

**SUMMARY MINUTES
CAPITAL AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
CAPITAL AREA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION
(CARTPO)**

**CAPCOG BOARDROOM
6800 BURLESON RD, SUITE 310
AUSTIN, TX 78744**

Friday, May 25, 2007

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Joe Holland, TxDOT	Comm. Ron Morrison, Williamson County
Ray Sanders, City of Lockhart	Comm. Cynthia Long, Williamson County
Edna Johnson, CARTS	Ed Collins, TxDOT
Comm. Maurice Pitts, Jr., Lee County	Howard Falkenberg, AARO
Robert Daigh, TxDOT	Daniel Yang, CAMPO
Comm. Debbie Ingalsbe, Hays County	Michael Aulick, CAMPO
Elizabeth Ascott, TxDOT	Mayor Caroline Murphy, City of Bee Cave
Martin Thomen, TxDOT	Judge H. T. Wright, Caldwell County
Justice Richard Owen, Llano County	Judge Donna Klaeger, Burnet County
Judge Wayne Brascom, Llano County	Comm. Will Conley, Hays County
Comm. Tom Muras, Fayette County	Tina Collier, TTI
Comm. Ronny Hibler, Burnet County	Comm. Gerald Daugherty, Travis County
Comm. Joe Roland, Caldwell County	

STAFF PRESENT:

Betty Voights, CAPCOG	Chris Ramser, CAPCOG
Sean Moran, CAPCOG	Lupe Sanchez, CAPCOG

1. Call to Order –Chairman Mr. Ray Sanders

Mr. Sanders opened the meeting by calling for introductions from those present.

2. Presentation on the Overall Financial Status of TxDOT and an Update on the Rescissions of Federal Highway Funds – Mr. Bob Daigh, P.E., TxDOT Austin District Engineer

Mr. Bob Daigh from TxDOT gave a presentation on the status of transportation funding with a focus on the CAMPO area. He opened by saying that there is a lot of discussion going on at the Transportation commission about the plight of TxDOT's finances. A couple of options that are being considered include shifting money from mobility to maintenance, and the possible creation of super-metro districts for financing. Mr. Daigh then gave a general overview of the structure and function of TxDOT through Districts.

Mr. Daigh talked about the congestion experienced in the Austin area and how this is a concern for the TxDOT Austin District (District) because it degrades the quality of life of the people in the area and causes safety problems. He also talked about how the source of federal funding is beginning to dry up. Transportation is paid for primarily through the gas tax. The gas tax is

comprised of a state tax of 20 cents per gallon and a federal tax of 18.4 cents per gallon. The state tax has not changed since 1991, while the federal has not changed since 1993. Mr. Daigh said the status of transportation funding is not very pretty. These funds are deposited into the Highway Trust Fund, which the Congressional Budget office estimates that the surplus in the account will reach zero in 2009-2010 timeframe, while the mass transit account will hit zero in 2011.

Mr. Daigh talked about how the federal funding picture has affected the operation of TxDOT primarily through rescissions, which he defined as basically Washington reducing the amount of money that it had originally promised to send to TxDOT. To date four rescissions have occurred totaling \$600 million. He said there are unofficial rumors from Washington folks that additional rescissions totaling \$600 million or more may happen in the future primarily because of the national emergencies such as Iraq and Hurricane Katrina.

He added, although revenue deposited into the Highway Trust Fund is increasing (national consumption is increasing); the purchasing power of the money in the fund is half as much as the money that was available in 1993. This is because no indexing has occurred to adjust the tax rate for inflation. The new people moving to Texas and buying gas has not resulted in significant increases in revenue because the cars are getting better miles per gallon. Therefore, the amount of gas consumption in Texas has remained relatively flat over the past few years.

Mr. Daigh explained that of the 20 cents that Texans pay in state gas tax (which is deposited into Fund 6- State Highway Fund), only half goes to TxDOT. He said that the Texas Constitution requires that 25% of Fund 6 goes to fund public education, 22% to fund the Department of Public Safety and other agencies, and 3% for administration.

Mr. Daigh explained that TxDOT has a 10 year transportation plan for mobility projects. The first few years of the plan sort of "hard funds" projects and while the last seven years are basically projections of how much money will be available for project. This plan is reviewed every year by TxDOT and the Transportation Commission approves the plan generally in the fall. The end year allocation for the 10 year plans for major mobility projects in the CAMPO area (Travis, Williamson, and Hays counties) was \$49 million in the 2006 plan. The 2007 plan saw a reduction in this allocation to \$23 million, while early projections for the 2008 plan show a reduction of mobility funds to \$16 million. Mr. Daigh said that \$16 million is approximately the cost to build one direct connect ramp (flyover ramp) for a major intersection such as Ben White. So from this plan, the metropolitan area can basically build one bridge.

Mr. Daigh presented the findings from Takeontraffic.com (a Greater-Austin Chamber of Commerce Campaign) which estimated that beyond the CAMPO plan (which is a fiscally constrained plan for the next 25 years of estimated funds the area will receive and the projects that can be built with those funds), \$10 billion of additional money is needed to keep traffic congestion about at the level that we currently see today. It further recognized that the CAMPO plan has not completely been funded because the plan includes \$1.6 billion in toll projects and \$1.1 billion in additional revenue from a hypothetical increase in the gas tax. This could mean that our area needs \$12.7 billion in additional funding for transportation mobility.

The ways to fund a projected shortfall would be from property tax from bonds, sales tax, gas tax, or user fees (such as tolling or bus fee). Mr. Daigh also presented findings from a Takeontraffic.com study performed by the Texas Transportation Institute and Texas A&M that showed the affect on the taxpayer if the transportation funding problem was solved using each of these ways. The study found that the property tax would need to be an assessment of \$0.98/\$100 valuation or nearly \$2,000/year of additional tax burden on a \$200,000 home. Paid through sales tax, the tax would need to be increased from 8.25% to 13.87% or a burden of \$5.62 on every \$100 spent. Using the gas tax to make up the shortage, an additional \$1.39 per gallon would need to be collected. Tolls are considered user fees, so the burden of the project is paid by the end user based on usage. These findings underscore the severity of the funding problem.

Mr. Daigh ended his presentation by talking about how the funding shortages are based on new mobility projects and does not factor in maintenance of an aging interstate or state road system. Mr. Daigh estimated that the TxDOT Austin District is short about \$100 million in maintenance each year. Mr. Daigh said that he believes the Commission could pool the mobility funds together and use this money to fund maintenance and rehabilitation of the aging system instead of new mobility projects. Recently, the five area engineers of the Austin District put together a list of projects that absolutely needed to be rehabilitated in the coming year to prevent failure. The list included \$50 million of projects, while the District only had \$13 million to spend. The District was able to scrap together \$17 million for those projects. Mr. Daigh concluded by saying the reason he wanted to make this presentation was not to make everybody sad for the coming holiday weekend, but rather to let everybody know the reason the District may have to reject a request for discretionary funding of a future project because the money is just not available right now.

CARTPO members briefly discussed the presentation and encouraged members to pass this message along to other elected officials and constituents about the current financial shortages because the problem will not be addressed in the future legislative sessions unless there is a big change in awareness and acknowledgement of the problem. Judge Wright asked for clarification on the potential super-metro district idea. Mr. Daigh said that our surrounding counties would be in the Austin-San Antonio super-metro district. Other examples of super-metro districts would be Dallas-Ft. Worth and Houston area. Judge Wright said he would prefer to be in a super-rural district. Commissioner Daugherty said that he has thought a lot about the past legislative session, the lack of action by the legislators to address the problem, and the disconnect between the elected officials and the everyday person on the street who do not believe the funding problem. Mr. Daugherty said the problem should not be that the experts may not have the exact amount of the shortfall; rather it should be to try to fix the problem that creates this shortfall whether it is \$50 billion or \$80 billion. Mr. Daigh concluded that the real problem is the average citizen has not been informed on the issue and the politicians cannot effectively make the votes without public support.

3. CARTPO Bylaws and Membership Update – CAPCOG

Mr. Chris Ramser advised CARTPO that the bylaws that were drafted and discussed at the last CARTPO meeting on March 30, 2007 were revised by the CAPCOG Executive Committee on April 11, 2007 based on CARTPO's request to clarify and restructure the voting procedure. Mr.

Ramser gave an overview of the bylaws. He said that CARTPO will have 30 voting members, 3 elected officials designated from each of the 10 counties in the CAPCOG region. A list of the newly appointed voting members was provided which showed that most of the 30 members have already been appointed; however, there were a couple counties that were waiting to appoint a third representative. The revisions made by the CAPCOG Executive Committee were the inclusion of the Austin Area Research Organization (AARO) as a non-voting ex-officio member. The second change pertained to the way the voting structure would be handled. Votes on regular business items would be a one vote per voting member present, which means a total of 30 votes may be cast on an item. For the call for projects, the voting would be handled in the manner that it was done in the past, which was that each County had the weight of one vote regardless of whether the county had three representatives or just one present at a meeting. The 10 county votes would be averaged together to obtain the score. The list would be prioritized based on this averaged score. The County for which a project is being considered may not vote for their project. The final membership category is a non-voting associate membership that may be held by any elected official, citizen, staff, or person with an interest in transportation who is not represented as a voting or ex-officio member. The intention of CAPCOG was to keep the tradition of openness that CARTPO has operated under, but to better define how CARTPO operates.

4. Elect CARTPO Officers – CAPCOG

Mr. Ramser said the new bylaws have defined the officers of CARTPO as a Chair and a Vice-Chair. Both officers serve a two-year term. Mr. Ramser stated that a quorum of voting members was present and said that CARTPO may consider electing two new officers. Mr. Sean Moran acknowledged and thanked the outgoing Chairman Ray Sanders for his five years of service to CARTPO through this leadership role. Mr. Sanders said that the success of CARTPO was through the coordinated efforts of the members, TxDOT, and all transportation organizations. He said that CARTPO really serves as an example to the state on what RPO's and COG's can do to assist regional transportation planning.

Mr. Sanders called for nominations for the position of CARTPO Chair. Judge Donna Klaeger nominated Commissioner Cynthia Long. Commissioner Maurice Pitts nominated Commissioner Will Conley. Judge Wright made a motion to cease nominations. Commissioner Long asked to withdraw her nomination in deference to Commissioner Conley's experience on CARTPO.

Commissioner Conley accepted the nominations and was elected by acclamation.

Mr. Sanders called for nominations for the position of CARTPO Vice-Chair. Judge Klaeger nominated Commissioner Long for Vice-Chair. Commissioner Daugherty encouraged those elected officials not within CAMPO to consider serving in a leadership role as the MPO counties are generally well represented in transportation planning. Commissioner Pitts was nominated, but he withdrew his nomination and nominated Judge Wayne Brascom. No other nominations were received. **Judge Brascom accepted the nomination and was elected by acclamation.**

Mr. Sanders turned the role of Chairman over to Commissioner Conley.

6. Update on Status of County Transportation Plan – CAPCOG and TxDOT Austin District

Sean Moran stated that an ad hoc committee was formed at the last CARTPO meeting to make recommendations for the county prioritization and review the scope of work for the plans. Judge Klaeger was selected to serve as chair of the subcommittee. Judge Klaeger introduced the presentation that was given at the first ad hoc committee meeting. Commissioner Pitts asked if item number five had been skipped. Mr. Moran apologized because he was really excited about the County Transportation Plans. The committee returned to item five.

5. Appoint an Elected Official as Representative to the Regional Transit Coordination Committee – CAPCOG

Sean Moran gave an overview of the RTCC, which was an initiative that was started by the Texas Transportation Commission about 2 years ago. The reason for this committee was to bring together all of the stakeholders in public transportation that spend money for these services and to identify where overlaps and gaps of service exist and find ways to coordinate by developing a plan. The planning phase was completed during this past year with CAPCOG serving as the administrative lead. With the completion of the plan, Mr. Moran said that the administrative lead agency role would be filled by CAMPO. There are some pots of money that have been identified to begin addressing the 20 or so action items identified in the plan.

The RTCC effort is led by a committee of about 30 representatives consisting of public transportation agencies, the health and human services sector, transportation and regional planning, client, and public transportation users. The committee meets about 4 times a year. In the past, CARTPO filled the position of local elected official through the appointment of Bill Hamilton. Mr. Hamilton will be serving on the committee under a different capacity, so the elected official position is vacant.

Chairman Conley called for nominations for the position of elected official representative to the RTCC. Commissioner Pitts nominated Commissioner Conley to serve this position. Commissioner Conley accepted and was appointed by acclamation.

6. Update on Status of County Transportation Plan – CAPCOG and TxDOT Austin District

Mr. Moran explained that CARTPO will have some oversight in this process to make sure the County Transportation Plans fit within a regional context. He said the ad hoc committee has the responsibility to refine the statement of work and to recommend a prioritized order for completing the plans. The actual plans and statement of work for the individual counties would be approved through a committee of local representatives in the County or by the Commissioner's Court. Judge Wright asked that Commissioner Roland serve on the ad hoc committee. Mr. Ramser read a list of members on the committee. There were four CARTPO voting members serving on the committee: Judge Klaeger, Mayor Markert, Commissioner Pitts, and Commissioner Roland.

Ed Collins gave a short presentation about the County Transportation Plan. He said the individual county will be leading the planning effort and will have direct input in the scope of work for their county plan to make the process locally driven. CAPCOG and TxDOT will mainly provide the resources and support to assist the counties. The individual county will also appoint a steering committee to oversee the planning process. Mr. Collins said that initially two counties will begin the process, with the rest started within three years. Commissioner Long asked whether the scope included services to update and maintain the plans. Mr. Collins said that there would be a process to provide updates for the plan. Judge Wright asked whether the funding for the plans was subject to drying up. Mr. Collins said that if for some reason the money for the consultants was not available, the planning process would continue at a slower pace but it would still happen because the plans are considered a needed tool. Mr. Collins said that “Rural Transportation Plans” was a typographical error on the scope; the services will be available to rural counties and also the CAMPO area.

The committee talked about the criteria for selecting the priority order of the County Transportation Plans. Mr. Moran said that criteria could include population, growth, linear road miles, and any other suggestions. This information will be presented at the next ad hoc committee meeting, and the committee would come up with the recommendation based on the criteria. Mr. Collins recommended a factor of eagerness to participate in the process.

Mr. Conley said that Hays County recently had a bond issue fail that would have funded a pass-through program. It was a sharply divided issue and there is a big need for help because the transportation plans in place are in complete turmoil at this point in time. He said that the planning process could be really beneficial to Hays County in the near future and updating the Hays County plan would likely not take all of the resources as a plan that starts from scratch.

Mr. Moran concluded this item by saying that the recommendations on prioritization would be brought back to CARTPO at either the next meeting or the one following. He also reminded CARTPO that the new bylaws allow for ad hoc subcommittees to form around other issues of interest as they develop.

7. Presentation of the Population Projections Approved for the 2035 Model – CAMPO

Mr. Mike Aulick introduced Dr. Daniel Yang who is the Manager of forecasting and modeling for CAMPO. The population projections were adopted in April by the CAMPO Policy Board as one of the first steps to the update of the long range plan. Dr. Yang said that the forecasting at the county level for the model was done for the three counties in the CAMPO planning area Williamson, Travis, and Hays as well as Bastrop and Caldwell, which may have significant commuter traffic. The timeline for the process was presented as follows:

Modeling Tasks for 2035 Plan	Completion Year
Base year or current conditions for population and employment evaluated	2006
Growth Concept and Arterial Studies Begun	2006
Model Improvements; key tasks such as the county level population and employment forecasts for 2035; and completion	2007

of Studies	
Desegregation of the population and employment data into a smaller level of geography known as the Traffic Serial Zone	Later on in 2007
Evaluate Transportation Alternatives	2008-2009
Federally Mandated deadline to adopt the 2035 plan	June 2010

The population forecasts were developed in consultation with cities and counties during February 2007. After several Technical Advisory Committee meeting reviews, the population/employment forecasts for 2035 were approved on April 9, 2007 by the CAMPO Policy Board. The approved forecasts were the average of the State Data Center's 0.5 and 1.0 2035 population projections. The 1.0 scenario is basically a 100% continuation of the net migration trend that occurred between 1990 and 2000, while the 0.5 scenario is 50% continuation of the net migration trend. Mr. Aulick said that the average of the two scenarios was ultimately recommended and approved because the 0.5 scenario seemed too low, while the 1.0 seemed too high. The employment forecasts were calculated by using the Texas Workforce Commission 2005 employment database by generating a job/population ratio for each County. The job/population ratio (with a slight adjustment) was then applied to the population forecast. The two charts below shows the approved CAMPO forecasts.

Approved CAMPO Population Forecasts				
	2005 SDC Est.	2015	2025	2035
Travis	896,800	1,105,000	1,318,000	1,555,300
Williamson	330,700	473,300	702,700	1,026,500
Hays	126,200	189,200	271,600	371,200
Bastrop	69,500	102,300	149,200	215,500
Caldwell	35,400	50,100	65,300	82,100
Total	1,458,600	1,919,900	2,506,800	3,250,600

Approved CAMPO Employment Forecasts				
	2005 Est.	2015	2025	2035
Travis	536,900	707,200	843,500	1,026,500
Williamson	101,500	165,700	253,000	400,300
Hays	41,000	66,200	97,800	137,300
Bastrop	12,000	20,500	34,300	58,200
Caldwell	7,000	10,500	15,000	20,500
Total	698,400	970,100	1,243,600	1,642,800

Commissioner Conley asked if the data factors in the number of workers commuting to a job in a different county. Dr. Yang said that the employment numbers were the total number of jobs in the County and did not differentiate the origin of the worker. The travel demand modeling process is a process that allows the staff to evaluate the traffic on the ground.

Dr. Yang said that previous population/employment forecasts were disaggregated to the traffic serial zones using the growth trend. CAMPO staff has developed a Growth Concept that would distribute the employment/population forecasts in a manner slightly different than before by focusing a percentage of growth into activity centers. The concept consisted of 1 large sized, 12 medium sized, 24 small sized activity centers. Mr. Aulick said that this concept was developed primarily because several CAMPO Board members during the last long range plan adoption did not want to approve the plan without considering other ways that our region could grow. The activity center concept does not replace the trend, but the policy could help relieve congestion by encouraging growth in a different manner. Dr. Yang also described process for disaggregating the forecasts to nearly 1,400 traffic serial zones.

Judge Wright talked about how the completion of SH 130 would likely increase the growth that Caldwell County will experience. Commissioner Hibbler asked the reason why Burnet County was not included in the population/employment forecasts. Mr. Aulick explained that there are federal limitations on the planning that CAMPO can perform on areas outside of the Metropolitan Statistical Area. Burnet County may be added to the M.S.A. in the future. Dr. Yang explained that CAMPO models the traffic coming into the CAMPO area from Burnet and other counties through traffic counts at external stations. Dr. Yang said that one of the main differences in this round of forecasting and modeling was that several planning agencies came together to agree on one set of forecasts.

Judge Wright asked whether the CAMPO Policy Board composition had changed based on Senator Watson's recommendation. Mr. Aulick said the Board now has 3 legislators (instead of 10) and 18 local elected officials.

8. Other Business

The City of Elgin and the City of Florence requested a letter of support from CARTPO for projects that are being submitted for funding to the Safe Routes to School program. A letter has been drafted for consideration for both of these projects. **Commissioner Pitts made a motion to approve the letter of support, a second was received. The motion carried unanimously.**

Condolences were expressed for the passing of Judge McDonald's mother. Services will be held tomorrow.

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:54 p.m.