

ACTION FORM BRYAN CITY COUNCIL

DATE OF COUNCIL MEETING: April 23, 2013		DATE SUBMITTED: April 15, 2013	
DEPARTMENT OF ORIGIN: PW – Traffic Ops.		SUBMITTED BY: Dale Picha	
MEETING TYPE:	CLASSIFICATION:	ORDINANCE:	STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:
<input type="checkbox"/> BCD	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC HEARING	<input type="checkbox"/> 1ST READING	<input type="checkbox"/> DIVERSITY
<input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSENT	<input type="checkbox"/> 2ND READING	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> STATUTORY		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GROWTH
<input type="checkbox"/> WORKSHOP	<input type="checkbox"/> REGULAR		<input type="checkbox"/> IMAGE
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INFRASTRUCTURE
			<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC SAFETY
AGENDA ITEM DESCRIPTION: Consideration of a resolution of support for the State Highway 249 corridor project between Navasota and Houston.			
<p>SUMMARY STATEMENT: Over 10 years ago, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) presented to the public a conceptual highway alignment for a new controlled-access freeway corridor between Navasota and northwest Houston, generally following the existing alignment of SH 249 in Harris and Montgomery Counties and SH 105 and FM 1774 in Grimes County. Originally referred to as the “Aggie Expressway,” this project would provide improved safety and mobility between the numerous major destinations in Bryan/College Station and Houston. However, TxDOT has not had the available funds to further plan, design, and construct the project. Portions of the project have always been envisioned to be constructed as a toll road, with exact terminus points still to be determined through TxDOT’s planning process.</p> <p>In 2011, the 82nd Legislature passed Senate Bill 1420, which authorized TxDOT to enter into several concession Comprehensive Development Agreements (CDAs), one of which was SH 249 in Harris and Montgomery Counties, for the specific expansion of SH 249 to a toll road facility. As a result, over the past two (2) years, local officials in Harris, Montgomery, and Grimes Counties have begun discussing ways to identify funding for the planning, design, and construction of various phases of SH 249. More recently, TxDOT, the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA), and the Montgomery County Toll Road Authority (MCTRA) have all initiated planning and design efforts to move phases of this project forward in northwest Harris County and southeast Montgomery County (Tomball and Pinehurst areas). Funding sources to fully construct all phases of this project still remain to be determined, especially in Grimes County. If the 83rd Legislature adds the Grimes County portion of SH 249 to an expanded CDA, and if an alignment is determined through further TxDOT planning efforts (and local governments in the region are supportive of that alignment), the full corridor could be under construction by 2015.</p> <p>Refer to the Location Map below for a more detailed exhibit of the SH 249 corridor.</p>			
STAFF ANALYSIS:			
<p>A. PROS: Adopting the resolution will help the State Legislature and TxDOT understand that the City of Bryan is supportive of the SH 249 highway improvement project and the benefits that the project can deliver. Adopting the resolution (in conjunction with other local governments doing the same) could help in getting the full SH 249 corridor through Grimes County added to the Comprehensive Development Agreement process, which ultimately can lead to the identification of funding sources to advance the project to design and construction.</p> <p>B. CONS: Adopting the resolution does not obligate the City to any funding commitments for the SH 249 project, but it may require City Council and/or staff to attend future meetings related to the project and to continue to offer public support for the project. Most of the meetings for this project to date have been held in Grimes or</p>			

Montgomery Counties. Not approving the resolution may mean that the City of Bryan is the only local government in Brazos County that does not offer their support of this highway improvement project. Adopting the resolution could result in the City of Bryan being supportive of a highway improvement project that does not have a lot of meaningful public support from residents in Montgomery and Grimes Counties.

STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION (Including Rationale and Justification): Staff recommends approving the resolution. The alignment of a new controlled-access highway connecting the Bryan/College Station area to northwest Houston will not directly impact property owners and businesses in Bryan or in Brazos County. Residents of this area, however, will directly benefit from such a project because of the improved safety and mobility that such a highway project can deliver, as well as the potential for additional economic development in the region as a result of the project.

OPTIONS (In Suggested Order of Staff Preference):

1. Approve the resolution in support of SH 249.
2. Do not approve the resolution in support of SH 249.

ATTACHMENTS: (all attachments are part of the Council Action Form)

1. Location Map.
2. Draft Resolution.

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

APPROVALS: Jayson E. Barfknecht 04/15/13; Hugh R. Walker, 04/15/2013

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL: CITY ATTORNEY Janis K. Hampton, 04/16/2013

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL: CITY MANAGER

Location Map – SH 249 Corridor



RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRYAN, TEXAS, EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE STATE HIGHWAY 249 CORRIDOR PROJECT BETWEEN NAVASOTA AND HOUSTON; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the State Highway (SH) 249 corridor between Bryan/College Station and Houston is home to many important destinations, including Texas A&M University and the new National Bio-Security Center (planned to be completed by the end of 2014), George Bush Intercontinental Airport, Exxon World Headquarters, and Texas Medical Center expansions in Houston; and

WHEREAS, the SH 249 corridor is continuing to develop as a unique economic development engine for the region and the State of Texas, and is poised to be designated as a much-needed major hurricane evacuation route for the region; and

WHEREAS, an improved SH 249 corridor could reduce travel time between Texas A&M and George Bush Intercontinental Airport by 30 minutes, and significantly improve the safety of the traveling public; and

WHEREAS, efforts are underway by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Harris County Toll Road Authority, and Montgomery County Toll Road Authority to develop schematic design and environmental documentation, construction design, and/or corridor preservation on portions of the SH 249 corridor between Spring Cypress Road in Northwest Houston and FM 1774 in Todd Mission; and

WHEREAS, the continued development of SH 249 between Pinehurst and Navasota will support the regional and Statewide goals of improved safety, increased mobility, and economic development opportunities; and

WHEREAS, development of the SH 249 corridor between Bryan/College Station and Houston has the support of elected officials, chambers and economic development groups, community leaders, and landowners along the corridor;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRYAN, TEXAS:

SECTION 1

That the City of Bryan supports the continued development of the SH 249 corridor.

SECTION 2

That the City of Bryan urges TxDOT to continue its efforts to develop, fund, and construct improvements along the SH 249 corridor between FM 1774 in Pinehurst and State Highway 6 in Navasota as expeditiously as possible.

SECTION 3

That City staff is directed to participate with other local governments to pursue a consensus on a corridor alignment that would be supported by the public and developed by TxDOT.

SECTION 4

That this Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED at a Regular City Council Meeting, this 23rd day of April, 2013.

ATTEST:

CITY OF BRYAN:

Mary Lynne Stratta, City Secretary

Jason P. Bienski, Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Janis K. Hampton, City Attorney