

# WALTER P MOORE

June 1, 2009

Mr. Will Hampton  
Communications Director  
City of Round Rock  
221 East Main Street  
Round Rock, TX 78664

Re: Response to Rodney and Brenda Howard Email  
Downtown Traffic and Proposed Lane Reductions on Mays  
Round Rock Downtown master Plan  
Round Rock, Texas  
Walter P. Moore Project Number 73-08029-00

Dear Mr. Hampton:

This is in response to an email you forwarded to me from Rodney and Brenda Howard regarding the reconfiguring of Mays (IH 35 business) from four lanes to three lanes with a continuous left turn lane. This modification was recommended as part of the Round Rock Downtown Master Plan draft dated May 1, 2009 and issued by Torti Gallas & Partners. In summary, a concern has been raised that the reconfiguring of Mays from four lanes to three lanes would result in adverse impacts to the community, specifically businesses located along Mays. The printed email is attached.

I think the Howards have articulated well the issues facing many communities like Round Rock:

- When a major roadway becomes congested, traffic spills over into the "neighborhoods";
- Just under the typical daily traffic loads, the existing intersections are congested;
- I want my business and my friends' businesses to be successful; and
- Traffic congestion will drive away business.

Significant delays do occur at Main and Mays. Using traffic counts collected by the City of Round Rock, a capacity analysis of the intersection of Main and Mays was conducted. Results of the capacity analysis are reported in Level of Service (LOS) format, with the most favorable conditions designated as LOS A and the poorest conditions indicated by LOS F. Intersections with LOS A, LOS B, or LOS C typically have excess capacity, intersections with LOS D are at capacity, and intersections with LOS E or LOS F are over capacity. Overall, the intersection of Main and Mays has LOS E during the peak hours with major approaches at LOS F. Because of the heavy left turn demands along Mays, the inside through lanes function as de facto left turn lanes. To provide for the heavy left turn demands, the signals are configured to serve only one direction at a time, which is referred to as "split phasing." While an appropriate strategy for the existing configuration for this intersection, it is one of the most inefficient methods of traffic signal timing because intersection movements which do not conflict cannot be served simultaneously.

The amount of vehicular traffic continues to grow every year. Traffic growth for the Round Rock area is approximately 2% per year based on data obtained from Capitol Area Metropolitan Planning

1301 MCKINNEY, SUITE 1100  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77010  
PHONE: 713.630.7300 FAX: 713.630.7396

[www.WALTERPMOORE.COM](http://www.WALTERPMOORE.COM)

Organization (CAMPO). Thus by 2030, the traffic volumes along Mays will increase about 50% over what they are today. Because of the Main and Mays intersection being over-capacity, queue lengths are very long. Traffic counts conducted by the City of Round Rock during the AM and PM peak hour on a typical weekday show the average queue lengths to be from 10 to 14 vehicles, depending on direction and time of day. The 90th percentile queue lengths (that is, the queue lengths encountered up to 90% of the time) range as high as 30 vehicles. With anticipated traffic growths of 2% per year, a proportional increase in queue lengths can be expected. Thus whether the City of Round Rock chooses to do something or to do nothing, the traffic volumes, delays, and queue lengths along Mays will increase.

The capacity of a roadway corridor is not determined specifically by the number of through lanes, but by the efficiency of the intersections along that corridor. To provide additional throughput along a corridor such as Mays, the roadway would need to be widened to provide a continuous left turn lane. Additional right-of-way would be required to implement this strategy. Instead, the Round Rock Downtown Master Plan proposes to reapportion the existing right-of-way to better serve all roadway users - pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists. The reconfiguration of Mays into a three-lane roadway eliminates the "de facto left turn lane" condition and allows the center lane to be used for left turns. The existing traffic signal at Main and Mays would be reconfigured to provide left turn signals. The split phasing would be eliminated and a traditional timing and phasing plan that allows for simultaneous movements would be introduced. Capacity analysis of the Main and Mays intersection in 2030 reveals the three lane configuration provides the same level of service as the four lane configuration with the split phased traffic signal.

Mobility is defined as the safe and efficient movement of people and goods through a transportation system. The historical concern for mobility has been on moving motor vehicles. Communities are becoming concerned with what they view as conflicts between motor vehicles and other roadway users which result in adverse impacts to quality of life. Studies throughout the U.S. are finding direct correlations between the potential economic vitality of roadway corridors and the level of focus the design of those corridors place on motor vehicles. Property along a corridor that is viewed as people-centric has the potential for a greater level of value than property along a vehicular-centric corridor. Thus the context of public roadway corridors is critical to the economic vitality of the communities they serve.

Streets are for people, and people will use streets based on their needs, their means, and the context of the street. Context includes the level of functionality and the design of the street, whether it is a neighborhood street or an interstate highway, and the functionality and design of the adjacent land use. The Round Rock Downtown Master Plan proposes the reapportionment of the existing right-of-way along Mays to create a walkable community while balancing the needs of motorists. By considering designs that serve all roadway users, then mobility for the corridor and the community is enhanced resulting in a more viable local economy.

Mr. Will Hampton  
City of Round Rock  
June 1, 2009  
Page 3

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

Yours very truly,

Walter P. Moore and Associates, Inc.  
TBPE Firm Registration No. 1856

WALTER P. MOORE AND ASSOCIATES, INC.



Gary W. Schatz, P.E., PTOE  
Senior Associate



CC: Neal Payton, Torti Gallas  
Tom Moriarity, Economic Research Associates

Attachment: Printed Email from Will Hampton dated May 29, 2009

P:\73\2008\08029-00\Correspondence\Letters\Response to Howard Email.docx

*Gary W. Schatz, P.E.*  
*6/11/09*

## Gary Schatz

---

**From:** Will Hampton [whampton@round-rock.tx.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 29, 2009 4:52 PM  
**To:** Neal Payton; Gary Schatz  
**Subject:** FW: Downtown Traffic and proposed lane reductions on Mays

Neal and Gary,

Can you please craft a brief response to this? We need to be able to clearly state why going from 4 to 3 isn't a negative, and discuss the timing merits of getting Main-Mays off a split phase timing schedule. And any other ideas you may have ...

Thanks,  
Will

---

**From:** Rodney & Brenda Howard [mailto:adamsgiftshop@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 28, 2009 1:14 PM  
**To:** Alan McGraw; Kris Whitfield; Carlos Salinas; John Moman; Rufus Honeycutt; George White; Joe Clifford  
**Cc:** City Manager Mailbox; Will Hampton; bhoward2324@gmail.com; rodneyhow@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Downtown Traffic and proposed lane reductions on Mays

Due to this Early mornings' traffic disaster on IH35 and 79, the traffic impact on Mays crippled our business.

blocked intersections, customers unable to access our driveway due to cars blocking it, Angry uncourteous drivers, drivers using my lot as a turnaround, etc....

If council reduces the number of lanes on Mays from 2 to 1 in each direction with a turn, As advocated in the downtown redevelopment plan, this above described situation will become the norm regardless of what is or isn't happening on IH35.

2 additional examples:

- Recently Mays northbound traffic has backed up to the Milam intersection from highway 79. this was caused by the reduction of 1 of the 2 northbound lanes at the 79 intersection to accommodate for repairs at 79 & Mays. Go from 2 lanes to 1 and this will be normal.
- last month on a Wednesday, at 11:20 am, ( no accident) I stood in hubingers photography studio parking lot waiting for my appointment and witnessed both southbound lanes of Mays traffic Que up at the Round Rock Ave & Mays light. both lanes full, nobody turning, blocking intersections at papa Johns and Perez's and all driveways of businesses on the west side of the street, as far back as the traffic signal at Anderson. I know this situation to be fairly normal. It lasts for a hour sometimes longer, a few times a day, most every weekday, in alternating directions, further challanged by school zones in the morning and afternoon.

A lane count reduction is a negative, not a positive.

Our viewpoint and that of other business owners that we have spoken with is The eventual outcome will be that our potential customers who have used mays will seek out alternative north/south routes to avoid downtown altogether, further challanging the ability of the remaining businesses to be viable.

Please, Do not reduce the number of lanes on mays.

Brenda & Rodney Howard  
Managers of RBJM LLC DBA Adams Gifts & Home Decor  
409 N. Mays

By the way, we think the rec center partnership with RRISD near Round Rock High is a positive.