

**Capital Area Regional Transportation Planning Organization
CARTPO**

Summary of Minutes

**CAPCOG Boardroom
2520 South IH 35, Suite 100
Austin, TX
Friday, October 14, 2005 – 9:30**

PARTICIPANTS:

Mr. Ray Sanders, City of Lockhart
Alderman Bill Hamilton, City of Rollingwood
Diana Woods, City of Uhland
Mayor Pro Tem Daniel Heideman, City of Uhland
Commissioner John Klaus, Bastrop County
Ross Milloy, Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council
Councilmember Karl Ansbach, City of Lakeway
Mayor Shirley Whisenant, City of Niederwald
Commissioner James Oakley, Burnet County
Joon Kim, TxDOT
Ed Collins, TxDOT
Mayor Eric Carlson, City of Elgin
Commissioner Ronny Hibler, Burnet County
Mike Walker, TxDOT
Commissioner Wayne Brascom, Llano County
Joe Holland, TxDOT
Bob Daigh, TxDOT
Travis Askey, Village of Bee Caves
Bruce Barton, Omni Projects
Paul Hamilton, Texas State University
Linda DuPriest, Wilbur Smith Associates
Michael Aulick, CAMPO
Commissioner Maurice Pitts, Lee County
Commissioner Susie Carter, Hays County

STAFF PRESENT:

Betty Voights, CAPCOG
Sean Moran, CAPCOG
Eric Dusza, CAPCOG
Georgette Nugent, CAPCOG

1. Call to Order – Chairman Mr. Ray Sanders

Welcome and introduction of all.

2. Update on the Austin – San Antonio Commuter Rail – Ross Milloy, President, Austin – San Antonio Corridor Council

Milloy discusses growth in population of South Texas, and in particular, Austin. He also highlights the amount of NAFTA trade that comes through I-35 Corridor, and the growth of trucking; 2% a year in most of the states, 15% a year on the I-35 Corridor. This creates public safety issues; more than 100 people killed a year in between Georgetown and San Antonio.

Three major objectives –

1. Build SH 130, Corridor Bypass Route from Georgetown to San Antonio,
2. Shift Non-Corridor Union Pacific Freight Rail Traffic to SH 130 Right-of-Way
3. Establish Commuter Rail Service on Union Pacific – MOPAC Rail Corridor, Running from San Antonio to Round Rock

Austin-San Antonio Rail Options –

1. Relocate Union Pacific –
 - a. Most current trains are “through trains”
 - b. Through trains will be rerouted to the east
 - c. Local freight customers will be served
 - d. Provides capacity for passenger trains

Regional Rail-

1. Regional Rail connects urban, suburban and rural areas and runs under “railroad” rules
2. Will provide regional benefits
 - a.) Improved traffic flow, less congestion
 - b.) Intermodal connections: rail, airports, interstate
 - c.) Expands market for tourist attractions, sports, special events
 - d.) Assists in maintaining air quality
 - e.) Better workforce distribution, increased employment opportunities
 - f.) Increased passenger & freight mobility, speeds commerce
 - g.) Downtown revitalization near transit centers
 - h.) Freight rail improvements would ease I-35 congestion
3. Construction of Regional Rail estimated at \$1.5 - \$2 billion over next 10 years. Construction of Highways estimated at \$10 - \$15 billion over the next 10 -20 years.

Update to 1999 TxDOT Feasibility Study almost complete.
Preliminary Overall findings (not Board approved):

1. Travel time (CBD to CBD):
Express: 90 minutes
2. Initial service:
Peak: 60 minutes
Off-peak: 90 minutes

- Graduated fares
- One-way fare: \$12.00
- Local: 105 minutes
- 3. Stations: 14 initially
- 4. System Length: 112 miles
- 5. Ridership
 - 2020 – 1 million per year
 - 2030 – 5 million per year
- 6. Costs (in 2004 dollars)
 - Capital – Initial \$394 million
 - Full \$608 million
 - Operations and Maintenance – Initial \$28 million per year
 - Full \$41 million per year

Description of Route –

Generally follows Union Pacific from Round Rock to San Antonio with the exception of MoKan from Georgetown to Round Rock. The total length would be 112 miles with 14 stations along route. Economic development a potential near rail stations.

Discussions ensued on need for public transportation once commuters arrive in area of destination, whether or not the number of people who use the rail will make it a cost effective move, and the need to look and plan for the changes in the future, not just the present.

3. TxDOT Environmental Process Overview – Mike Walker, Austin District’s Environmental Supervisor, TxDOT

Walker states that he and his staff are responsible for preparing environmental documents and obtaining environmental clearance for projects.

Types of documents include –

1. Categorical Exclusions – This is for smaller projects such as shoulder additions and bicycle projects. Can involve minor amounts of right away but cannot involve substantial controversy on environmental ground. Cannot affect anything over 50 years old. These documents normally take one week to prepare and three to four month review period.
2. Environmental Assessment – This is for added capacity projects on an existing location. These take two to three months to prepare and have a twelve to fifteen month review period.
3. Environmental Impact - This is for new controlled access freeways. These can take six to fifteen months to prepare and a three to five year approval period.

These documents are submitted to the Environmental Division to review and make sure all regulations are addressed in the document. Division is also responsible for distributing documents to resource agencies, depending on the type of project.

Discussion ensues of further detail of Environmental Reviews, and significant projects on hold due to Environmental Reviews.

4. CARTPO Call for Projects

- Review – Submitted Projects

Dusza gives an update on the number of projects submitted. Hamilton requests that someone from each county give a short review of submitted projects.

Tentative scheduling for next CARTPO meeting – November 18, 2005.
The Scoring/Presentation meeting is set for November 4, 2005.

- Appoint – Evaluation Subcommittee

Hamilton questions if all counties have appointed up to three people to be a part of the evaluation subcommittee.

- Discuss – Evaluation Subcommittee Scoring Meeting

Discussion ensues of necessary equipment for Scoring Meeting, the amount of money that will be available, and what the presentations should consist of.

5. Update on Regional Planning and Public Transportation Coordination – Sean Moran, CAPCOG

Concept is there is a lot of transit funded activities that are not coordinated. If they were coordinated, they would provide better service for fewer dollars. Have been in the process, over the course of the summer, to scope the plan. Will begin planning a Work Plan to address Transit Coordination. If this is successful, than next year they will start working the plan and addressing the issues.

House Bill 3588 – Mission was to review Public Transportation Planning.

Want to have a System (organization where transportation is the goal) and a Client Base.

Goal is to map out a general strategy for preparing the plan, estimate the financial assistance, and identify the lead agency.

The project area is the CAPCOG boundaries. We have 3 major transit providers – CARTS, Capital Metro, Hill Country Transit.

Who has been working on the scoping process?

1. The Regional Transit Coordination Interim Committee
2. Scoping Group

The Process –

Transparent

- Information will be made available to the public in a timely fashion
- A publicly accessible website will host reports, presentations, and public comments
- The public is invited to attend the 12 stakeholder meetings

Inclusive

- Seek input from a large variety of agencies
- The RTCC and Stakeholder Groups will include representatives from a broad cross-section of transit related agencies
- The general public is invited to comment

Iterative

- Planning and implementation will continue after the Plan is submitted in Oct. 2006
- The Plan will generate a “program of projects” that must be planned, financed, implemented, evaluated, and updated

Barriers to Transit Coordination are briefly discussed as well as the Management Structure.

CAPCOG has been identified as the administrative lead agency – This means we are here to make sure meetings are held and are inclusive, will directly oversee outreach group and planning group.

The Work Process Flow Chart is reviewed.

Six Tasks are identified –

1. Establish Goals/Objectives and Criteria for Evaluation
2. Inventory Current Conditions
3. Identify Opportunities to Achieve Goals
4. Evaluate and Create a Short List of Opportunities
5. Develop Draft Regional Transit Coordination Plan
6. Complete Regional Transit Coordination Plan and Submit to TTC

6. Other Business

Joe Holland, TxDOT, makes announcement about Transportation Enhancements Project Call for Projects.

Sanders thanks all for coming.

7. Adjourn