

# L&G Engineering

Transportation Consultants

January 2, 2024

The Honorable Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu  
Commissioner, Pct. 2  
c/o **Armando Garza Jr.**  
300 West Hall acres  
Pharr, Texas 78577

RE: County: Hidalgo  
RCSJ No. 0921-02-406  
Parcel No. 44  
Cesar Chavez Phase II: From: Business 83 To: Nolana Loop

Dear Commissioner Cantu:

Attached herewith is a counter-offer as submitted by Mr. Robert L. Bell Jr., owner of Parcel 44 on December 11, 2023. L & G Engineering has reviewed the aforementioned and hereby recommends that counter-offer **be approved**. Also attached is the N-9, Administrative Settlement Evaluation and Approval Form.

L & G Engineering believes the counteroffer is a valuation, legal and cost savings issue. More importantly, due to recent court awards on similar projects and the cost to litigate through the Special Commissioners' Hearing we recommend that the counter offer of **\$18,167.50** be accepted.

Please review these documents and feel free to contact me at (956) 585-1909 if you wish to discuss this matter personally.

Sincerely,

Fernando "Fred" Herrera  
Right of Way Administrator

Attachments: As noted.  
cc: File



## HIDALGO COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE EVALUATION AND APPROVAL FORM

---

ROW CSJ: 0921-02-406

County: Hidalgo

Highway: Cesar Chavez Rd

Project Limits: From Business 83 to Nolana Loop

Parcel No.: 44

Owner's Name: Robert L. Bell Jr.,

Approved Offer: \$12,578.00

Date Offer Sent: 11/20/2023

Owner's Counteroffer: \$18,167.50

Date Counteroffer Received: 12/11/2023

### Factors considered in evaluation:

#### 1. Valuation Issues

- a.  Reconciliation of all available appraisals, including Owner's.  
b.  Other: Property owner believes that her property was undervalued.

#### 2. Legal Issues

- a.  Analysis of recent court awards on similar properties or projects.  
b.  Analysis of recent court decisions which may affect the outcome of a condemnation action.  
c.  Analysis of previously unlitigated issues.  
d.  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. Cost Savings

- a.  Approximate cost to litigate through Special Commissioners' Hearing \$20,000.00  
b.  Approximate additional cost to litigate through jury trial \$40,000.00  
c.  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Timing Issues

- a.  Maintain project schedule: Yes  
Possession of this property is needed by: 02/2024  
Projected possession date, if settled is: 02/2024  
Projected possession date, if condemned is: 07/2024  
Letting date: 6/2025  
b.  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. Other Issues

\_\_\_\_\_

\*\* The following documents have been considered and are incorporated by reference: appraisals, appraisal review form, owner's counteroffer and supporting documentation, negotiator's log, and \_\_\_\_\_

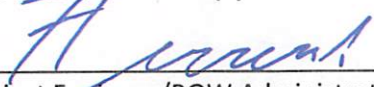
**Analysis and Conclusion:**

Our  approval/  disapproval recommendation is based on the items checked above and has been evaluated as follows: (attach additional sheets as necessary)

Parcel 44 is a partial acquisition containing 2,795 sq. ft. parcel of land situated in Hidalgo County, Texas and also being a part of a certain 15.50 acre tract out of Lot 4 Block 35, MILLER'S SUBDIVISION. On November 20, 2023, Acquisition Provider, L & G Engineering, made an offer of \$12,578.00 to property owner Robert L. Bell Jr., via certified mail. On December 11, 2023, Mr. Bell submitted a counter offer for \$18,167.50. In his counter offer he states that he feels his property had been undervalued, due to passage of time. he states that he did his research on other comparables in the area and also received a professional opinion from Globe Realty. Based on the information provided within the the counter offer and discussion by the acquisition team it is recommended that the Administrative Settlement be approved. The difference between the approved value versus the property owner's counter offer is a (difference of \$5,589.50) does not warrant the risk and added expenses associated with standard eminent domain proceedings. Accepting said counter offer will help avoid project time delays, and associated condemnation proceedings, thus resulting in a cost saving to the County.

This administrative settlement of \$ 18,167.50  is /  is not recommended for approval as being reasonable, justified, prudent and in the public interest.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Project Engineer/ROW Administrator

1/3/24  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
RPIC/Authorized Pct. Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**COUNTY APPROVAL:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Judge

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

December 7, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Robert Bell and I am writing about Parcel ID# 44 Cesar Chavez Section II.

The value that the appraiser set for my property is a little low. The dates of the Comp sales are not recent. One is 20 months old; one is 22 months old and the oldest is 31 months. Many things have changed in the area, and I feel that #44s close proximity to the expressway and across the street from the busiest business in the Valley add a great deal of value to my property. Also, new development has come onto the property very close to mine on the south side.

After researching the Hidalgo County Appraisal District's website, I found the following values of some property close by that indicates that my appraisal value is low.

El Tigre Id# 593490 \$17.60/sq. ft  
Shop at Chavez Id# 1373967 \$10.05/sq. ft  
San Juan Corners Id# 895027 \$10.50/sq. ft  
Kim Taek & Nancy Vargas Id# 958551 \$4.25/sq. ft.

Using these examples, I feel like my property should be worth \$6.50/ sq. ft. for a total value of \$18,167.50.

I also called Global Realty to get a professional opinion from Mr. Dean Chan about the value of my property. He said that he feels like the property next to Cesar Chavez would sell from between \$6.00 and \$7.00 /sq. ft. So I averaged that to be \$6.50. He said he feels it could be sold in six to ten months at that price. Contact information: Global Realty, Mr. Dean Chan at 956-827-1415.

Thank you in advance for reconsidering the value of my property. I look forward to hearing from you.



Robert L. Bell, Jr.



# L&G Engineering

Transportation Consultants

November 17, 2023

County: Hidalgo  
CSJ: 0921-02-406  
Highway: Cesar Chavez Section II  
From: Business 83  
To: Nolana Loop  
Parcel: 44

RE: The purchase of a 0.064 of an acre (2,795 square feet) parcel of land situated in Hidalgo County, Texas, and also being a part or portion of a certain 15.50-acre tract out of Lot 4, Block 35, ALAMO LAND AND SUGAR COMPANY'S SUBDIVISION, according to the plat or map thereof recorded in Volume 1, Pages 24 - 26 of the Map Records of Hidalgo County.

Robert L. Bell, Jr.  
2314 Orange Street  
Mission, Texas 78574

Dear Mr. Robert L. Bell, Jr.:


Enclosed for your review and further processing are the following:

- Initial Offer Letter
- Metes and Bounds and Plat (proposed right of way to be acquired highlighted in yellow, located within appraisal report)
- Appraisal Report prepared by: Leonel Garza, III dated 10/24/2023
- Acknowledgement of Receipt of Appraisal Report
- Land Owner Bill of Rights
- Title Commitment
- Sample Deed
- Brochures ("State Purchase of Right of Way")

Please return the signed Acknowledgement of Receipt to our office at L&G Engineering, 900 S. Stewart Road, Suite 10, Mission, Texas 78572.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (956) 585-1909.

Sincerely,

  
Fernando Herrera,  
Right of Way Administrator



# L&G Engineering

Transportation Consultants

November 17, 2023

Via Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested,  
No. **7021 2720 0003 5005 3469**

County: Hidalgo  
Federal Project No.: N/A  
Highway: Cesar Chavez Section II

ROW CSJ: 0921-02-406  
Parcel ID: 44  
From: Business 83  
To: Nolana Loop

Robert L. Bell, Jr  
2314 Orange Street  
Mission, Texas 78574

Dear Mr. Robert L. Bell, Jr.:

In acquiring property for the highway system of Texas, the Texas Department of Transportation (the "Department") and Hidalgo County (the "County") follow a definite procedure for appraising the land needed and for handling personal negotiations with each owner. As has been or will be explained by the County's negotiator, Novelia Sanchez, a portion of your property located on Cesar Chavez Road, as described in the enclosed property description, is to be acquired for the construction or improvement of the above-referenced highway project.

We believe at this stage of the purchase process it is mutually beneficial to confirm that, based on an appraisal, the County is authorized to offer you **\$12,578.00** for the Property, which includes **\$12,578.00** for the Property to be purchased and **\$0.00** for damages to your remaining property. This amount is the total amount of just compensation for all interests in the portion of the property to be acquired, as determined in accordance with State law, less oil, gas, and sulfur, subject to clear title being conveyed to the County. In accordance with State law, it is the policy of the Department/County to negotiate with the fee owner(s) of the Property with the understanding that you will, in turn, negotiate with any lessee or other party who may own any interest in the land or improvements, with the exception of public utility easements, which will be handled separately by the Department/County.

This offer to purchase includes the contributory values of the improvement(s) listed below, which are considered to be part of the real Property. Since the improvement(s) must be removed, it is the policy of the Department/County to permit owners who convey voluntarily to the State to thereafter retain the improvement(s), if they wish to do so. The retention values shown below are estimated amounts the improvement(s) would bring if sold on public bids. If you wish to retain title to any of the following improvement(s) and remove it (them) from the right of way, the above offer must be reduced by the appropriate retention amount(s). This option to retain the improvement(s) does NOT apply should it become necessary for the County to acquire the real Property by eminent domain.

N/A	<u>Improvement</u>	<u>Amount to be Subtracted if Retained</u>
-----	--------------------	--

If you wish to accept the offer based upon this appraisal, please contact Novelia Sanchez, as soon as possible, at (956) 585-1909 so that the process of issuing your payment may be started. If you are not willing to accept this offer, you may submit a written request for administrative settlement/counteroffer, setting forth a counteroffer amount and the basis for such amount, provided such settlement request is received in writing within 30 days from the date of this letter. Please note that your opportunity to submit an administrative settlement shall be forfeited if such a settlement request is not received by the Department/County within the 30-day time deadline. In the event the condition of the Property changes for any reason, the County shall have the right to withdraw or modify this offer.

After the date of payment of the purchase price, or the date of deposit in court of funds to satisfy the award of compensation as determined through eminent domain proceedings to acquire the Property, you will be reimbursed for any fair and reasonable incidental expenses necessarily incurred in transferring title to the Property for use by the Texas Department of Transportation/Hidalgo County. Expenses eligible for reimbursement may include (1)

recording fees, transfer taxes, and similar expenses incidental to conveying the real Property to the County, and (2) penalty costs for prepayment of any preexisting recorded mortgage entered into in good faith encumbering the real Property. Voluntary unnecessary expenses or expenses incurred in clearing questionable title will not be eligible for reimbursement. Eligible incidental expenses will be reimbursed upon submission of a claim supported by receipted bills or other evidence of actual expenses incurred. You may file a written request for review if you believe that the Department/County failed to properly determine the eligibility for, or the amount of, incidental expenses to be reimbursed. There is no standard form on which to request a review of a claim; however, the claim must be filed with this office within six months after you are notified of the Department's/County's determination on any claim for reimbursement.

You may be entitled to additional payments and services under the State's Relocation Assistance Program. It is emphasized, however, that any benefits that you may be entitled under this program will be handled entirely separate from and in addition to this transaction. You will receive a brochure entitled "*Relocation Assistance*", which will inform you of eligibility requirements, payments, and services that are available.

You have the right to discuss with others any offer or agreement regarding the Department's/County's acquisition of the subject Property, or you may (but are not required to) keep the offer or agreement confidential from others, subject to the provisions of Chapter 552, Government Code (the Public Records Act) as it may apply.


Please see the enclosed copy of the proposed instrument that will convey the Property and any improvement owned by you on the Property to the Department. Additionally, please see the enclosed copy of the Texas Landowner Bill of Rights.

Also enclosed is a copy of the Texas Department of Transportation brochure entitled "*Right of Way Purchase*", which we trust will give you a better understanding of the procedures followed by the Department in purchasing property. We respectfully request the opportunity to meet with you or to otherwise discuss and answer any questions you may have regarding the details of the type of facility to be built or concerning the County's offer or proposed purchase transaction. Also, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Novelia Sanchez at the telephone number provided above regarding any questions you may have.

Please see the enclosed copy of the Texas Landowners' Bill of Rights.

Finally, we enclose copies of all appraisal reports relating to your Property being acquired, which were prepared in the ten (10) years preceding the date of this offer and produced or acquired by the state/County, including the appraisal on which this offer is based.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Right of Way Manager or other signatories

ENCLOSURES:  
Appraisal Report(s)  
Landowner Bill of Rights  
"Right of Way Purchase" Brochure





**TABULATION OF VALUES (continued)**

Parcel: 44

Highway: Cesar Chavez Road Ph II

ROW CSJ: 0921-02-406

**III. Damages and Enhancements**

Total Non-Exempt Damages	Enhancements	Exempt Damages	Net Damages
\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

**IV. Sign Values**

Item No.	Sign Owner	Type Construction	Improvement Value	Retention Value	Bisect. Cat.
N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0.00	\$0.00	N/A
<b>Total</b>			\$0.00	\$0.00	

**V. Recapitulation**

Date:	10/24/2023	Recommended Value
Appraiser's Name:	Leonel Garza III	
Value of Whole Property	\$254,826.00	\$254,826.00
Parcel Area: 0.064 ac.		
<b>VALUE FOR PARCEL</b>		
Land: per sf. \$4.50	\$12,578.00	\$12,578.00
Easement	\$0.00	\$0.00
Improvements	\$0.00	\$0.00
Net Damages or (Enhancements)	\$0.00	\$0.00
OAS Value(s)	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>TOTAL COMPENSATION</b>	\$12,578.00	\$12,578.00

Calculations for Net Damages or (Enhancements) considers Direct Access Denial damages.

**TABULATION OF VALUES (continued)**

Parcel: 44

Highway: Cesar Chavez Road Ph II

ROW CSJ: 0921-02-406

**VI. Comments and Conclusions on Values in the Appraisal Report**

Appraiser: Leonel Garza III  
Effective Date of Valuation: October 2, 2023  
Report Dated: October 24, 2023  
Review Appraiser: Brian Cade  
Effective Date of Review: October 27, 2023  
TxDOT Review Appraiser: N/A  
Report Received at TxDOT:

Parcel 44 appears to be a parcel taking of 0.064 of an acre (2,795) sf. parcel of land being a part or portion of a certain 15.5 acres, more or less, in the Alamo Land and Sugar Company Subdivision, Lots Torritos Grant, more fully described in the Warranty Deed to the Veterans Land Board dated August 26, 1971, recorded in Volume 299, Page 162, Deed Records of Hidalgo County, Texas.

This parcel is located along the West side of Cesar Chavez Road within the City of San Juan, Texas. The whole property containing vacant land is owned by Robert L. Bell, Jr. The highest and best use is for commercial use.

Three (3) recent comparable sales are utilized to value the whole property at \$4.50 per sf. The part taken is properly valued as a pro-rata part of the whole property unit value. There are no market damages to the remainder land.

A breakdown of the total compensation is as follows: Land owned by Robert L. Bell, Jr to be \$12,578.00.

The appraiser has considered access damages in accordance with Section 21.042(d) of the Texas Property Code, as amended by SB18 of the Texas 82nd Regular Legislative Session. The result of the findings is that there is no denial of direct access nor material impairment of direct access on or off the remaining property that affects the market value of the remaining property. Therefore, there are no access damages to the remainder property.

The report prepared by the appraiser Leonel Garza III is an Appraisal Report presented on TxDOT form ROW A-5 and appears to comply with USPAP and the Texas Department of Transportation's Appraisal and Review Manual. The appraisers' opinion and conclusions appear to be well supported by information contained within this appraisal report. It is recommended that the total value of \$12,578.00 be approved for negotiations and acquisition.

**VII. Justification and Explanation for Credit if Retained.**

N/A

**TABULATION OF VALUES (continued)**

Parcel: 44

Highway: Cesar Chavez Road Ph II

ROW CSJ: 0921-02-406

**VIII. Conditions**

Values for signs, if any, are applicable only if sign owner has compensable interest.  
Fencing is applicable only to actual cost or lump sum fencing on 90-10 Right of Way projects and State cost participation in fences to be in accordance with State's Right of Way Manual.  
The values indicated hereon have been approved on the basis that all improvements within the taking will be acquired in the name of the State through negotiation.

**IX. Reviewing Appraisers' Statements**

**Reviewing Appraiser's Statement**

It is my opinion that the appraiser's report for this parcel appears adequately supported and in compliance with all appropriate appraisal standards, laws, and regulations, and I recommend this appraisal for use by the appropriate Agency Official and his/her assigns. I have no direct or indirect present or contemplated future personal interest in such property or in any benefit from the acquisition of the parcel. To the best of my knowledge, the value does not include any items that are not compensable under State law.

**Brian Cade**

Digitally signed by Brian Cade  
DN: cn=Brian Cade, o=RGV Appraisal Services,  
ou,email=brian@rgvappraisals.com,c=US  
Date: 2023.10.27 09:07:50 -0500

10/27/2023

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewing Appraiser

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Contract Reviewing Appraiser (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Division Reviewing Appraiser (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**X. Approval of Values**

*[Handwritten Signature]*

\_\_\_\_\_  
County/City Representative

*11/6/23*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
ROW Staff Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

APPROVED BY  
COMMISSIONERS COURT  
ON: *11/17/23*



REAL ESTATE APPRAISAL REPORT - TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Address of Property: West side of Cesar Chavez Road between IH-2  
and FM 495, San Juan, Texas

District: Pharr

Property Owner: Robert L. Bell, Jr.

Parcel: 44

Address of Property Owner: 2314 Orange Street, Mission, Texas 78574

ROW CSJ: 0921-02-406

Occupant's Name: Vacant

Federal Project No: N/A

Whole:  Partial:  Acquisition

Highway: Cesar Chavez Road Ph II

County: Hidalgo

Purpose of the Appraisal

The purpose of this appraisal is to estimate the market value of the fee simple title to the real property to be acquired, encumbered by any easements not to be extinguished, less oil, gas and Sulphur. If this acquisition is of less than the whole property, then any special benefits and/or damages to the remainder property must be included in accordance with the laws of Texas.

Market Value

Market value is defined as follows: "Market Value is the price which the property would bring when it is offered for sale by one who desires, but is not obliged to sell, and is bought by one who is under no necessity of buying it, taking into consideration all of the uses to which it is reasonably adaptable and for which it either is or in all reasonable probability will become available within the reasonable future."

Certificate of Appraiser

I hereby certify:

That it is my opinion the total compensation for the acquisition of the herein described property is \$12,578 as of October 2, 2023, based upon my independent appraisal and the exercise of my professional judgment;

That on October 2, 2023, I personally inspected in the field the property herein appraised; that I afforded Robert L. Bell, Jr., the property owner or the representative of the property owner, the opportunity to accompany me at the time of the inspection;

That the comparables relied upon in making said appraisal were as represented by the photographs contained in the appraisal report and were inspected on October 1, 2023;

That I have not revealed and will not reveal the findings and results of such appraisal to anyone other than the proper officials of L&G Engineering Transportation Consultants Inc., Hidalgo County Precinct No. 2 and or the Texas Department of Transportation, and/or their representatives, or officials of the Federal Highway Administration until authorized by State officials to do so, or until I am required to do so by due process of law, or until I am released from this obligation by having publicly testified to such findings;

That my compensation is not contingent upon the reporting of a predetermined value or direction in value that favors the cause of the client, the amount of the value estimate, the attainment of a stipulated result, or the occurrence of a subsequent event.

The appraiser has considered access damages in accordance with Section 21.042(d) of the Texas Property Code, as amended by SB18 of the Texas 82<sup>nd</sup> Regular Legislative Session and finds as follows:

1. Is there a denial of direct access of the parcel? No
2. If so, is the denial of direct access material? Not Applicable
3. The lack of any access denial or the material impairment of direct access on or off the remaining property affects the market value of the remaining property in the sum of \$ 0.00.

I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief:

That the statements of fact contained in this report are true and correct;

That the reported analysis, opinions and conclusions are limited only by the reported assumptions and limiting conditions, and are my personal, unbiased professional analysis, opinions, and conclusions;

That I have no present or prospective interest in the property that is the subject of this report, and I have no personal interest or bias with respect to the parties involved;

That my analysis, opinions and conclusions were developed, and this report has been prepared in conformity with the appropriate State laws, regulations, and policies and procedures applicable to the appraisal of right-of-way for such purposes, and that to the best of my knowledge no portion of the value assigned to such property consists of items which are non-compensable under the established law of said State, and any decrease or increase in the fair market value of subject real property prior to the date of valuation caused by the public improvement for which such property is to be acquired, or by the likelihood that the property would be acquired for such improvement, other than that due to the physical deterioration within the reasonable control of the owner, has been disregarded in estimating the compensation for the property.

Appraiser Signature

Leonel Garza III

Certification Number

TX-1328375 G

Date: October 24, 2023

To the best of my knowledge, the value does not include any items which are not compensable under State law.

Digitally signed by Brian Cade  
DN: cn=Brian Cade, o=RGV Appraisal Services, ou,  
email=brian@rgvappraisals.com, c=US  
Date: 2023.10.27 08:58:56 -05'00'

Brian Cade

10/27/2023

Reviewing Appraiser

Date

