

Capital Area Regional Transportation Planning Organization
(CARTPO)

Summary Minutes

CAPCOG Board Room
2520 South IH 35, Suite 100
Austin, Texas
Friday, April 8, 2005

PARTICIPANTS

Comm. Wayne Brascom, Llano County
Clovia English, City of Lockhart
Alderman Bill Hamilton, City of Rollingwood
Paul Hamilton, Texas State University
Comm. Ronny Hibler, Burnet County
Comm. James Oakley, Burnet County
Cecil Pennington, City of Bastrop
Comm. Maurice Pitts, Lee County
Mayor Ray Sanders, City of Lockhart
Judge H.T. Wright, Caldwell County
Travis Askey, Village of Bee Cave
Michael Aulick, CAMPO
Bruce Barton, Omni Projects
Bruce Byron, CATC
Ed Collins, TxDOT
Sandy Edwards, Regional Director, Senator John Cornyn's Office
Howard Falkenberg, Austin Area Research Organization
John Langmore, TxDOT
Don Loucks, Bastrop County
Patrick Marotta, TxDOT
Wilda Won, TxDOT

STAFF PRESENT

Betty Voights, Executive Director
Sean Moran, Director, Regional Planning & Information Services
Eric Dusza, Community Planner
Georgette Nugent, Administrative Assistant

I. Call to Order – Chairman Ray Sanders, Mayor of Lockhart

Ray Sanders opens meeting with introduction of all present.

II. Regional Freight Train Relocation – John Langmore, Transportation Land Use Consultant

Langmore opens with a brief history of location of rails and past plans taken to legislature of future rails that did not come to pass. He moves into the present and says he is in favor of keeping rails along Mopac, suggesting lanes could still be added despite the rails. This also opens the option of providing a commuter rail. Langmore discussed the estimated cost to take the Union Pacific rail running from San Marcos to Taylor and move it to Red Rock to Bastrop to Taylor. The estimated cost is \$500,000,000 and Union Pacific invested \$200,000 in preparing this proposal. He also discussed Union Pacific's desire to relocate rail out of San Antonio down to Seguin due to derailments, among other issues. He discussed the evaluation from TxDOT to lay rail along the 1-30 Corridor in Segment 6, or upgrade existing rail, and then added that the joint venture of CINTRA/Zachery Construction had been awarded the I-35 parallel to the Trans Tex Corridor. CINTRA/Zachery is now examining the potential to pick up Segments 5 and 6 of 1-30 and have it be the first portion of their venture. They are also contemplating Segments 1-4 and proposed to give \$1.2 billion for a 50 year concession. Union Pacific offered to pay for benefits they will receive if the state pays for their own benefits in return. Langmore mentioned TxDOT contemplating putting a new rail line between an existing line and the 1-30 instead of upgrading.

The maximum speed of the freight trains was questioned. It was answered that the maximum speed is 70 mph for freight but passenger trains will go high-speed.

The status of lines running from San Marcos to Smithville to Taylor to Flatonia was questioned. It was answered that there has been discussion on the subject but not very advance.

It was stated that Amtrak and commuter trains would run on same rails and there would be double track for freight lines.

The timeline for the Planning Phase and getting the trains running was questioned. The issue is money (\$1 billion) and selling Segments 1-4 to Cintra/Zachery will help. The optimistic timeline has been judged at 2010.

It was pointed out that a high-speed bullet train would dissect the counties. How easy will it be to cross the rails? Crossings will have to be factored into costs and will take the input of local officials to lock down costs and locations.

III. State and Federal Legislative Update – Patrick Marotta, TxDOT Legislative Affairs Office

Please refer to attached Update paperwork.

IV. CARTPO's 2005 Call for Projects – Alderman Bill Hamilton

Commissioner Pitts made a motion for a letter to go out announcing the anticipated 2005 Call for Projects in June. It was seconded by Mayor Sanders and approved.

V. TxDOT Update on CARTPO Projects – Ed Collins, TxDOT

Please review the TxDOT Update on CARTPO Projects handout.

Alderman Hamilton proposed question on status of SH17 from Bee Caves to Burnet County Line project. Collins replied project still had not made significant progress.

VI. Other Business

Next meeting was set for May 13th.

Mayor Sanders and others inquired about letters received from private consultants regarding pass thru tolling. Betty Voights offered to look into it.

VII. Meeting Adjourned