

**CIELO VISTA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
MEETING MINUTES - FEBRUARY 8, 2018**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM. Following the Pledge of Allegiance all present introduced themselves. The first speaker was Jennifer Wright assisted by Ricardo Romero and Francisco Marez. They reviewed plans for proposed improvements to Airway, Hawkins, and Viscount and their intersections with I-10. The construction is having a negative impact on both Hawkins exits and the traffic flow in and out of the two malls. Pictures of the proposed changes that will be made to existing streets and to the interstate are startling. Montana and the interstate near Hawkins will be redesigned. Montana will have many more traffic lanes, while the interstate will have extended overpasses.

Work on improving and increasing exits and entrances to the Fountains began in January. The work should be completed in November prior to the Christmas rush this year. Improved traffic flow between Cielo Vista Mall and the Fountains is a necessity. Also, accessing I-10 is difficult, causing a backup of traffic on the frontage road. The off ramp to the west and the on ramp crisscross in a dangerous manner. Guard rails are being installed. Hawkins exits and entrances will have to be closed. Traffic will use Geronimo or Robert Lee. Montana can also be used as a detour.

New on and off ramps will reduce crisscrossing of traffic. The old off ramps will be demolished and new ones will reduce crisscrossing traffic. There will be two on ramps between Viscount and Hawkins. New lanes will be added to Gateway East in the Hawkins area. Once the construction is complete traffic will flow more smoothly with reduced crisscrossing. Questions have been raised about braided ramps. Their use allows for smoother and safer traffic flow. The goal is to complete the construction before Christmas 2018. Measures have been implemented that have accelerated the work schedule so the work is presently 5% ahead of schedule. It is expected to be completed in six months.

TXDOT is hoping to convince the city to increase the entrances and exits for The Fountains. Cielo Vista has many of them, but The Fountains has few.

Metropolitan planning looks at many projects all around the city. However, finding money is a problem as El Paso can barely keep up with the roads already in the city.

The shoulders on I-10 were turned into lanes so now disabled vehicles must be towed off quickly. The city has the right to tow vehicles, and tows about thirty a week. Flat tires or no gas are the usual reasons for towing. There are four tow trucks on standby. They tow cars to the nearest gas station or the nearest place where a tire can be changed. Recent records show 35 tows the first week, 66 the second and 52 the third. So many tows, so little money, and soon the city will run out of money for towing.

Plans to solve the traffic congestion at Global Reach and Montana project a cost of 30 million dollars. The project should be completed in January 2020. Montana backs up for many miles in the morning. Plans call for bridges over major intersections along Montana from Global Reach to Zaragoza. The Joe Battle-Loop 375 intersection will look like the Spaghetti Bowl on steroids. Construct will begin next year.

The corridor study to re-imagine I-10 covers approximately 55 miles. It is broken into parts: Northern Gateway | Downtown | Airport | Southern Corridor. Engineers don't travel every inch of highway so they welcome input from the public. Public outreach is requested.

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How often are traffic lines and reflectors maintained? An engineer drove many of our roads and highways to have an actual driving experience. He found that reflectors had been ripped off by snowplows. The solution is to submerge them. We have limited money for maintenance. We have little money for maintenance because we have good weather. However, we have lots of traffic.

John Carrillo, Candidate for Texas 16th Congressional District, spoke to us about his qualifications for this position. He was given an award for his work on KTEP-AM by the NPR. He was also a lecturer at UTEP. He has a BA in Mass Communications and an MA in Communications. He was the Graduate of the Year with a 4.0 Grade Point Average. He has other certifications as well. This combination will help him succeed. He is interested in all aspects of legislative matters. He has worked with Anthony ISD, Community in Schools, has sat in Representatives and Senators offices discussing legislation, and has met and worked with a wide range of people.

He is running for office because we must have change. There is an increase in racism, in assaults on ethical behavior, and these perilous times require leaders. El Paso has a lack of leadership. They say nothing when Trump speaks of building a wall, saying, "What have you got to lose?" We have a great deal to lose. The wall would be detrimental to trade. Presently we get one billion dollars daily in trade with Mexico. Six million American jobs depend on trade. Machinery, oil, vehicles, plastics are among trade items that add \$128 billion to our economy annually. Thirteen million people travel here yearly. They add 8.5 million dollars to our economy. Mexico is a top trading partner with many of our states. In 2015, 92 billion dollars in trade was exported from Texas to Mexico. 84 billion was imported from Mexico, favoring us financially.

Mr. Carrillo wants to get rid of about 25 million people without medical care. We must have subsidized medical care for our citizens. Dreamers came here without volition. Their parents brought them here, and this is the only country many of them know. Should they be punished for the actions of their parents? It is estimated that there are 800,000, dreamers in the United States, and about 8000 live in El Paso. It is estimated that dreamers produce \$188 billion in output and take in \$117 million in welfare.

We need to invest in our infrastructure like we did with the Work Program Administration, the WPA. We need to provide jobs. We should lead the country in the use of solar power. We should have a minimum wage of \$15 an hour. We should invest in our children by providing a free University education. It is a basic right like our first Amendment rights.

The disabled should have a fair shot at employment and security. We should ensure that every American has access to free quality health care and expand Medicaid.

He says that he is not part of the good old boy network, but he will collaborate to increase economic opportunity in El Paso, expand social services, and legislate to provide health care. He will safeguard the environment and educate Capitol Hill about free trade. If you are tired of politics as usual, he is the one to choose.

Following John Carrillo's speech, the representative from Papa John's Pizza accepted a glass plaque for all he has done for CVNA. He has been the general manager for six years and we are lucky to have him in our community.

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A representative from the County Commissioners staff announced plans for the city and county to collaborate and work to include Las Cruces and Juarez in discussions about problems common to our region.

There will be a drive-in movie at Ascarate Lake on Valentine's Day. Information was distributed in a newsletter.

Roger Montoya explained the details of the Enchilada Dinner Fund Raiser. Each member will be asked to sell 20 tickets at \$9 each. Money is the life's blood of our association if we are going to fund our projects.

We need to define the role and responsibility of our Honorary Board Member from Burges High School. Burges chooses two students to [participate at board meetings. These high school students are asked to be our liaison with Burges. We mutually support each other. Burges students helped with the luminarias and clean ups. Burges was asked to name a sophomore and a junior to work with CVNA. These students can also make announcements about occasional special activities involving Burges and CVNA.

We were reminded to please help reduce the sand pile in front of St. Paul's Church.

Our CVNA roster has 200 enrolled as members who are not participating. They were sent notices to be active participants. We received 32 to 34 applications from the 200 sent out.

Homeless are beginning to set up in the shopping center at Viscount and Edgemere. The owner, Mr. Berg, plans to fix up the shopping center.

The Great American Clean Up will get help from United Way. We will get 60-70 students to help.

The get together of all the El Paso Neighborhood Associations will be April 22 at Memorial Park.

Our guests from Mission Valley Neighborhood Association told us of a problem they are having in an area where the families have their homes on nine acre plots and the Diocese wants to build homes with much smaller plots on land owned by the Church. The neighborhood cannot accommodate high density housing as the streets are not wide enough. High density housing is contrary to the ambience of the neighborhood. Cassandra Brown is aware of their problem and supports the present home owners. The one hundred square foot homes would have a negative impact on the established community.