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Subject: **Bob Billings Parkway**

Dear Mayor Amyx and Commissioners,

I will be out of town on Nov. 17 and unable to participate in the meeting about Bob Billings Parkway.

I have been active in a number of meetings concerning this traffic artery. I am attaching comments I made to the previous commission and materials assembled by the Billings Safety Group that were presented to that commission.

I hope they are helpful in your consideration of this matter.

I also have made brief comments online.

Thank you for the time you're taking on this.

Ralph Gage

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Mr. Mayor and Commissioners.

I'm Ralph Gage. I live at 5021 Jeffries Court. In January of 2014 I was involved in efforts to organize a public meeting at Langston Hughes School, where city staff provided information about the K-10 interchange and improvements planned for Bob Billings Parkway. (Mayor Amyx attended.)

One outgrowth was the formation of a coalition of 16 homeowner associations and neighborhood groups – folks who live in the areas along BBP. This coalition has been working to identify concerns about the street and organized another meeting with city staff last month. The group's steering committee asked me to speak tonight and to present to you our report about safety issues along the road.

First, it's important to remember that until it was renamed to honor Bob Billings, this was 15th Street. It is not and never has been a parkway in the sense of Clinton Parkway. Clinton is a limited access roadway. It has access roads and wide multi-use lanes for pedestrians and bicyclists on both sides.

15th, on the other hand, has **no** access roads. Instead it has more than 50 intersections and curb cuts (serving businesses, schools, churches, condominiums, office buildings, retail facilities, the police department, KU research, banks, retirement communities and single-family residences.) 15th has **no** sidewalks in some areas, and in others, the sidewalk is broken and dangerous.

Worse yet, along some stretches of 15th, the average speed – **AVERAGE SPEED** – is nearly 55 mph.

Our paramount concern is safety for all users of BBP. In general, we suggest that three strategies be developed:

1. To decrease the speed of vehicles.
2. To improve access at the many intersections serving residential areas.
3. To provide sidewalks and crossings for pedestrians and to improve safety for bicyclists.

Our group has prepared a report outlining concerns about various locations along the route, and suggesting possible solutions.

We appreciate the involvement of Dave Corliss, Chuck Soules, Dave Cronin and other city staff members. We support the agenda items before you this evening. They're welcome first steps.

We'll continue to suggest and support further safety improvements along this road. It's our hope that instead of finding ourselves merely reacting to proposals, we will be involved in a proactive process with you and the staff, to make this a safe roadway for the city's residents and others who use it.

Thank you. I'll leave copies of our report. It also will be emailed to you and others.

Will try to answer any questions.

##

Billings Safety Group (BSG)¹ Report – February 21, 2015, Meeting

Updated To Include Post-Meeting Comments & Information

See Intersection-by-Intersection Rundown (Below)

March 20, 2015

The BSG met for the second time on Saturday morning, February 21, 2015, with 19 attendees. All but three were representatives of the 16 neighborhood associations² along Bob Billings Parkway (BBP) . The three were City officials: the Director of Public Works, Chuck Soules, the City Engineer, David Cronin, and an unexpected participant, the City Manager, David Corliss.

Warren Corman (Corman.mary@gmail.com), President of Quail Pointe at Alvamar Townhomes Assn., chaired the meeting.

With a large map of BBP, provided by the Public Works Department, spread out on the conference table, representatives were able to point out their particular neighborhoods and to identify specific public-safety concerns related to the use of BBP presently and in the future.

Unlike Clinton Parkway, which makes use of access roads in order to limit the number of intersections (approximately a dozen with all but a couple signalized) and was intended for heavy traffic, BBP has virtually no access roads and approximately 50 intersections (only four with traffic signals) serving mostly residential neighborhoods and was not designed for the amount of traffic it is now anticipated to carry.

Representatives of the BSG intend to use this Report to actively assist the Lawrence Public Works Department in the development of a robust amelioration plan. Once that is completed, one or more public meetings will be held so those living along BBP can review and help refine the plan before it is set in concrete 😊 This is the procedure essentially agreed upon at the meeting at Langston Hughes Elementary approximately one year ago.

Below are four sections: (1) General Concerns, (2) Intersection-by-Intersection Concerns, (3) Possible Solutions, and (3) Important Information Gained

General Concerns

Safety concerns frequently voiced all along BBP included:

- Inadequate funding to implement essential safety measures.
- Inadequate sight lines at intersections:
 - o For vehicle drivers trying to safely enter and/or exit BBP
 - o For vehicle drivers traveling on BBP to see vehicles turning onto BBP

- The excessive speed of vehicles on BBP encouraged by
 - o No active speed restraints, e.g., roundabouts, speed humps
 - o Few passive speed restraints, e.g., signalized intersections, enforcement
- The volume of traffic :
 - o Already a problem at particular times of day on BBP (e.g. going to work, coming home from work, when Corpus Christi mass and school let out)
 - o Projected to grow dramatically once the K-10 Interchange opens
- Insufficient breaks in traffic to allow entry onto BBP
- BBP-only entry and exit for several neighborhoods
- Pedestrian dangers along BBP
 - o Dangerous presently to cross BBP except at signalized intersections (and even there it is not without risk)
 - o Limited access to DeVictor Park and McGrew Nature Trail - no parking and no crosswalks
 - o Can't walk length of BBP without dangerous street crossings because of a sidewalks checkerboard with walks on only one side of street and then the other
 - o In several locations, the existing sidewalks are not usable because of defects
- Bicyclists are confronted with a puzzling bicycle route that at places is on the sidewalk, at others on the roadway, and at others non-existent.
- Inadequate and untimely sharing of information on important topics, e.g., traffic counts, sight lines, crash histories funds availability, limits the ability of citizens to objectively assess safety issues. (For instance, only within the last few days has the BSG even learned that such information exists although the City has had it for several months.)

Intersection-by-Intersection Rundown (West To East)

Bob Billings Parkway (BBP) – Historically, parkways are separated with vegetation and have a vegetated median and are not designed for high-speed travel or for heavy vehicles. Here's hoping history repeats itself. (Editorial comment from the Acting Secretary)

Unnamed Street – Infrastructure for more than 100 homes is being installed on land adjoining K-10 on the West and BBP on the South. In addition, substantial commercial development (including a grocery store) is proposed for the area. Access on to BBP is about 175 yards east of the K-10 Interchange and 325 yards west of George Williams Way (GWW). Whether a neighborhood association is planned is unknown. The traffic generated by this development, by the opening of the adjacent Interchange, and by the existing Legends-Trail-Drive neighborhood (see below) will surely result in congestion and major safety challenges for all users along BBP. The speed of traffic and the attentiveness of drivers exiting the Interchange will make left-hand turns (which will be the majority) on to BBP from this street very difficult. Because this portion of the Parkway has no median, pedestrians will be unable to cross BBP

safely except at GWW. Bicyclists will face serious challenges. What the developer or the city has done to address these problems and to pay for ameliorating measures is unknown.

Legends Trail Dr. – This 80-residence community, located south of BBP, apparently does not have a neighborhood association. Its sole access is via BBP approximately 250 yards east of the Interchange and 250 yard west of GWW. The traffic generated by the neighborhood, by the new development north of BBP, and by the opening of the adjacent Interchange (see above) will surely result in congestion and major safety challenges for all users along BBP. At peak usage times, the traffic light at GWW will likely back up eastbound traffic and block this street. The speed of traffic and the attentiveness of drivers exiting the Interchange will make left turns in either direction from Legends Trail very difficult. Because this portion of the Parkway has no median, pedestrians will be unable to cross BBP safely except at GWW. Bicyclists will face serious challenges. What the developer or the city has done to address these problems and to pay for ameliorating measures is unknown.

George Williams Way – A \$500,000 re-construction and signalization of the intersection is planned for the summer of 2015. It will present the first opportunity to slow traffic exiting the Interchange onto BBP. It will do very little to address traffic problems at the Unnamed Street and Legends Trail (see above) and may, in fact, exacerbate them. Depending on the re-construction and the type of signalization the intersection may provide a degree of crossing safety for pedestrians. However, a significant number of school children from the two nearby schools cross BBP here. Because of the traffic volume, the safety of children will likely require the continued use of a crossing guard.

Redleaf Place and Goldleaf Place – The Longleaf Neighborhood, located generally north and east of the GWW intersection, has access onto GWW about 125 yards north of the intersection. Redleaf intersects BBP approximately 200 yards east of GWW, and Goldleaf about 400 yards. The GWW traffic light should provide sufficient breaks in the flow of traffic to allow access to BBP. However, at times when the soon-to-be-constructed, left-turn lane for Corpus Christi is experiencing peak use, left turns from Redleaf and Goldleaf will be difficult-to-impossible. Goldleaf intersects BBP in the middle of a downward sloping curve creating sight line problems to the east. In-street bicycle paths already exist on this section of BBP. Because this portion of the Parkway has no median, pedestrian crossing is hazardous.

Bob White Drive – The most recent traffic count at this intersection: 586 vehicles on Bobwhite, 1,792 eastbound on BBP, 2,247 westbound on BBP. It intersects BBP from the south and is the primary access point for residents (mostly retirement age) of the Villas at Alvarado (65 residences), The Reserve at Alvarado (30 residences growing to 40 when development is complete), and at least three cul-de-sacs (19 residences). DeVictor Park is located on the north side of BBP. The 85th percentile speed on BBP in this area is 53 mph notwithstanding the posted limit of 40 mph. (Conventional wisdom among traffic engineers - at least those focused on the efficient movement of vehicles- is that speed limits normally ought to be set at the 85th percentile.) This intersection is at the western base of a 500-yard, downhill “race course” and at the eastern base of a 600-yard, downhill, S-curved “speedway.” Entry on to and exit from BBP is almost impossible when Corpus Christi mass/school starts or ends. Sight lines to the west are inadequate and will become worse with an increase in the curve of BBP caused by installation of the Corpus Christi left-turn lane. In-street bicycle paths already exist on this section of BBP. Because

this portion of the Parkway has no median, pedestrian (many of whom are retirement age) crossing to DeVictor Park is problematic and will verge on the impossible with any significant increase in traffic. At night, street lighting is inadequate and not characteristic of lighting at other intersections east of Wakarusa. There is a strong consensus among its users in favor of a roundabout at this intersection.

Legends Drive – More than 100 residences use this intersection as their primary access point. There is no known neighborhood association. The most recent traffic count is: 549 vehicles on Legends. The BBP count would be almost the same as at Bob White. Legends intersects BBP from the north. The posted BBP speed is 40 mph. However, the 85th percentile speed would be close to that at Bob White, e.g., 53 mph. It is located about 150 yards below the crest of the hill that descends westward toward Bob White. As a result, the sightline to the east is impaired both for vehicles traveling west on BBP and for vehicles turning in either direction from Legends. In-street bicycle paths already exist on this section of BBP. Because this portion of the Parkway has no median, pedestrian crossing is problematic and will verge on the impossible as traffic increases.

Foxfire Drive – Foxfire Drive provides primary access for more than 100 residences. It is located on the south side of BBP approximately 125 yards east of Legends Drive (on the north side of BBP) and across from a small office complex. There are several neighborhood associations. Because of the steep descent of BBP to the west and vegetation along property lines, sight lines are poor for vehicles traveling east on BBP and for vehicles turning in either direction from Foxfire. Access is further impeded by the speed of eastbound vehicles on BBP and by the volume of traffic entering BBP from Legends Drive. At times of high-traffic volume, left turns from Foxfire are extremely difficult. The BBP median that runs westward from Wakarusa ends at Foxfire. This is just past the entrance to the office park. As a result, vehicles eastbound on BBP inappropriately cross in front of the median into the westbound lane in order to reach the office complex. Similarly, traffic exiting it makes U-turns around the median in order to head back east. At night street lighting is inadequate and not characteristic of lighting at other intersections east of Wakarusa. Existing plans call for the median to be narrowed between Wakarusa and Foxfire in order to add in-street bicycle lanes to BBP. The median provides limited protection for pedestrian crossings. Many of the pedestrians are retirement age. Crossing BBP to walk in DeVictor Park is dangerous.

Research Park Drive – This street provides circuitous access for residences in the overall Foxfire area. The latest traffic count for Research Park Dr. is: To the south: 205, to the north: 260. It is approximately 325 yards west of Wakarusa. The high speed of eastbound traffic makes access difficult. Northbound vehicles on Research Park experience difficulty in making turns – especially to the left – at times of high traffic volume. At night the intersection is treacherous because there is no street lighting. Existing plans call for the median to be narrowed in order to add in-street bicycle lanes to BBP. The median provides limited protection for pedestrian crossings.

Wakarusa Drive – Although the re-construction of this intersection has improved vehicular traffic flow, it has done little to improve the safety of pedestrian traffic. Wakarusa and BBP are both multi-lane roadways with left-turn lanes and right-turn-on-red. There are no safety islands in the roadways.

Vehicles with some regularity ignore yellow lights, run red lights, and fail to stop before making right-turns on red. Pedestrian crossing is scary.

Police Department & Brandon Woods Parking – Although the Police Department only uses one-half of its 40,000-square-foot headquarters, it still generates significant traffic. However, it has the advantage of sirens. Were it to actually expand into the rest of the city-owned structure and add a 2-level parking garage, this would increase usage. The parking lot for Brandon Woods is across from the police. Site lines are adequate for both. The signalization at Wakarusa provides sufficient breaks in the flow of traffic to allow access to BBP. Pedestrians have sidewalks on both sides of BBP and the Wakarusa intersection is nearby and provides limited protection for pedestrian crossing.

Inverness Drive (south) & Bella Sera - The most recent traffic count in this area: 5,438 eastbound on BBP, 6,381 westbound on BBP. Inverness intersects BBP from the south. Bella Sera intersects from the north. BBP provides the sole access to Bella Sera. Brandon Woods accesses BBP here. The intersection is at the crest of a steep descent of BBP to the east. As a result, traffic coming from the east and traffic turning in either direction from Inverness or Bella Sera have poor sight lines. There are left-turn lanes to facilitate turning from BBP. Speed and the volume of traffic complicate turning. The median provides limited protection for pedestrian crossings, but remains difficult for seniors and children. Many of the pedestrians are retirement age and crossing to walk in the nearby McGrew Nature Preserve. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalk on the north side of BBP is too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use. There is no sidewalk on the south side going east from Inverness.

Inverness Drive (north) – The most recent traffic count for Inverness Drive is 758. The count for BBP in this area is 5,438 eastbound and 6,381 westbound. It serves as primary access for more than 100 families. There is a left-turn lane for BBP traffic. Sight lines are adequate, but speed and the volume of traffic are a problem. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalk on the north side of BBP is too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use. There is no sidewalk on the south side going east. The median provides limited protection for pedestrian crossings, but remains difficult for seniors and children.

Quail Pointe Road– BBP provides sole access to this neighborhood of 13 residences. Because of the median, access off of BBP is restricted to vehicles traveling eastward. Sight lines are adequate, but speed and the volume of traffic are a problem. Drivers can only enter onto BPP by turning right. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalk on the north side of BBP is too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use. There is no sidewalk on the south side going east. The median provides limited protection for pedestrian crossings – especially if you have permission to fish in the pond in the Western Hills neighborhood - but remains difficult for seniors and children.

Stone Meadows Drive – The most recent traffic count for Stone Meadows is 614. The count for BBP in this area is 5,457 eastbound and 5,652 westbound. BBP provides primary access to more than 75 homes, situated north of BBP, along Stone Meadows. It shares this intersection with Quail Pointe Terrace (on the south side of BPP). There is a left-turn lane for BBP traffic. Sight lines are marginal, but speed and the volume of traffic are a problem. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalk on the north side of BBP is too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use. There is no sidewalk on the south side

going east. The median provides limited protection for pedestrian crossings, but remains difficult for seniors and children.

Quail Pointe Terrace (west)- BBP provides sole access to this neighborhood of 16 residences. There is a left-turn lane off of BBP for the west entrance (which is the main entrance in and out of the neighborhood). It shares this intersection with Stone Meadows (see above). Sight lines are inadequate, i.e. to the west about 200 feet and to the east only 150 feet. At 50 mph a vehicle traveling on BBP covers ground at 73 feet per second. A 200-foot sight line is traversed in 2.7 seconds. By the time a driver sees a vehicle entering the intersection from Quail Pointe, removes his or her foot from the gas, and hits the brakes, the 2.7 seconds will have elapsed. This is not safe. Speed and the volume of traffic are a problem.. Residents believe that the only practical way to control speed is to install a roundabout at the Stone Meadows/Quail Pointe Terrace (west) intersection. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalk on the north side of BBP is too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use. There is no sidewalk on the south side going east. The median provides limited protection for pedestrian crossings – especially if you have permission to fish in the pond in the Western Hills neighborhood - but remains difficult for seniors and children.

Quail Pointe Terrace (east)- BBP provides sole access to this neighborhood of 16 residences. The east entrance is used less frequently than the west. The sight line to the west is inadequate at about 200 feet. Because of the median, access off of BBP is restricted to vehicles traveling eastward. At 50 mph a vehicle traveling on BBP covers ground at 73 feet per second. A 200-foot sight line is traversed in 2.7 seconds. By the time a driver sees a vehicle entering the intersection from Quail Pointe, removes his or her foot from the gas, and hits the brakes, the 2.7 seconds will have elapsed. This is not safe. Speed and the volume of traffic are a problem. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalk on the north side of BBP is too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use. There is no sidewalk on the south side going east. The median provides limited protection for pedestrian crossings – especially if you have permission to fish in the pond in the Western Hills neighborhood - but remains difficult for seniors and children.

Wagon Wheel Road – Although Western Hills has access into the neighborhood from Monterey Way, BBP provides the more practical access to those in the western half. There is a left-turn lane for BBP traffic going east. Sight lines are adequate, but speed and the volume of traffic are a problem. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalk on the north side of BBP is too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use. There is no sidewalk on the south side going east. The median provides limited protection for pedestrian crossings, but remains difficult for seniors and children.

Proposed New Roadway into golf course complex - The new owner of the Alvamar golf complex south of BBP has suggested, as part of its plan to substantially develop the area, a new street intersecting BBP somewhere between Quail Point Terrace and Crossgate Drive. The new street would add yet another intersection to BBP and would be expected to carry an amount of traffic that would likely necessitate a signalized crossing or roundabout at that location. (It is possible that the Crossgate intersection would be closed. Presumably there would be left-turn lanes. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalk on the north side of BBP is too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use. There is no sidewalk on the south side going east. The median provides limited protection for pedestrian crossings, but remains difficult for seniors and children.

Crossgate Drive (present entry to Alvarmar golf complex) - Although a very narrow private roadway, it is treated by many as a public thoroughfare to the golf course. The pending re-development at the golf course would dramatically increase the volume of traffic on Crossgate (see Proposed New Roadway above). Sight lines are adequate (if evergreens to west on south side are trimmed or removed), but speed and the volume of traffic are a problem. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalk on the north side of BBP is too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use. There is no sidewalk on the south side going east. The median narrows and ends at Crossgate. As a result there is no left-turn lane on BBP and pedestrian crossing is difficult.

El Dorado Drive (west and east) - BBP provides sole access to the Woodfield neighborhood of 50 residences. Sight lines are inadequate and make entry and exit dangerous. Speed and the volume of traffic are major problems. Reducing the grade of BBP to improve sight lines is likely not workable because of a major gas line that crosses beneath BBP in this area. There are no left-turn lanes on BBP. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalk on the north side of BBP is too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use. There is no sidewalk on the south side going east. There is no median and pedestrian crossing is difficult.

Monterey Way – It intersects BBP at the crest of a hill from the north and is signalized. There is a left-turn lane on BBP. Eastbound traffic tends quickly to accelerate and soon exceed the speed limit as it descends the hill in either direction. There are marked pedestrian crossings. However, there is no protective island in the roadway and there is insufficient time for safe crossing. Vehicles headed west frequently do not stop before making right-turns on red. There is no sidewalk on the south side going west. The sidewalk on the south side going east is deteriorated in many places to the point of being unsafe.

Alvarmar Drive – BBP provides sole access to this neighborhood of more than 75 residences. Sight lines are problematic as are speed and the volume of traffic. There is no left-turn lane on BBP. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalks are too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use and in need of maintenance. There is no median and pedestrian crossing is difficult.

Medinah Drive & Court – BBP provides sole access to the Quail Ridge East Neighborhood of 20 residences. Sight lines are problematic. When turning left onto BBP, it is nearly impossible to see cars coming from the east. Because they are descending a steep hill, speed in excess of the posted limit is a continual problem. Access is impeded during high-volume-traffic times. The timing of the traffic lights at Monterey Way and at Kasold Dr. frequently does not allow sufficient time to enter on to BBP. There is no left-turn lane on BBP. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalks are too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use and in need of maintenance. There is no median and pedestrian crossing is nearly impossible.

St. Andrews Drive – It provides access, among others, to KU's Osher Institute, located just south of BBP. Osher provides a large number of classes throughout the year. These are designed especially for retirement-age persons and attended by thousands (most of whom drive to the classes). There is no left-turn lane on BBP. For traffic approaching St. Andrews from the west and for traffic turning left onto BBP, the sight line is literally zero until one's vehicle is well into the intersection. It is a blind intersection.

Because there are no buildings close to the intersection on the SW corner, it would be possible to remove a portion of the hillside and improve the sight line significantly. Speed and the volume of traffic increase the safety issues. There are no in-street bicycle lanes. The sidewalks are too narrow for pedestrian and bicyclist use and in need of maintenance. There is no median and pedestrian crossing is impossible except at the Kasold Drive intersection. However, there are no safety islands at Kasold.

Kasold Drive – Kasold Drive and BBP are both multi-lane roadways with left-turn lanes and right-turn on red. There are no safety islands in the roadways. Vehicles with some regularity ignore yellow lights, run red lights, and fail to stop before making right-turns on red. Pedestrian crossing is scary. Buses halted at the bus stop on BBP just west of the intersection on the south side force vehicles to back up beyond St. Andrews at high-volume-traffic times. The stacking lane for westward bound vehicles on BBP is frequently inadequate.

Possible Solutions

- A number of potential solutions of varying efficacy were also discussed (all they take is money) including:
- Strict observance of speed limits by neighborhood residents. Lead by example!
- It was noted that changing the geometry of streets is the most effective way to control speed, i.e. make it physically impossible to go fast
 - o Roundabouts (no matter how unpopular with many drivers) accomplish this. A rough estimate to install a roundabout is \$500,000 which includes pavement reconstruction.
 - o Speed humps are also effective. (Drivers learn rather quickly and remember the consequences of taking speed humps at excessive speed.)
- Reducing the grade of hills to improve sight lines. (It was noted that there are possible negative consequences to doing this, e.g. homes adjoining BBP may end up with very high retaining walls in their backyards, the speed of motorists often increases on 4-lane arterials when you flatten out the hills.)
- Install more signalized intersections to allow vehicles to enter and exit BBP and to allow pedestrians to cross BBP. Signalized lights can also be timed to regulate traffic flow. (By comparison over the same distance, Clinton Parkway and 6th Street each have close to a dozen signalized intersections while BBP presently only has 3 or 4) (Signalization costs typically \$250,000-\$350,000 without any geometric/ pavement improvements.)
- Reduce speed limits presently set at 40 mph. (At least one study near DeVictor Park has shown that 15% of the traffic goes 53 mph or more. Speed limits are based on the design / geometry of the street and the 85th percentile speed of the users of the facility. Typically drivers will travel a corridor at a comfortable rate/ speed regardless of the posted speed limit. A certain number of drivers simply ignore speed limits.)

- Increase speed limit enforcement (It slows traffic when officers are present, but the effect tends to dissipate quickly as soon as the officers are gone.)
- Install speed monitors, i.e. signs that tell your speed and the lighting of which becomes more vivid as speed increases above posted limits. (They have some effect. But, like other passive measures, may be ignored by a percentage of drivers.)
- Narrow traffic lanes, e.g. narrowing traffic lanes from 12' to 11' or even to 10' decreases speeds.
- Dedicated left turn lanes would facilitate safe turning off of BBP onto intersecting streets. (Where there are medians this can be done relatively cheaply. At other intersections it may be possible by reducing lane widths in order to create a middle/turning lane.) However, without substantial safety islands, they do little to make pedestrians safe.
- Right turn lanes at especially busy intersections to facilitate merging traffic
- Warning signals on approach to intersections with entering traffic, e.g. vehicles traveling west on Clinton Parkway are warned as they approach Crossgate Dr. (which cannot be seen until you are almost to it) by a flashing light indicating a red light ahead. This type of warning can be used to alert oncoming traffic to blind intersections at which there are no traffic lights. This is a passive measure and is only effective if drivers see the sign/light and react appropriately. Additionally the intersecting traffic / side street motorist should not assume that the main line drivers will note warning light.
- Reducing traffic to one lane in places and installing dedicated left turn lanes was suggested as a relatively inexpensive, but doable, interim measure. (For the near future, the traffic count is low enough for this to be feasible. In the long term, traffic is expected to increase to a level making that no longer workable.)
- Overpasses and/or underpasses for pedestrians and bicyclists are the safest solutions for pedestrians and bicyclists crossing BBP. (These have been used in many communities. In Lawrence, an underpass has been used for decades to allow children to safely cross 6th Street to Pinckney school. The Park and Recreation Department long-range plans call for extending a trail from DeVictor Park south to the Wakarusa River – including an underpass beneath BBP.)
- Complete bike paths – Presently many bike paths abruptly stop and force bicyclists either onto streets or onto sidewalks. Apparently, in-street bike paths will be installed along BBP from Kasold on west to K-10. In some instances they already exist. In others, traffic lanes will be narrowed in order to do this. (Bicyclists are of two minds: 1-Those who prefer in-street bike lanes: 2-Those who prefer off-street bike lanes)
- Crosswalks without beacon lights or signal lights have been found on busy and multi-lane streets to actually be more dangerous for pedestrians than not having crosswalks.

(They can provide a false sense of security for a pedestrian. Some motorists do not notice them and others disregard them, e.g. right-turn-on-red frequently fall in this category.)

- Safety islands – On multilane streets the installation of safety islands allows pedestrians to cross one direction of traffic at a time and provides an area for pedestrians to more safely cross the road– especially if they include beacon lights.
- Sidewalks – For pedestrians and bicyclists (choosing to use them), the installation of 8-10-foot-wide sidewalks on both sides of BBP (as has been done on BBP from Iowa to Kasold) would contribute significantly to a more pedestrian-bicycle friendly BBP. (The city normally replaces sidewalks when it does a major overhaul of a street . Kansas Statute and City Code place the responsibility for sidewalk maintenance on the adjacent property owner. However, enforcement is difficult and seldom rigorous.) The City is in the process of creating a Pedestrian-Bicyclist Task Force to develop a long term plan/solution to making our transportation system as friendly to walkers and peddlers as it now is to drivers.)
- Improvement districts, such as the one created by Corpus Christi for its left-turn lane, provide a last resort mechanism to pay for intersection improvements, e.g. signalization, roundabouts, when local government won't. That, of course, requires convincing the neighborhood to pay for the improvement by an additional property tax levy (typically over a 10-year period) and convincing the City Commission to allow it.

Important Information Gained

We received notice of a number of decisions already made by the City staff. These are decisions made with little or no neighborhood input. We expect to have opportunities for meaningful input going forward.

- Opening of BBP/K-10 Interchange – 01/01/2016 (possibly slightly sooner)
 - o Current traffic volume on BBP at Wakarusa is 15,000 vehicles per day.. The projected increases with the opening of the interchange are approximately 5,000 vehicles per day on BBP and by 2035 up to 24,000.
- Opening of South Lawrence Trafficway (SLT) – 11/01/2016
 - o The east leg of the SLT (now under construction) will be 4-lane.
 - o From Iowa heading west it is currently 2-lane .
 - o The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) has scheduled a meeting for Tuesday, March 31 from 5 to 7 p.m. at Southwest Middle School, 2511 Inverness Drive. , to discuss expanding the western leg to 4-lanes & possibly adding more interchanges. (A long-terms project.)

- Once open, SLT traffic is expected to increase almost immediately from its present 6-12,000 vehicles per day to 15-20,000. By 2040, the count is expected to be 29,000.
- According to an article in the *Journal-World*, the BBP/K-10 Interchange is expected to be an area ripe for commercial development (some is already planned). It is also thought that residential building will soon jump the SLT and continue on west.
- Complete Street – Pedestrian/Bicycle Issues Task Force - The City has approved the creation of a Pedestrian-Bicyclist Task Force (more information on city website) to develop a long term plan/solution for making our transportation system (including BBP) as friendly to walkers and ‘pedalers’ as it now is to drivers. This is consistent with the existing *Complete Streets Policy* adopted by the City in 2012, and with statewide and national efforts to turn our transportation system into one that takes into account equally its safe and convenient use by everyone (drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists).
- 2015 Pavement Management Program – The Lawrence Public Works Department has prepared its street maintenance and capital improvement program for 2015 (more information on city website). It contains important information about BBP:
 - BBP (Wakarusa to Foxfire)
 - Pavement re-construction, curb median improvements, additions of fiber conduit, addition of bicycle lanes
 - Work scheduled May-August, 2015
 - Estimated cost: \$1.2 million
 - One-lane traffic in both directions for much of the time during construction
 - BBP & George Williams Way Intersection
 - Traffic signal to be installed
 - Turn lanes installed
 - Work scheduled: May-August, 2015
 - Estimated cost: \$700,000
 - Corpus Christi Turn Lane
 - South side of BBP to be widened to accommodate dedicated center-turn lane
 - Work Schedule: May-August, 2015
 - Estimated cost: \$250,000 (Payment by Corpus Christi benefit district)
 - BBP (Kasold Drive to George Williams Way)
 - Meet with neighborhoods to identify priorities (Apparently there are some that BSG has missed.)

- The meeting has tentatively been set for Wednesday, April 22, 2015, at Langston Hughes Elementary (Definitive information will be available on the City website at some point.)
- Develop plans
 - Pavement maintenance
 - Intersection improvements
 - Pedestrian improvements
- An additional \$2.2 million (over and above the funds noted above) has tentatively been set aside for improvements between Kasold Dr. and the BBP/K-10 Interchange.

- If you have corrections, additional information, other concerns, solutions, comments, or questions, please direct them to: Jerry Harper, Acting Secretary, 1516 Fountain Dr., 785-865-2611, Jharper900@gmail.com .

¹ Background - The BSG is an informal coalition of neighborhoods that border BBP. Impetus for its organization came from the Villas at Alvarado Neighborhood Association. After several unsuccessful attempts over the last year to arrange a meeting with the City for its residents, the Villas concluded that more attention might be paid to a larger group. That has proven to be the case.

The BSG seeks to identify safety concerns impacting the thousands of Lawrencians (pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers) who live along and regularly using BBP – concerns that will be exacerbated by the end-of-year opening of the BBP/K-10 Interchange. This will increase traffic substantially on an already-busy BBP.

In anticipation of the Interchange opening, the City has spent millions to re-pave the eastern portion of BBP (Iowa to Kasold Drive) and is soon to spend millions more to re-pave and re-construct sections of the western portion. The BSG goal is to persuade the City to expend the substantial additional sums necessary to ameliorate the many safety issues it has created by the way in which BBP has been allowed to develop.

Unlike Clinton Parkway, which makes use of access roads in order to limit the number of intersections (approximately a dozen with all but a couple signalized) and was intended for heavy traffic, BBP has virtually no access roads and approximately 50 intersections (only four with traffic signals) serving mostly residential neighborhoods and was surely not designed for the amount of traffic it is now anticipated to carry.

¹ List of Neighborhood Associations

LONGLEAF TOWNHOMES ASSN.
James Buckley, President

LONGLEAF HOMEOWNERS ASSN.
David Kelsey, President

THE RESERVE AT ALVAMAR HOMES ASSN.
Mike McGrew, President

THE VILLAS AT ALVAMAR HOMEOWNERS ASSN.
Jerry Magnuson, President

CASTLE POND AT FOXFIRE HOMEOWNERS' ASSN.
Nancy L. Miles, President

JEFFRIES COURT NEIGHBORS, formerly known as
FOXFIRE NO. 3 EAST HOMEOWNERS ASSN. (DISSOLVED)
Ralph Gage, Contact

FOXFIRE ADDITION NO.5 HOMEOWNERS' ASSN.
Rod Laing, President

BRANDON WOODS TOWNHOUSE ASSN.
John Dvorske, President

QUAIL POINTE AT ALVAMAR TOWNHOMES ASSN.
Warren Corman, President

QUAIL'S NEST AT ALVAMAR CONDOMINIUM ASSN.
David M. Richey, President

WOODFIELD MEADOWS CONDOMINIUM ASSN.
Barbara Kimbrough, President

THE ALVAMAR-FAIRWAY ELEVEN HOMES ASSN.
Sondra Mosley, President

THE SUMMIT AT ALVAMAR TOWNHOMES ASSN.
Pat Webb, Acting President

QUAIL RIDGE EAST HOMES ASSN.
Keith Reimer, President

APPLEGATE HOMEOWNERS ASSN.
Emily Donaldson, President

WESTERN HILLS NEIGHBORS, formerly known as
WESTERN HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSN. (No longer active)
Victor Contoski, Contact

Bob Billings Parkway Safety Group

March 24, 2015

Re: March 24, 2015, Consent Agenda, Items 6 (c), (d), & (e)

Dear Commissioners:

The Billings Safety Group (BSG) is an informal coalition of 16 neighborhood associations (list attached) bordering Bob Billings Parkway (BBP). We have been working to identify existing and potential safety concerns impacting the thousands of Lawrence residents (pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers) who live along and regularly use BBP – concerns that have been heightened by the end-of-year opening of the BBP/K-10 Interchange.

Unlike Clinton Parkway, which makes use of access roads in order to limit the number of intersections (approximately a dozen and with all but a couple signalized) and was intended for heavy traffic, BBP has virtually no access roads and approximately 50 intersections (only four with traffic signals) serving mostly residential neighborhoods and was not designed for the amount of traffic it is now anticipated to carry.

In summary form, our overarching concern is the safety of everyone using BBP. To ameliorate existing problems, we are convinced that several steps need to be taken:

1. Active and passive measures to decrease vehicular speed, e.g. roundabouts and traffic signals;
2. Improved access at the numerous residential intersections with BBP, e.g. improved sight lines, alternative measures where sight lines cannot be improved;
3. Safe crossing and usage for pedestrians and bicyclists, e.g. above or below grade crosswalks, signalized crosswalks, sidewalks on both sides of BBP, bike lanes along the entire length of BBP.

At our invitation, City staff joined 16 BSG representatives on February 21, 2015, for a meeting to identify and discuss specific safety problems. We have produced a 13-page Report (copy attached) expressing in some detail our concerns and some possible solutions.

In anticipation of the Interchange opening, the City Commission has previously authorized re-construction of the eastern portion of BBP (Iowa to Kasold). You have before you a proposal to:

1. Re-construct and signalize the BBP/George Williams Way intersection (\$681,253.00);
2. Construct a left-turn lane into Corpus Christi (\$202,507.28);
3. Re-construct part of the western portion of BBP (Wakarusa to Foxfire) (\$939,710.50);

We appreciate the work that has already been done, fully support the approval of the items on the consent agenda, and look forward to working with the City to install the additional safety measures necessary to make BBP safe for all users.

Sincerely,

Warren Corman

Moderator

From: Scott Morgan [<mailto:sem@morganquitno.com>]
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2015 10:10 AM
To: Mike Amyx; Leslie Soden; Stuart Boley; Matthew Herbert; Lisa Larsen
Cc: Diane Stoddard; Charles Soules
Subject: Support for Inverness Drive and Billings improvements

Dear Happy and Excited City Commissioners,

I am writing to lend my support for the improvements recommended for the intersection of Inverness Drive and Bob Billings Parkway. While I also support many of the other recommended improvements along Billings, the Inverness corner is my particular area of support.

We have lived on Inverness Drive since 1988 and have watched the evolution of this intersection. During most parts of the day it is not a difficult intersection to navigate although you do need to develop an ability to see traffic driving up a steep hill heading west while also keeping an eye out for people leaving Brandon Woods on the Billings exits and heading east but needing to make a u-turn to head west on Billings. We also need to watch for the occasional random folks (they may not be random but their traffic is) leaving Bella Sera and trying to enter traffic from the north. The Bella Sera traffic will increase with the construction of the additional phase of their development. Confusing but manageable.

The real problems are morning and evening work traffic as well as morning and afternoon school traffic. Southwest Middle School draws from the areas north of Billings around Quail Run Elementary. Inverness is a direct road to that school south of Clinton Parkway. There is only one lane on Inverness so anyone being rude enough to want to turn left to head west on Billings will block the traffic for a significant time while waiting for all of the traffic to turn left onto Inverness to head to Southwest.

I write all of this mostly to confuse you but to honestly point out that this is an intersection with heavy peak travel and some significant issues facing drivers. I haven't even mentioned the interesting aspects of elderly drivers leaving Brandon Woods from the Inverness exits and desperately trying to make their way onto Billings (OK, I have now mentioned it but I hadn't). This intersection needs help.

I would lean toward supporting a traffic circle as I think they work very well (please add one on Wakarusa at Harvard). I also think the peak traffic nature of this intersection is better served by a circle. However, I will defer to your collective wisdom as to whether a circle or light makes the most sense. But please do improve this intersection.

Hope you are all still having fun. Thank you for your service.

Scott Morgan

From: Jan Kozma [<mailto:kozmajan5@gmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2015 1:12 PM
To: City Hall email
Subject: Billings considerations

Could you please forward this message to each commissioner? I can't seem to find their individual addresses. When making your Billings decisions, could you please consider amending the street signs to indicate that **this is also 15th Street**? Perhaps "15th St." could be printed under the name Bob Billings on the sign but in full view? I cannot tell you how many out-of-town guests have been thoroughly confused by this inconsistency in our numbered street names. It would be so easy to rectify.

Thanks so much, Jan Kozma
4816 Normandy Park 66049

--
JK

Jan Kozma

November 16, 2015

To: Lawrence City Commission

CC: David Cronin, City Engineer



Re: Bob Billings Parkway Proposal

The BAC reviewed the proposed design for Bob Billings Parkway at our meeting on November 16th. We support the current design proposal that includes continuous sidewalks along the entire length of Bob Billings Parkway between Kasold Drive and Wakarusa Drive. This sidewalk is important because Bob Billings Parkway is an arterial between neighborhoods, it is imperative that there be facilities along this roadway for people who choose to walk and bike. We recognize that the scope and budget for this current project has prevented the project engineers from including a Shared Use Path in the project design. We understand and recommend that when this roadway is reconstructed a Shared Use Path be installed that is consistent with the Countywide Bikeway System Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Hallberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lisa Hallberg, Lawrence - Douglas County Bicycle Advisory Committee Chair

From: Bud Jacobs [<mailto:budjacobsdds@gmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2015 9:33 AM

To: Charles Soules

Subject: Bob Billings Parkway

Mr. Soules,

My wife and I live in The Villas at Alvamar. We strongly urge you to consider putting in a stoplight at the intersection of Bob Billings Parkway and Bobwhite Drive. Please help ensure our safety at this dangerous intersection!

Thank you,

Dr. Robert W. Jacobs
1524 Fountain Dr.

From: Sheryl [<mailto:sheryljacobs2@gmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2015 10:47 AM

To: David Cronin; Charles Soules; Mike Amyx; Leslie Soden; Stuart Boley; Matthew Herbert; Lisa Larsen

Subject: Bob Billings and Bobwhite Intersection

I live in the Villas, and am writing about the problem at the intersection of Bobwhite and Bob Billings Parkway. This is such a dangerous intersection. It is difficult to cross the street on foot in order to walk in Fred DeVictor Park. And, it is almost impossible to turn right or left when cars are leaving Corpus Christie Church either following a church service, or before or after school when parents are dropping off or picking up their children. I would urge you to consider putting in a stop light at this intersection to ensure the safety of the residents living south of that intersection. Thank you for your consideration.

Sheryl Jacobs