



CITY OF JERSEY VILLAGE, TEXAS

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MAYOR'S LETTER DECEMBER 2012

Written by Mayor Russell Hamley

THE TIME IS NOW TO HELP JERSEY VILLAGE

As you are probably well aware, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is planning to widen Highway 290 through Jersey Village. The plan is to increase the number of lanes which, while it will certainly help congestion as commuters try to get to IH 610 and back home, will also increase the number of cars and trucks passing through our city.

The issue of road noise will come up as each passing car and truck increases the noise you will hear at your house. This noise pollution is a factor in the quality of life that each resident experiences while living inside and outside their house. While the freeway sound may not be an issue to people who live a greater distance from either Beltway 8 or Highway 290, it is a big nuisance to the people whose houses back up to those roadways. With the construction of additional lanes to widen the highway, the potential for increased noise will ultimately affect **all** residents in a negative way if we allow it to happen.

The steady hum of road traffic may cause you to take outside conversations indoors and, even indoors, you may find it necessary to talk a little louder or turn the TV up to drown the constant noise coming from the highway. The eventual impact is an increased stress level within your household and a negative effect on your life style. The deterioration in lifestyle will be reflected in the value of all houses within Jersey Village, costing you money whether you can hear the highway noise or not.

The best solution is to urge TxDOT to build sound barriers of different sorts that will be effective in keeping or reducing the current level of noise that results from cars and trucks passing by Jersey Village. The good people at TxDOT -- some are Jersey Village residents -- are working to build a highway that will reduce traffic congestion without unduly inconveniencing residents as the construction is taking place. These same people must justify to both TxDOT and the taxpayers of the state the need to reduce highway noise; the best way for us to help them do that is to share our comments about the negative impact the increased noise will have on Jersey Village.

TxDOT has scheduled public hearings to allow for citizen comments about the expansion of Highway 290. If you are interested in maintaining your current lifestyle, I strongly urge you to attend and share your comments at these meetings. This type of participation was very effective when we were working with Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA). The Public Comment Meetings are set for Tuesday, December 11 at the Sheraton Brookhollow and Thursday, December 13 at the Berry Center. Both will start at 6:00 with a general display; 7:00 for a presentation followed by public comments. **Now** is the time to help Jersey Village, so please attend those meetings and voice your concerns.

I also urge to write our State Senator Dan Patrick and State Representative Gary Elkins (also a Jersey Village resident) to let them know about your concern of increased noise from the freeway.