

Capital Area Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CARTPO)

CAPCOG Board Room
2520 South IH 35, Suite 100
Austin, Texas
Friday, January 14, 2005

Summary Minutes

Michael Aulick, CAMPO	Comm. Ronny Hibler, Burnet County
Comm. Tom Bonn, Caldwell County	Joe Holland, TxDOT
Will Bozeman, TxDOT	Comm. James Oakley, Burnet County
Comm. Wayne Brascom, Llano County	Cecil Pennington, City of Bastrop
Bruce Byron, CATC	Comm. Maurice Pitts, Lee County
Mayor Eric Carlson, City of Elgin	George Russell, City of Marble Falls
Ed Collins, TxDOT	Mayor Ray Sanders, City of Lockhart
Bob Daigh, TxDOT	Elaine Schele, Travis County
Comm. Gerald Daugherty, Travis County	Leonard Voellinger, Half Associates
Howard Falkenberg, Austin Area Research Organization	Roger Wheat, SAM, Inc.
Comm. David Goertz, Bastrop County	Judge H.T. Wright, Caldwell County
Paul Hamilton, Texas State University	

GUESTS PRESENT

Rep. Mike Krusee, Texas House
Norm Chafetz, Citizen

STAFF PRESENT

Betty Voights, Executive Director
Sean Moran, Director, Regional Information Services
Lucy Galbraith, Director, Regional Planning
David Partlow, Director, Member Services
Marty Herzog, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order – Mayor Ray Sanders, Mayor of Lockhart

Mayor Sanders called the meeting to order and led introductions. Representative Mike Krusee, who is the chairman of the House Transportation Committee, was welcomed.

2. Overview of the next legislative session – Representative Mike Krusee, Round Rock

Rep. Krusee gave an overview on two subjects; the first being why toll roads are being constructed and the second on the Trans Texas Corridor.

When Rep. Krusee received the chairmanship, he analyzed what the transportation needs are versus the resources available. The needs include billions of dollars for every metropolitan area, and fact that congestion has gotten worse and will continue to do so. The resources consist of a 20 cent tax on a gallon of gas, but the revenue coming in from that goes down every year in because of vehicle fuel efficiency, hybrid vehicles, inflation and cost of maintenance. Rep Krusee explained the tolls are actually a user fee, such as water and electricity, based on usage. Toll roads are being used because transportation revenue is tied to an artificial mechanism that has nothing to do with growth or the economy with the cost of building a road. The controversy has come in because some of the roads that are under construction, which tax dollars have paid for, are being turned into toll roads for maintenance purposes, which costs 2 ½ times the cost of construction, and for which there are no funds for. The toll roads will give more money for roads and infrastructure in the future.

For the Trans Texas Corridor, the state entered into contract negotiations with a company from Spain called CINTRA to build a parallel road to I-35 from Mexico to Oklahoma. TxDOT wanted a private company to finance and build it and would contribute one billion dollars. Bids were opened, and CINTRA stated that they will invest six billion of their own funds, not take the TxDOT contribution and also give one billion in order to build the road. They allowed for the possibility to buy more right-of-way than is needed for the moment, and also use truck lanes and rail, transmission lines and water and gas pipelines. CINTRA's bid is just for the highway, it will not be a quarter mile swath running through the state.

Questions were solicited and discussion ensued on the time limit of the toll, limitations, the private sector, right of way, connections to the two borders, rate of return, the use of the billion dollars, county road reconfiguration, the width of the road, funds available, a thoroughfare plan, right-of-way, ground water authority, the allocation of the gas tax, local option issues, one passenger vehicles, payment versus consumption, taxation on the miles driven, rural needs, pass through tolls, indexing the gas tax, how CARTPO can contribute, future legislation and appraisal caps.

3. Transportation Safety Projects Update – Will Bozeman, TxDOT Austin District

Will Bozeman gave an overview regarding two handouts, the headlines that came out with the safety bond program and then the summary of the projects in eleven counties. HB3588 authorized bond financing with at least 20% of that going into safety improvements. Fifteen high priority improvement projects were evaluated. The Austin district was awarded \$40 million for improvements for fifty projects.

Discussion ensued on the amount of projects the Austin district submitted, grade separation, the Ogden bonds and widening on RM1174.

4. TxDOT Update on CARTPO Projects – Ed Collins

Ed Collins gave an overview on the handout from TxDOT updating CARTPO projects. The updates will now be on a quarterly basis. Questions were solicited and discussion ensued on the 290 project.

5. Other business

Commissioner James Oakley presented the Highlander's newspaper story of a reception for the area engineers and a thank you to Bob Daigh.

Lucy Galbraith stated that copies of two articles that appeared in the Austin American Statesman on US 290 were available.

Motion was made by Commissioner Maurice Pitts and seconded by Judge Wright to accept the November 12, 2004 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Sanders inquired as to whether CARTPO could get Rep. Robbie Cook at the next meeting.

The next CARTPO meeting was set for the second Friday in March.

Mayor Sanders offered a thank you to CARTPO for receiving an award.

6. Adjourn

With no other business the meeting was adjourned.