



To: Mayor and City Council

From: Michael Kovacs, City Manager

Date: November 23, 2022

Agenda Items: Discuss, consider, and take any necessary action concerning the Rockwall County Outer Loop highway project within the City of Fate.

Staff Action Requested: Provide feedback on any concerns generated from the various routes.

Previous Council Action: The City's and County's Thoroughfare Plans moved the Outer Loop east into Royse City (in the latest versions). Previously, the Outer Loop would have gone through MUD 6.

Overview & Background: The Outer Loop project, on its face, is an attempt by the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) at the NCTCOG to plan for future car mobility needs. The belief is that growth is coming, and roads are needed to avoid traffic impacts later if those roads are not built. While we completely disagree with this planning philosophy and the suburban sprawl that it is perpetuating, it is the foundational and accepted philosophy in operation, and Fate will not be able to stop the Outer Loop project. In fact, trying to stop the Outer Loop may create other issues that will damage the City's ability to get needed state road improvements completed, as we've seen in Houston and Austin earlier this year. Therefore, cooperation is needed, and the City's best approach now is to try and mitigate the damages to our small businesses and property owners.

Rockwall County authorized a route study and environmental clearance process, at the encouragement of the region, to determine the best footprint for a George Bush Turnpike-style roadway (frontage roads version like in Plano and other cities). The roadway could be publicly funded via TXDOT or might be something built and run by NCTA. A public meeting was held last week at Bobby Summers Middle School in Fate, with about 250 attendees, according to Halff, the design engineers. The design and environmental clearance process will take another two-plus years, but route inputs are most critical now as the engineers try to pick the best route possible.

Financial Considerations: The Outer Loop has changed configurations several times in its concept width and functions since the 2007 overall route study. The latest version will have frontage roads, which could capture some commercial growth for the unincorporated areas, Royse City, and possibly Fate. Those new areas would cannibalize current in-City commercial areas, like I-30, and if they could be eliminated from the plan, this would be good. Royse City would like the frontage roads in the design, though we will continue to try and advocate for no frontage roads. If frontage roads are included, we could do the math on how serving these businesses would impact our budgets, though many of the routes are totally within Royse City and the farthest west routes also have quite a bit of floodplain that would make perimeter businesses in Fate unable to be built. More importantly, the purple route could devastate small businesses in northern Fate near FM 552, FM 1138, and HWY 66.

Supporting Documents: From Halff, the design engineer:

The latest PDFs, and everything else presented at the Public Meeting, are online at:

<https://www.rockwallcountytexas.com/1137/RCOL-Public-Meeting-1>.

Halff created a Google Map that they haven't posted online quite yet, but you can find it here:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1fkVYe5X6nBul4dIVzkTqxKFMS9ej80Y&usp=sharing>

Some sections of the Google Map as of 11/23/22 are included on the next pages.







