

## **APPENDIX K PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a Draft EIS for Potential Multipurpose Projects for Ecosystem Restoration, Flood Damage Reduction, and Recreation Development within and along the Clear and West Forks of the Trinity River in Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas, was published in the Federal Register on October 16, 2002. An amendment to the original NOI was published in the Federal Register on October 24, 2004, defining the expansion of the study area. The NOIs provided background information related to the Clear and West Forks study, current status of ongoing studies and the rationale for preparing the EIS.

### **SCOPING**

A Notice of Public Scoping Meeting was mailed to all known interested parties on October 11, 2002. The notice outlined the study authority, major projects being proposed by the Corps of Engineers within the study area, and the date and location of the public scoping meeting. The Fort Worth District also issued a news release on October 24, 2002, announcing the scoping meeting and the opportunity for citizens to offer comments, suggestions or any other information that might benefit the Corps of Engineers in preparing the EIS. The scoping meeting was held on October 29, 2002, in the Grand Ballroom of the downtown YMCA in Fort Worth, Texas. Approximately 50 individuals attended.

During the scoping meeting, a brief description of the overall study and anticipated schedule for conducting the remainder of the NEPA process was discussed. Members of the interested public were then allowed the opportunity to present oral and/or written statements about their concerns or general comments on the Clear and West Forks study.

Nine speakers provided oral comments at that meeting, the highest priority concerns included:

- preventing pollution run off into the river during construction and usage of proposed areas including streets and parking lots near the river;
- ensuring sufficient continual in-stream flow to accommodate downstream river areas including wetlands and estuaries;
- endangered wetlands, preservation of wetlands (near Zoo Creek) by closing the artificial channel that diverts water into the Clear Fork
- ensure trails remain continuous for usage by bicyclists, include trailhead water fountains, bathrooms, amenities (also the downtown development would be a draw for users of the trails)
- concern about loss of fishery habitat and access by fishermen, habitat quality, toxicity of the fish population
- concern about the release at Benbrook, monitoring and metering the pumpage with the possibility of providing more flow to enhance habitat
- watershed management as a result of storm water runoff, mitigation to try to increase wetland development

## **INTERAGENCY COORDINATION**

In addition to the scoping meeting, numerous other avenues for providing input toward understanding the needs, opportunities and potential solutions identified for the study area were utilized during the EIS preparation. Several meetings, some on bi-weekly to annual recurring basis and additional one-time meetings were held with multiple local, state and federal agencies and TRWD to provide input to the NEPA process. A summary of the key meetings follows.

- Approximately seventy (70) Local Agency Coordination Meetings were conducted from March 2001 through May 2005. Attendees included TRWD, City of Benbrook, Corps of Engineers, Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, City of Fort Worth Staff and City Officials, Mayor of Fort Worth, North Central Texas Council of Government (NCTCOG), Tarrant County.
- Congresswoman Kay Granger held a Federal Summit on May 13, 2002, at the Petroleum Club in Fort Worth. This meeting included representatives from Tarrant County, Environmental Protection Administration (EPA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission, Texas Historical Commission, Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD), Texas Water Development Board, City of Fort Worth, Southwestern Division and Fort Worth District of the Corps of Engineers (SWD and SWF, respectively), Bureau of Reclamation, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- Bi-weekly Project Delivery Team (PDT) meetings were held continuously from late 2003 through December 2004. Representatives from USACE, TRWD, the City of Fort Worth, NCTCOG and CDM attended these meetings.
- An interagency coordination meeting was held with TCEQ on March 4, 2005. Attendees included representatives from TRWD, USACE and CDM.
- An interagency coordination meeting was held on March 8, 2005 with TxDOT. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss environmental reviews, funding, status of USACE EIS, and TxDOT, USDOT NEPA review process. Representatives from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Texas Department of Transportation (TxDot), Fort Worth District of the Corps of Engineers (USACE), the City of Fort Worth and CDM.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

### *TRINITY RIVER VISION MASTER PLAN*

In August 2000, TRWD in association with Streams and Valleys, Inc., the City of Fort Worth, and the USACE with assistance from Gideon Toal, an architecture / planning firm, commenced development of the Trinity River Vision (TRV) Master Plan. Gideon Toal was retained primarily

to oversee the extensive public input process to develop a vision on enhancing the open space and recreational amenities represented by the river. The TRV Master Plan focused on eight segments of the Trinity River and its tributaries: Central City, Clear Fork (North), Clear Fork (South), Marine Creek, Mary's Creek, Sycamore Creek, West Fork (East) and West Fork (West).

The TRV planning process began in February 2001 at which time Steering and Advisory Committees were formed. The 16-member Steering Committee includes representatives from Streams and Valleys, TRWD, USACE, the City of Fort Worth and others. The Advisory Committee includes over 70 members from neighborhood and residential associations, recreational associations, and civic leagues with sub-committees for each of the eight river segments led by Segment Chairs. The Segment Chairs worked with TRWD, Streams and Valleys and Gideon Toal to ensure proper notification of the public on the project progress and provide the opportunity for input and continuing involvement.

As part of the TRV Master Plan work efforts, a series of public meetings/project briefings were held with local citizens and local interest groups about the future of the Trinity River and its major tributaries in Fort Worth, Texas. Attachment 1 contains a list of members of the Steering Committee, Advisory Committee and Attachment 2 is the list public meetings held to date.

From April to June 2001, ten public meetings were held; eight with local citizens' groups focusing on each river segment, and two with special-interest groups. Attendance ranged from 20-60 citizens representing neighborhoods, landowners, sports and environmental organizations. Emphasis was also placed on facilitating river segment workshops, identifying neighborhood organizations, landowners and other stakeholders in an effort to solicit participation in the planning process. In this first round of public meetings, citizens were asked to provide comments, opinions and thoughts as to what the Trinity River means to them as individuals and groups. Specifically two questions were posed;

- 1) "What does the river mean to you?"
- 2) "What are your dreams for its future?"

The following summarizes oral comments from these segment meetings held in early 2001.

In response to the question, "What does the river mean to you?" the following comments were articulated.

- Mary's Creek is one of the last remaining natural areas on the far west side;
- The river is an asset and the overall goal is to maximize the asset;
- The river has a calming effect on the city if it is clean and inviting;
- The river increases pride in its citizens;
- The river is one of the most important visual assets of a city;
- Recreation;
- Development of the river should be for the benefit of everyone, not just for the benefit of corporations or a wealthy few;
- A free opportunity for all to enjoy;
- A place of civic pride that demands high priority for maintenance expenditure budget dollars;
- The river gives a feeling of the country in an urban environment; it's a quality of life issue that most cities don't have;
- The river is an escape, a feeling of being in nature;
- There is a large amount of history to the river; it threads our city together;

- Fort Worth has no mountains, no canyons, ocean front, beach areas or monument valleys, but we have this river that could be our jewel, our generation's contribution to the aesthetics of Fort Worth and to the heritage of future generations;
- The river is a place to run, hike and enjoy wildlife; and
- The river is important for its natural resource value; it's rare to have a river that is so embraced by its community.

In response to the question, "What are your dreams for its future?" the following comments were articulated.

- Better access to river, greenbelts, trails from neighborhoods;
- Better linkage to trails, improve signage;
- Develop bike trails;
- Ensure conditions in the river allow for rowing and canoeing activities;
- Control development of greenbelt areas, preserve natural environment, leave trees;
- Leave river in its natural state;
- Maintain beauty and natural aspects of parks;
- Have natural barriers and aesthetically pleasing channelization;
- Good economic development opportunity;
- Flood control and erosion issues need to be addressed, but should be in a manner conducive to the natural environment;
- Clean up the river;
- Want deep water for fishing, manage water flow to allow for boating at all times;
- Safety concerns for trail users, better lighting especially near bridges;
- Buffer ball parks, recreation areas to keep chemicals from grass, trash, beverages out of the river;
- Increase family access to river through better access to trails, better lighting;
- Remove fallen trees and trash more often and regularly, try to prevent dumping and "flow" of trash into the creeks;
- Expand recreational opportunities with playgrounds for all ages, trail user amenities like restrooms, benches, trails leading to and over the water, more picnic facilities, recreational fields with parking;
- Take steps to control the water flow to accommodate future development whether it is commercial, recreational or residential;
- Flood control/management – water at a more constant level throughout the system;
- Around Stockyards, the waterway could be developed like the Riverwalk in San Antonio;
- Equestrian trails separate from hiking and bike trails (at least three stables are adjacent to the linear parks);
- Trees for shade, seating for casual walkers, pockets for picnics and areas for horse riding; and
- Screening of industrial areas from river.

A Trinity River Vision Workshop was held October 15-17, 2001. Attendees included River Segment Chairs, Advisory Committee Members, Steering Committee Members, urban planners, staff liaisons and representatives from four consulting firms. Attendees studied inputs from the ten community meetings to formulate a scope of work and develop goals for a project that would complement the City of Fort Worth's Comprehensive Plan. Discussions included urban waterfronts, relevant comparable river projects, conservation, open space, recreation, boating and trail systems. Inspired by the community's desire to connect to the river through increased

access, the workshop resulted in preliminary concepts and draft plans for an urban waterfront in the Central City segment of the river. The idea of re-channeling the Trinity River in the Central City area was a significant outcome of this workshop.

In January 2002, a second round of five public meetings was held with groups representing each of the eight river segments along with two special-interest groups, to review draft concepts and determine if all of the ideas, thoughts and concerns raised by the public were adequately captured and addressed.

In Spring 2003, the Trinity River Vision Master Plan was adopted by the Tarrant Regional Water District Board, the Streams and Valleys Board, the City of Fort Worth and Tarrant County.

From November 2002 to June 2004, three at-large public meetings were held in Fort Worth with the purpose of maintaining dialogue with and updating the public on the progress of the TRV Master Plan and the Community Based Alternative for Central City..

### *CENTRAL CITY*

Several Central City design workshops were held in late 2003 through mid 2004 to gather input on the most appropriate urban design elements of this project. These workshops focused on urban design and planning concepts, including street grids, layouts, landscaping and recreation components. In addition to the urban planners and engineers, the design workshops typically included community members, and representatives of non-profit organizations (Streams and Valleys), TRWD, USACE, City of Fort Worth, and Tarrant County.

The Trinity Uptown Plan (TUP) was published in late 2004 as a result of these design workshops. On December 9, 2004, a public meeting was held at the Fort Worth Community Arts Center at which time the Trinity River Vision Exhibit (known to the public as Trinity Uptown) opened. This exhibit shows the past, present and future of the Trinity River in Fort Worth through a series of pictures, displays and video. It also contains a 9 ft by 9 ft model that depicts components of the Central City project as well as future private development envisioned over the next 50 years. It will remain on display through summer 2005. A comment box at the exhibit is being used to collect feedback from the public.

Individuals who own property that could potentially be impacted by the construction of the bypass channel and interior water feature in the Community Based Alternative were invited to a public presentation and stakeholders meeting on November 16, 2004. This meeting provided an overall project overview and status update. Approximately 78 people were in attendance. Most of the comments and questions at this meeting pertained to potential redevelopment of properties acquired for the project and the relocation process for displaced owners and businesses.

#### *Property Owners*

Property owners and known tenants were also invited to attend either of two meetings held on April 26, 2005. The presentation at these meetings specifically addressed the current status of the USACE Draft EIS, a tentative construction sequence schedule based on preliminary engineering, and an overview of the land acquisition and business relocation benefits available under the federal guidelines documented in the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (as amended).

Attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions in a Q&A session at the end of the meetings. Approximately 55 people attended.

### *Cultural/Historic Groups*

On April 27, 2004, a preliminary meeting was conducted to address the cultural/historic parameters of the project. Participants included the State Historic Preservation Officer, staff from the USACE, the City of Fort Worth, TRWD. From November 2004 to January 2005, meetings were held with nine cultural / historical interest groups in the area. The groups were provided with a project overview presentation, explanation of the Section 106 Process/Public involvement plan, and had the opportunity to ask questions and voice any concerns. A detailed list of the meetings with special interest groups is included in Attachment 2. On December 2, 2004, members of USACE, TRWD, the City of Fort Worth, Tarrant County and CDM, met with the SHPO and staff, to present the project and propose methodology for inventory and assessment.

In summary, from the early stages of the Trinity River Vision Master Plan in 2001 to present, community briefings and workshops were held involving various user, special interest, neighborhood, civic and association groups which continue to solicit suggestions and feedback on the current concept plans and designs. Copies of comments and/or meeting minutes are available upon request from TRWD. Since February 2001, a website ([Trinityrivervision.org](http://Trinityrivervision.org)) is available and is regularly updated with postings of public meetings, copies of presentations, graphics. Both the Trinity River Vision Master Plan and the Trinity Uptown Plan are also available for download on the website. A feedback link is also provided for public comments.