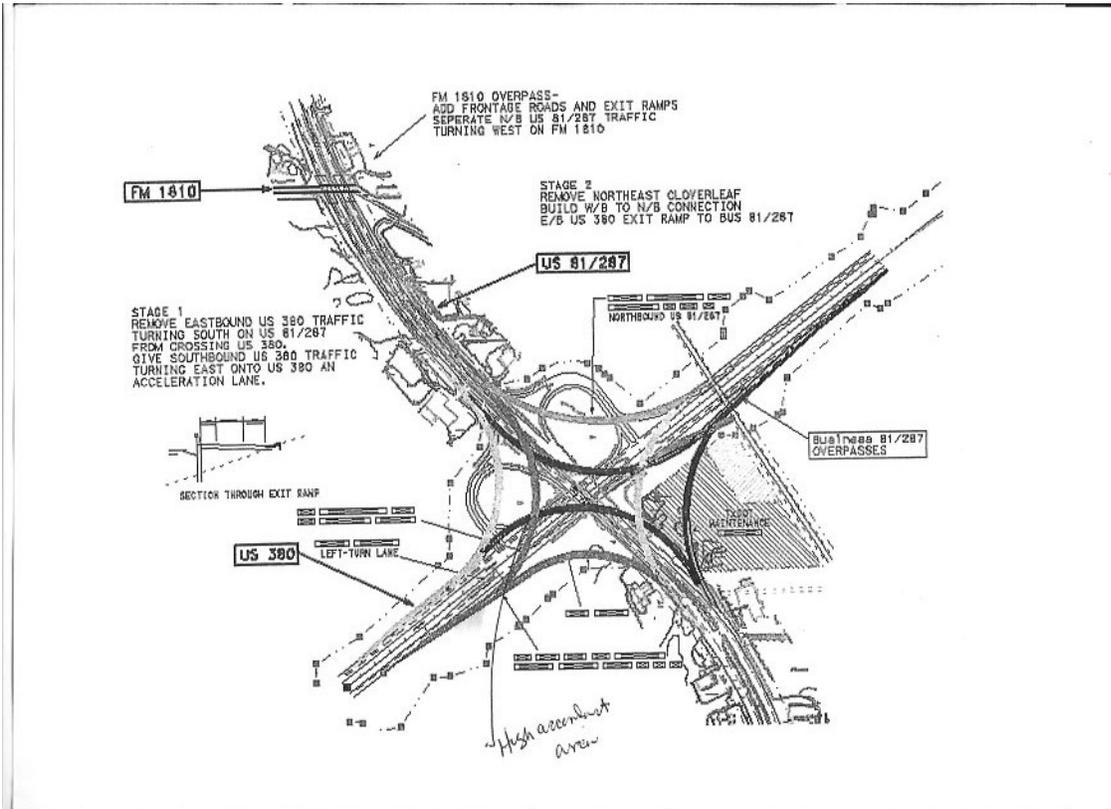
Drop

Olive Creek

North

2364

Bryan



DECATUR, TEXAS

WISE COUNTY
**Citizens file
civil lawsuit
against RRC**

By BRIAN KNOX

After finding no sympathy from the Texas Railroad Commission, a local citizens' group has now turned to the courts to help them keep an injection well out of their neighborhood.

On Tuesday, the Railroad Commission refused a motion for a rehearing on an injection well permit application submitted by Pioneer Exploration Ltd. of Houston. The company plans to build the injection well in the Greenwood area near the intersection of County Roads 2625 and 2735.

By refusing to hold another hearing on the permit application, the Railroad Commission upheld its ruling on Feb. 7 to grant the permit. The group Wise Citizens for a Safe Future and Clean Water filed an appeal for a new hearing shortly after the ruling.

On Thursday, David Frederick, the Austin attorney representing the citizens' group, filed a lawsuit in 126th District Court in Travis County against the Texas Railroad Commission appealing its ruling.

According to wording in the lawsuit, the citizens' group is alleging that the Railroad Commission erred in several areas during the hearings for the proposed injection well permit. Among the highlights, the

“

I think we have a good shot. We've taken it out of the Railroad Commission's regulations right now and brought it to a standard court of law where I think we'll have a better chance.

Tracy Smith
Greenwood

”

Continued on page 8A

RHOME

Council discusses time frame to close sewer plant

By DON MUNSCH

The city of Rhome received some unexpected estimates on the cost to have sludge removed from the Eastside sewer plant.

Mayor Mark Lorance said the city thought it would cost \$15,000 to \$20,000 to have the sludge removed and hauled away.

The cost estimates came in at \$525,000

"We decided to skip that," he said. "It gives us more urgency to shut that plant down."

The council at its meeting Thursday discussed the time frame to close the plant. The matter will be examined again at a workshop Tuesday at 7 p.m. The council also will discuss the short list of candidates for the city administrator position and dates for interviews.

The council also will discuss budget revisions at the workshop.

Lorance said an engineer will look at the process of considering all the aspects of shutting down the Eastside plant - and the sooner, the better, because of all

the work that has to be done, including cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

"Tuesday, we'll look at what we need to get that shut down," Lorance said.

Filter repairs at the Westside sewer plant should be completed by Wednesday, Lorance said. They were non-operational for at least a year.

Also at the meeting, the council asked Police Chief K.C. Schoenthal to research and advise the council on where he thinks traffic signs need to be

placed in the Ellis Homestead subdivision. Lorance said the council wants that information within a week.

Spring cleanup will start on May 6 and run about a week, Lorance said. Residents may discard their household items in dumpsters near the Rhome annex building in downtown, not far from the fire department.

The council also approved rescinding a resolution to require the city to use the direct recording electronic voting machine. The city will use paper ballots for the May election.

AURORA

Land use map helps city prepare for growth

By DON MUNSCH

The Aurora City Council approved a comprehensive future land use map recently to prepare for the growth that is coming to the south Wise County community.

Toni Kelly-Richardson, city administrator, said the city had two public hearings and three meetings on the land use map, which is the first the city has had. The city has been growing at 14.3 percent a year for the last five years.

"In order to have positive growth, we have to set these things in place," Kelly-Richardson said. "If you don't have a map, you don't know where you're going. Where do we want our sewer to start? Where's the fastest place to get water? These kind of things we have to work out."

A color map with designations hangs on a wall in the city hall. She calls the map "the first step for our future."

She explained that the Texas 114 construction project, which will expand to four lanes in the

Continued on page 2A



Widening of the runway at Bridgeport Municipal Airport to 75 feet, and extension of the landing strip by almost 1,600 feet, are under consideration by the Airport Advisory Board. - Indexfoto

Big changes planned at airport

by Dorothy Clark

Although runway extension has long been discussed by the Bridgeport Airport Advisory Board, it acquired more urgency when Devon Energy asked that the runway be extended to accommodate its

larger jet aircraft.

Devon's request prompted the Advisory Board to develop a 20-year Airport Master Plan that includes extending the runway length from 4,004 feet to 5,600 feet, which will require the width to be increased

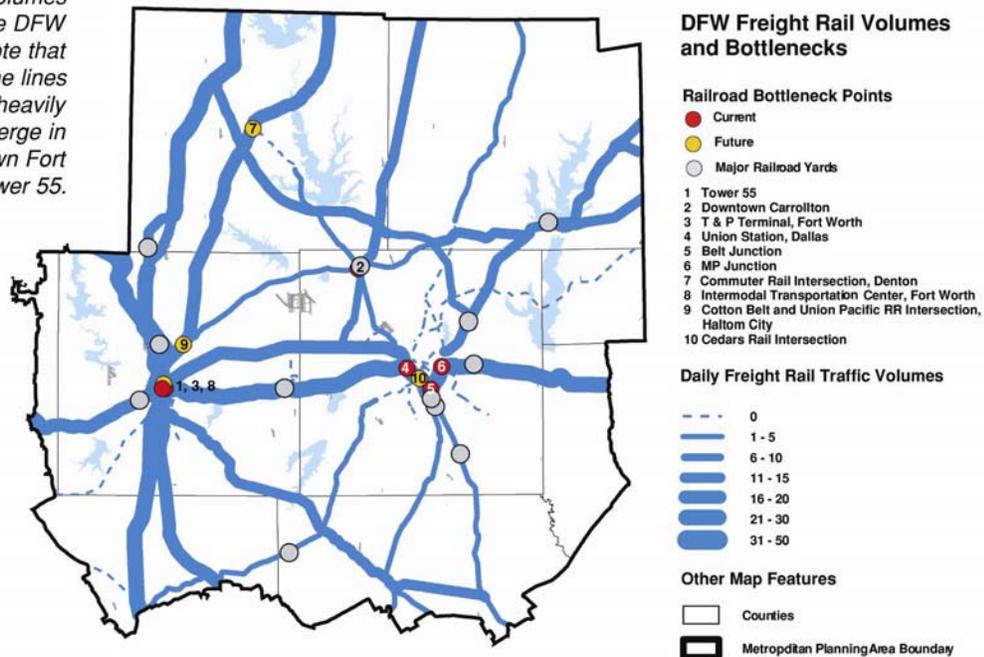
from 60 to 75 feet.

The City of Bridgeport has initiated the application process to seek funding from the Texas Department of Transportation's Capital Improvement Program and approval of a 90/10 percent cost

share grant to finance the planned extension.

As the formal application process progresses, the City will seek letters of support from individuals and organizations that use the airport to just- (Continued on Page 3)

This map shows daily freight rail volumes throughout the DFW region. Note that several of the lines that are most heavily used converge in downtown Fort Worth, at Tower 55.



Union Pacific Railroad System Map



Rail between Ft. Worth & Chico
 Average 12-13 Trains/Day
 Approximate maximum suggested capacity 19

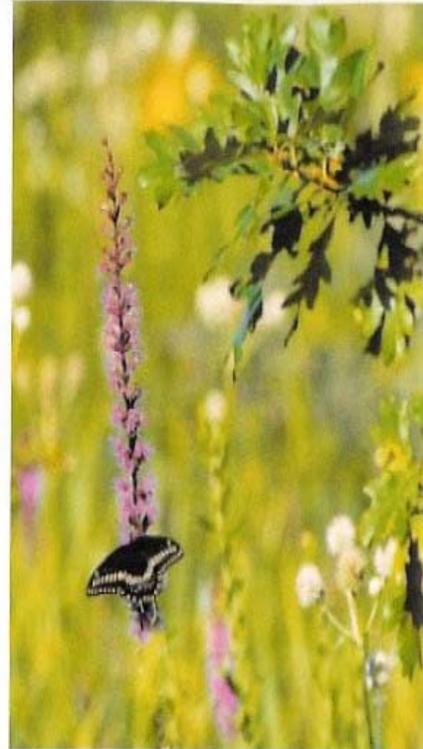
Approx. Daily Mix
 2 Unit Grain Trains: up to 120 cars
 3 Manifest (mixed cargo) Trains : up to 120 cars
 7 Rock Trains: up to 100 cars
 Most Intermodal Rail Cars Ship Through Denton

Project Goal

- Create National Park for North Central Texas region
- Promote heritage and culture of Texas
- Promote stewardship of North Central Texas landscape
- Provide an economically beneficial public good

Presentation Overview

- Examine current regional and local context
- Examine National Park system and identify precedents
- Set out vision for new National Park
- Analyse existing land and boundary conditions
- Discuss land economic issues
- How to establish and fund the park
- Recommend next steps



Team Alliance | Chisholm Trail National Park