



CITY OF JERSEY VILLAGE, TEXAS

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MAYOR'S LETTER JUNE 2012

NOISE, NOISE, NOISE

I can imagine that if you lived in Jersey Village back in the 1950's you would have been surrounded by the calm, soothing sounds of nature: birds singing, wind gently blowing through the trees and noise from the family pets. Through the next several decades, however, the sounds of the city have encroached on the tranquility of Jersey Village. Bit by bit the noise has slowly interfered with the peace and quiet that we once knew here in the village.

First came the paving of Highway 290 and the addition of bi-grade crossings at Senate and Jones Road. A decade later the access roads of Beltway 8 and, shortly thereafter, the main lanes of the Sam Houston toll road brought more noise to the neighborhood. Each year more and more vehicles travel the roads and freeways surrounding Jersey Village increasing the noise level and expanding the hours that we hear the traffic.

While the noise levels have grown almost constantly since the 1950's, several things have minimized the effects of the noise. The most important was when citizens rallied together to have the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA) move the toll road from Senate Avenue to the east side of Jersey Village. Citizens were also successful in getting 14-foot sound barriers placed between the Beltway and the residents' homes. As a result of citizens' efforts, the state did not connect Gulf Bank with FM 529, a move which would have added a major road with truck traffic within yards of the residents on Seattle. Most recently a group of citizens led by former Councilman Mark Maloy convinced the HCTRA to add a layer of rubberized asphalt along the toll road adjacent to the city reducing the decibel noise of the freeway rumble.

In the next few years, TXDOT will be expanding Highway 290 which will again add to the noise level within the village. It is important that all citizens work to make sure the state follows its own guidelines about noise levels and considers all methods to reduce the noise. The city council has taken several steps to make sure this freeway expansion will not add significantly to the noise levels from the highway. I will explain what the council can do and what you as a concerned citizen can do to reduce noise in Jersey Village as things develop.