



dallasnews

Powered by *The Dallas Morning News*

Keep the faith on Trinity Parkway's benefits to all of Dallas



47

2

0



39



By [VONCIEL JONES HILL](#)

Published: 25 June 2014 07:11 PM

Updated: 25 June 2014 07:19 PM

The intersection of Interstates 30 and 35 near downtown Dallas is consistently rated as one of the most congested in the country. Rush hour is three hours in the morning and three hours in the afternoon. Dallas exists because of business, not because of lakes or rivers. Business needs a strong transportation system to be able to thrive. That is why we, as a city, have invested in DART and in

D/FW Airport. Those investments have paid off.

To continue to have our economy grow, we need to increase the capacity of the freeways near downtown by 250,000 trips per day. There are three options. We could double-deck Stemmons, but that is very expensive and very ugly. A double-decked Stemmons will not encourage economic growth. The second option is to widen Riverfront. That would require taking 280 pieces of property, parcels that currently provide jobs and pay taxes.

The third alternative is the Trinity Parkway, a toll road inside the levees on the downtown side. Portions would be four lanes; they would transition to six lanes where the traffic count justified the expansion. A full expansion could not be considered until 2025, and then only when the traffic count justified it. This alternative can provide the needed increased capacity and, because taxpayers already own the land, is by far the cheapest of all the alternatives.

The current plans for the Trinity Parkway are the result of three different public planning processes. Mayor Steve Bartlett created the 800-member Trinity River Corridor Citizens Committee. They spent hundreds of hours in meetings and concluded that transportation improvements were needed. They preferred those improvements not be between the levees but that if a high-speed toll road was the best choice, it should be pursued. The Texas Department of Transportation formed the Major Transportation Investment Study, which looked at 35 different alignments, maximizing DART usage, traffic signal sequencing and other improvements. They concluded that the toll road between the levees was the best option.

Mayor Laura Miller had opposed the toll road as a council member. As mayor, she and others raised private funds and engaged nationally known experts to re-examine the issue. After study and public discussion, they wrote the Balanced Vision Plan, which described how all the aspects of the Trinity — flood control, lakes, athletic fields and the toll road could fit together. The Balanced Vision Plan was approved by the City Council.

This year, the Parkway Environmental Impact Study will be finished, and the city will receive the record of decision. As a community, we will know what can be done in the Trinity floodway and maintain the required flood control protection.

Now is the time to go to work and design a Trinity Parkway that increases traffic capacity so Dallas residents can get from their homes to their jobs and is at the same time compatible with the park. Using private funds, supporters of the Trinity have consistently identified national and internationally renowned planners. Antoine Predock designed the Audubon Center. Santiago Calatrava designed the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge and the Margaret McDermott Bridge. Norman Foster and Partners designed the South Side Master Plan. Alex Krieger and Bill Eager wrote the Balanced Vision Plan.

Recent studies show that 60 percent of the people who will use the parkway will either live or work in Dallas. These folks along with the voters who have twice approved the Trinity Parkway deserve our best efforts to design and construct a waterfront boulevard that carries 250,000 person trips per day.

Look at what the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge has done for our civic outlook and, in particular, for West Dallas. Imagine what a fully realized Trinity — lakes, athletic fields, bridges, flood control, transportation improvements — can do. We just have to keep the faith.

Dallas City Council member Vonciel Jones Hill is chair of the council's Transportation and Trinity Committee. She may be contacted at vonciel.hill@dallascityhall.com.

Did you see something wrong in this story, or something missing? [Let us know](#).

You Might Also Like



The World's Most Beautiful Dining Rooms (Food & Wine)



Dallas' 9 Best Sandwiches (Zagat)



The 13 Worst Supermarkets in America in 2014 (The Fiscal Times)



10 most corrupt states in America (Fortune)

From the web

[Do You Know Your "Color Personality"? Find Out Now](#) BHG

[Two Adults, Two Kids, One Small Brooklyn Apartment—IKEA Makeover Squad Saves the day](#) YouTube

[Tour Jimmy Fallon's Home in the Hamptons](#) HGTV FrontDoor

More from *Dallasnews.com*

[Sex, lies, diamond scheme alleged in suit against Dallas plastic surgeon](#) News

[Texas to no longer require auto inspection sticker](#) News

[Scott Goldstein: Rawlings' legacy depends on a second term](#) Opinion

Recommended by

Recommended by

Comments

To post a comment, log into your chosen social network and then add your comment below. Your comments are subject to our [Terms of Service](#) and the privacy policy and terms of service of your social network. If you do not want to comment with a social network, please consider writing a [letter to the editor](#).



Write a comment

39 Comments

Sort Subscribe RSS



Pegaso

13 hours ago

CLEAN YOUR NASTY POOL!!

Reply Share

14 0



Wylie H Dallas

13 hours ago

Who writes Vonciel Jones Hill's scripts and gives her her marching orders?

Reply Share 2 replies

13 0



Raymond Crawford

12 hours ago

The Dallas Citizens Council who funds her. Next question?

Reply Share

7 1



mdunlap1

10 hours ago

No one. She truly believes this would make the city better. Mayor Rawlings thinks the same. Old white people and old black people in this country love cars and highways. It's just how they were raised. It's tragic.

Reply Share

4 0



Raymond Crawford

12 hours ago

I find it interesting to hear great visions of grandeur and history from a home owner with attitude who doesn't take care of her own property. If this were meant to be a teachable moment for us, I'm afraid the teacher has no credibility.

Reply Share

10 0



Mark

11 hours ago

This woman's argument is asinine.

Last week I took a ride down to the new Continental Bridge Park and then the Trinity Skyline Trail, a walking/biking path that runs along the (proposed) toll road alignment. These projects are exactly what Dallas needs more of: Quality public spaces made for people (not cars) that compliment the river's natural beauty. Beauty, you say? I wouldn't have said that either a week ago, but after a 5 mile bike ride along the new river path, we may finally have a rebuttal when people say Dallas is a concrete jungle.

World class cities don't build riverfront highways anymore. It's time to leave the 1960s behind. Hundreds of millions of dollars are being invested to make the river a city asset. The tollroad would reduce the value of these investments substantially by creating another blighting barrier which discourages pedestrian and bicycle access to these new parks and trails.

I suggest Ms. Hill visit Continental Bridge Park and the riverfront trails (on bike). Spend some time down there and then imagine 250,000 cars/day rushing along the river. It's not like Dallas has an abundance of natural landscapes to enjoy. Why spend millions to ruin one of the few we have left?

There's a reason professional and highly respected planners, visionaries, and architects are coming out against this project. Perhaps Ms. Hill should listen to them more closely.

Reply Share 9 0



Bill Betzen

11 hours ago

Dallas exists because of business, not because of lakes or rivers, but if you ever want more than 50,000 living downtown, better protect those potential lakes and the only actual river. Keep the Trinity a place of peaceful bike trails, canoe rides, and quiet recreation, and downtown will be well over a half million some day!

Reply Share 9 0



richard schumacher

12 hours ago

Keep the faith. Pray real hard. That's what passes for transportation planning in Dallas.

Reply Share 5 replies 9 0



Wylie H Dallas

12 hours ago

And don't ask Vonciel Jones Hill any tough questions...

Reply Share 8 0



PM Summer

12 hours ago

Funny. That describes Austin far more than Dallas. Dallas has the State's best transportation mix: highways, light rail, trolley service, airports, and ped-oriented urban re-development.

Reply Share 3 replies 0 4



Wylie H Dallas

12 hours ago

I'd be more interested in seeing a comparison of Dallas with the rest of the U.S. and other cities in the world known as being livable.

TxDOT isn't exactly known as a forward-thinking, best-practices sort of place.

Reply Share 8 0



mdunlap1

10 hours ago

You left out a key component: on-street bike infrastructure. Austin has a lot. Dallas has basically none.

Reply Share 5 0



Ken Duble

2 hours ago

Austin has tighter building codes, and hence, a more walkable downtown. Something like the proposed Uptown Sam's would never happen near downtown Austin.

Reply Share 2 0



Wylie H Dallas

11 hours ago

[To continue to have our economy grow, we need to increase the capacity of the freeways near downtown by 250,000 trips per day.]

Really? According to who... YOU, Vonciel Jones Hill???

Reply Share 1 reply 7 0



Ken Duble

2 hours ago

The fact is Dallas isn't growing despite the proliferation of freeway lanes. If anything, more freeway lanes facilitate the relocation of jobs and growth to the suburbs. Detroit has the greatest concentration of freeway lanes in North America and Vancouver the fewest. The results speak for themselves.

Reply Share 3 0



1DaIM

12 hours ago

So, what is Hill's background that qualifies her to be a traffic planner? Does she have an engineer degree? No? An urban planning degree? No? Any private transit experience? No?

Is she just parroting what her bosses who own companies that build highways are telling her to say?

Reply Share 1 reply 7 0



Raymond Crawford

12 hours ago

Smarty

Reply Share 1 1



Avi Roy

11 hours ago

I wonder how many people have been infected with West Nile virus due to Vonciel's slimy pool? Keep the faith!

Reply Share 5 0



Glenn Wang

12 hours ago

To answer the question about her credibility, no. She does not have an engineering background or urban study degree.

http://www.utexas.edu/law/alumni/association/executive_committee/2008-2009/hill.php

Reply Share

5 0



WalkableDFW

5 hours ago

There is zero evidence that new highway capacity leads to economic growth. In fact, most evidence points to a negative correlation due to the debt spending to build the infrastructure, the diminishing returns on such overbuilt infrastructure, the limited reduction in congestion that proponents claim will occur, and the increased costs of vehicle ownership and vehicle miles travelled due to the new capacity (of which there is very strong data) upon the private sector which is regressive meaning it punishes the poor most of all.

Reply Share

3 0



Jim Schermbeck

8 hours ago

Because it ignores the last years of debate and eroding support, this piece could have been written in 1997, or 2007. In language that Ms Hill can understand, "A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing her opinion." Proverbs 18:2.

Reply Share 1 reply

3 0



Raymond Crawford

1 hour ago

Preach on brother Jim!

Reply Share

0 0



Wylie H Dallas

12 hours ago

[Alex Krieger and Bill Eager wrote the Balanced Vision Plan.]

Krieger's email to Laura Miller:

"From Alex Krieger

March 22, 2007

to Bill Eager, Laura

Laura,

I'm not sure in what context the issue of alternative alignments for the Trinity Parkway has come up, but during my recent visit -- at the initial charette with the Trinity Lakes Planning Team -- what concerned me most was that the engineering of the road was proceeding as if it were a great big interstate highway instead of a parkway and that there was absolutely no evidence of concern for the "context sensitive design" that was promised as part of the balanced vision plan. Devoting MUCH MUCH more attention to the design of the roadway - and making sure that it results in a road worthy of being part of great park and open space environment -- is what I think is most immediately necessary.

Best,

Alex Krieger"

Source: http://blogs.dallasobserver.com/unfairpark/2007/05/angela_hunt_proves_it_the_mayo.php

Reply Share

3 0



Wylie H Dallas

3 hours ago

[These folks along with the voters who have twice approved the Trinity Parkway deserve our best efforts to design and construct a waterfront boulevard that carries 250,000 person trips per day.]

First of all, the first referendum in 1998 was for a package of improvements.... a review of articles at the time suggest that most voters who pulled the lever for the package did it IN SPITE OF the fact that the Parkway was included; even with that, it barely passed. It was later determined that much of what the City of Dallas circulated to promote the package was false propaganda--- the City then went to court to successfully plead that it didn't have to be held to any of the promises it made about the recreational amenities... it only had to stick with the ambiguous language of the referendum itself.

In 2007, the only time the toll road was put up for a vote on a stand-alone basis, the City of Dallas and NCTCOG again circulated a substantial amount of propaganda later determined to be false. In addition, the pro-toll road contractors, etc., intentionally engaged in a campaign to confuse people, adopting the anti toll road motto from the 1998 bond referendum and using it to trick people into voting for the toll road. Again, it barely passed.

There is no mandate.

Second, there is no longer any plan to build a "waterfront boulevard." That plan was abandoned long ago. The current plan is to build a high-speed limited access highway through the middle of the park.

Third, none of the published projections show this road carrying anywhere near 250,000 person trips per day.... I have no idea where Vonciel Jones Hill got her numbers, but they are completely wrong.

Reply Share 1 reply 2 0



Ken Duble 2 hours ago

Even if the trip count were right, it wouldn't justify building it. If anything, it would reflect the relocation of more wealth and jobs to the suburbs.

Reply Share 1 0



WalkableDFW 5 hours ago

Riddle me this: how can new highway capacity lead to some ambiguous feel good term like "growth!" and congestion reduction when it yields more driving <http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-fkuGx4-347KY/UJwzTle6RI/AAAAAAAAEi8/MRAVT6cr1A/s1600/MSAs+51-100.jpg> which means more cost on public sector for the infrastructure, the private sector for the driving, and increased congestion due to more driving while GDP per capita is negatively correlated with VMT per capita <http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/grwinkelman-graph2.gif>

It's time these dinosaurs get more meteors. And by meteors I mean retirement.

Reply Share 2 0



roscoe jett 8 hours ago

Paving a river and putting in motorists who may drown in a disaster. Yeah, great idea. Let's spend a couple of billion to put people in jeopardy.

Reply Share 1 reply 2 0



Ken Duble 2 hours ago

The road would be closed when the waters rise. A rising river results from rains upstream, not rains in Dallas. They always know days in advance when the river will crest. I'm not arguing for the road. I'm just saying motorists wouldn't be in jeopardy.

Reply Share 0 0



Wylie H Dallas 11 hours ago

[Alex Krieger and Bill Eager wrote the Balanced Vision Plan.]

Yes, they did.... and I understand they have made clear that what the City is now doing is in direct contradiction with that plan, by replacing a gentle parkway with what appears to be a full-blown interstate highway. Maybe that explains why the Dallas Chapter of the AIA has withdrawn its support for this crazy scheme.

Source: https://www.aiadallas.org/media/uploads/mini-site-docs/trinity_tollway_position_paper.pdf

Reply Share 2 0



Glenn Wang 12 hours ago

<http://frontburner.dmagazine.com/2014/05/01/what-vonciel-jones-hill-should-have-said-about-the-trinity-toll-road/>

Reply Share 2 0



Glenn Wang 12 hours ago

<http://www.dallasvoice.com/update-vonciel-hill-s-nubs-gays-officially-castigating-1041777.html>

Reply Share 1 0



cobynichols 19 minutes ago

I have NEVER read a position by an elected leader that lacks basic vision. She is a joke and she not chair ANY committee that has anything to do with the future of Dallas. She should move to the suburbs (which is rumored where she actually lives) and build freeways all over the place. Pitiful!

Reply Share 0 0



Greg Shelton 47 minutes ago

The basic primes that this opinion is based on is old and out of date. The latest studies of young people show that they have no interest in driving -- The arrival of new automated driving technologies will easily increase the capacity of today highways (these cars can travel closer at faster speeds) -- The toll road is yesterday's solution looking for a problem to solve. We are in the middle of a tectonic shift in transportation and where people want to live and both are moving away from the need for this toll way.

Besides that we have two big issues in Dallas that everyone should be focused on Quality of Live (the Trinity Park) and DISD. This toll road addresses neither.

Reply Share 0 0



PM Summer 12 hours ago

People (media) seldom some of the real issues that are being dealt with here.

- 1) The current 'Trinity River' through Dallas is a flood-control diversionary channel.
- 2) Any 'Park' beyond the current one would be swept away/covered up by flood events... annually. There is no money to replace them.
- 3) One of the primary (yet unspoken) reasons behind the Trinity Parkway is the need for a capacity bypass during the reconstruction of I-35/Stemmons. When Stemmons is rebuilt, through traffic will either flow on a modified I-35E bypass, or it will migrate to I-35W. A traffic shift to the under-utilized I-35W in Tarrant County will choke off economic development (and viability) from Dallas to Lewisville.
- 4) #3 is unspoken due to the 'armistice' between Dallas and Ft Worth following the Wright Amendment fiasco.

Strangle away.

Reply Share 5 replies 1 10



Wylie H Dallas

12 hours ago

[A traffic shift to the under-utilized I-35W in Tarrant County will choke off economic development (and viability) from Dallas to Lewisville.]

Nothing about that statement makes any sense.

Reply Share 1 reply 8 0



Raymond Crawford

1 hour ago

Unless she knows something that the public doesn't.

Reply Share 0 0



mdunlap1

10 hours ago

Traffic flow. Meh.

Reply Share 1 0



Ken Duble

2 hours ago

Higher traffic count from urban freeways doesn't promote economic development. It hurts it. You get the negative impact of traffic -- the delays, noise and pollution -- without the economic benefits of consumer spending.

Reply Share 1 0



Greg Shelton

34 minutes ago

No one I know of is suggesting that we build a playground in the Floodway it is about ridding your bike in a wide open natural environment. Normal flood events won't sweep away lakes and trails...

The thing i don't get is how they are re-doing the Horseshoe without a bypass... Central Expressway was built without a bypass but for some reason we need one for this one project or else a terrible calamity will befall us.

Reply Share 0 0