

CAPCOG CONNECTIONS

A Publication of the Capital Area Council Of Governments



CAPCOG To Host Entrepreneurship Conference April 7th

CAPCOG will host the Austin-San Antonio Conference on Entrepreneurship and Regional Competitiveness at the Omni Austin Hotel at Southpark on Friday, April 7th. The conference is a collaborative effort involving the U.S. Economic Development Administration, the Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council, the City of Austin Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office, the Institute for Economic Development at the University of Texas at San Antonio, and CAPCOG to promote entrepreneurship and increase awareness about regional competitiveness issues.

Tracking with the American Competitiveness Initiative announced by President Bush in January and the creation of the Emerging Technology Fund and Texas Entrepreneurship Network

Governor Perry and the 79th Texas Legislature, it is generally recognized that the business environment and the practice of economic development are dramatically changing as the relationship between economic competitiveness and entrepreneurship are increasingly necessary.

The conference will focus on these issues as it features several national experts sharing information about successful strategies used in other U.S. regions and discuss the role of entrepreneurship as a critical driver.

Many state and local organizations are participating as well, such as the Texas Workforce Commission, the Texas Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, and BiGAUSTIN. This event will mark the first time stakeholders from throughout the Aus-

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Hamilton, Marsh Elected To RTCC Posts

The Regional Transit Coordination Committee (RTCC) elected Rollingwood Alderman Bill Hamilton, an officer of CAPCOG's Executive Committee, as Chair at its meeting recently. David Marsh, General Manager of

the Capital Area Rural Transportation System (CARTS), will serve as Vice-Chair.



Alderman Bill Hamilton (above), newly elected RTCC Chair, discusses the agenda during the RTCC meeting. Sean Moran (right) reviews the new bylaws with the committee.

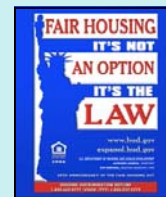


This committee was created under the combined leadership of the CAPCOG and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Austin District as a result of House Bill 3588 passed in the 2003 Legislative Session, specifically Article 13 of that bill requiring statewide coordination of public transportation services between rural, suburban, and metro areas.

The goal of this committee is to develop a plan for a seamless system that should achieve efficiencies, eliminate duplication, increase coordination, and address service gaps. Participants on the RTCC include more than 25 agencies and organizations that are responsible for providing public transportation services, providing health and human services, or interested in the coordination of public transportation and

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HUD Celebrates Fair Housing Month



This year marks the 38th annual celebration of Fair Housing Month. Each April, HUD commemorates this occasion and cele-

brates the strides it has made in furthering this landmark civil rights law. The 2006 Fair Housing Month theme is "Fair Housing: It's Not An Option, It's the Law."

The Fair Housing Act ensures that every person, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or familial status can obtain the housing of their choice. What's more, the Act promotes the establishment of safe and secure communities where everyone, regardless of nationality, can live free from discrimination.

RETF To Offer Environmental Law Training Courses

The Capital Area Regional Environmental Task Force will be offering basic environmental law training courses in June and August of this year.

The June 2nd class will be held at the



Lower Colorado River Authority Facility-Eastern Maintenance Facility, 104 E. State Hwy. 71 bypass in LaGrange and the August 4th class will be held at the Travis County Sheriff's Office – East Command, 7811 Burleson-Manor Rd., in Manor.

Certified instructors from various agencies, including the City of Austin and the Travis County Attorney's Office, will provide insight and information about the growing problem of illegal dumping and other environmental crimes.

Subject areas will include Civil vs. Criminal Prosecution, Unauthorized Discharges (Water Pollution), Solid Waste & Nuisance Violations, Clean Air/Outdoor Burning Violations, and Search/Administrative Warrants. The morning will consist of lecture on specific environmental codes/laws and the afternoon will consist of scenario/group discussion.

The course will provide six hours of TCLEOSE credit, six hours of MCLE State Bar credit, six hours of Department of State Health Services Code Enforcement Officer credit and/or six hours of Department of State Health Services Sanitarian credit for all participants.

To Register online: <http://www.capcog.org/Training/viewCat.asp?catid=5#17> (or you can download a registration form and fax it). For more information contact: Chris Masey, Regional Environmental Task Force Coordinator, CAPCOG, at 512-916-6040 or cmasey@capcog.org

Aging To Hold Follow-up Forums



The Texas Delegation to the White House Conference on Aging 2005, Texas Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS), and the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature (TSHL) have formed a four-way partnership to conduct statewide public forums during May, which is Older Americans month.

The purpose of the forums is to report the aging issues and resolu-

tions discussed during the White House Conference in December and facilitate discussions for a Texas response.

Texas Area Agencies on Aging are taking the lead in coordinating the local forums with assistance from DADS, WHCoA Delegates, and TSHL. As a result of these forums, partners will receive grass roots input for DADS and AAA aging service plans. TSHL will also be able to identify priority concerns of older Texans for consideration at the TSHL. See **Aging** (Continued on page 4)

Annual APA Workshop Planned for May 5th

The Capital Area Council of Governments will host an annual workshop in conjunction with the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association for planning commissioners, elected officials, and planning staff on Friday, May 5, 2006 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The workshop, sponsored by the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association, will cover a variety of planning topics such as being an effective planning commis-

sioner, the importance of meeting procedures, planning for small towns without staff, and recent legislative and court decisions. There will also be an opportunity for discussion and

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Brian James, Director of Planning for the City of McKinney, leads the workshop at last year's planning meeting.

9-1-1 Holds Calendar Coloring Contest

The CAPCOG Emergency Communications Department recently sent letters to all elementary schools within its region asking them to participate in a coloring



contest to create a 9-1-1 calendar. The region was divided by grade levels and selected artworks will be chosen to appear in a calendar. The theme for this year's contest is

"9-1-1 and Emergencies." The theme was chosen to highlight the importance of knowing when and how to call 9-1-1 in an emergency.

The calendars will be distributed to schools, emergency personnel, senior citizen centers, libraries, and other public officials as a 9-1-1 public awareness tool.

The project allows students to help in bringing the important message of 9-1-1 to the entire population while teaching how to help their community.

Prizes will be offered as well as a (Continued on page 4) see **COLORING**

CLEAN AIR Force Offers Way To Reduce Air Pollution

The CLEAN AIR Force of Central Texas (CAF) will offer central Texans a financial incentive to purchase cleaner electric lawnmowers and to learn other simple ways to help reduce air pollution.

To receive a discount on corded and cordless electric lawnmowers, citizens must contact the CAF to pre-order their mower by May 1, 2006.

During the month of April, the CAF will partner with an online electric lawnmower company, Neuton Mow-

ers (www.neutonmowers.com), to provide a \$70 discount on their Neuton cordless electric lawnmower, plus a free rear-bagger, a 2-year extended warranty for a total of four years' coverage, and free shipping.

During the month of May, the CAF and participating Home Depots will offer central Texans a 20% discount on the purchase of a corded Black & Decker MM575 18" mulching Lawn Hog electric lawn-

mower.

The two discount events will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 6, at the Sunset Valley Home Depot and from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 13, at the Arboretum Home Depot.

There is NO requirement for an older mower to be exchanged in order to receive either discount. If a participant has an old gas-powered mower they would like to get rid of, they will have the opportunity to deposit their mower at either location. The older mowers will be collected and transported for recycling at no cost to the participant.

The first 200 people, per store, to contact the CAF will receive the discount. Contact the CLEAN AIR Force of Central Texas at 916-6047 or send an email to info@cleanairforce.org. This discount offer is available only to citizens residing in Travis, Hays, Williamson, Caldwell, and Bastrop counties.

CJ Community Plans To Be Updated

CAPCOG's Criminal Justice Planner will begin working with the ten counties in Region 12 in early June to update and revise current community plans which are necessary to make application for any Criminal Justice funding from the Governor's Office. These plans contain information on community trends in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and victim services and are the primary documents referenced by the

Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) during the application prioritization process.

If you would like to be included in the CAPCOG-facilitated community planning efforts, please email your contact information to: mcasa-nova@capcog.org. Be sure to list Region 12 Community Planning Process in the subject line of your email correspondence.

RTA Sets Dates For Next Basic Peace Officer Courses

The CAPCOG Regional Training Academy (RTA) will begin Class 42 of the Basic Peace Officer's course on May 8, 2006. This 20-week long class will be held at the RTA campus and meet from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

On June 19, 2006 the RTA will begin Class 43 of the Basic Peace Officer's course. This 33 week class will also meet at the RTA campus from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday and numerous Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. throughout the duration of the course.

The RTA just graduated two Basic Peace Officer courses. The 21 students of Class 39 held evenings at the Pflugerville Police Department beginning in June graduated during ceremonies held at the Extension Auditorium of the State Capitol in February. Judge Sara Livingston of the Travis County Civil Courts was the keynote speaker.

The 35 students of the daytime Class 40 begun in October graduated

at ceremonies held at the Senate Chambers at the State Capitol in March with Captain Chris Bratton of the Round Rock Police Department as the keynote speaker.

In late January of 2006, the RTA provided the Forensic Investigative Hypnosis Certification Course. This course is seldom provided, but is extremely important.

By law, Investigators must complete this course and pass the

TCLEOSE examination in order to attempt to aid traumatized victims in retrieving repressed information from a crime.

This course was attended by 25 investigators who were from the CAPCOG service region, as well as investigators from Florida, Connecticut, and Hawaii. It was instructed by Marx Howell, retired DPS Inspector; Frank Malinak, and Jim Huggins, all of Texas Rangers Service.

Solid Waste Summit Set For April 27th

The Capital Area Council of Governments and Fayette County will host a Solid Waste Summit from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., April 27, 2006 at the LCRA Eastern Maintenance Facility, 104 East State Highway 71 bypass in La Grange, Texas.

Those attending are encouraged to RSVP by April 20th to Keith Helmers at either khelmers@capcog.org or phone

512-916-6185.

Management of the region's solid waste is an increasingly important issue due to the rapid growth in central Texas. Through education and research many are becoming aware of the importance of proper solid waste management. This Summit will include presentations and discussions on how the re-write of the Chapter 330 rules will change municipi-

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tin-San Antonio Corridor have come together specifically to address this topic, and it should serve as a catalyst for exciting work to come.

Economic development awareness is usually limited to highly visible projects; however, much of the critical economic development work affecting regional prosperity takes place under the radar.

Entrepreneurship often goes overlooked or underappreciated. Firms with less than 20 employees make up more than 80% of all companies in Austin and San Antonio. Of the top 25 paying industries in Austin, only six industries have companies that average more than 25 employees per firm.

The future of economic development in the Austin-San Antonio Corridor depends on the region's ability to maintain its competitive edge in attracting and retaining entrepreneurial people and organizations.

If you would like to attend the event or want more information, please contact Brian Kelsey at 512-916-6183 or bkelsey@capcog.org.

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Legislative Session set for September 2006.

In the CAPCOG region, the Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area will partner with the Austin/Travis County Aging Services Council to host its WHCoA follow-up forum on May 23, 2006. The Capital Area had twelve delegates appointed to represent the future interests and concerns of older Texans at the White House Conference on Aging.

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questions about issues unique to municipalities in our region.

The workshop will be held at the Capital Area Council of Governments Board Room, located at 2520 IH 35 South, Suite 100, in Austin, Texas. Registration is \$75.00 and checks should be made payable to CAPCOG. Lunch will be provided but cannot be guaranteed unless the registration form is completed and returned to CAPCOG no later than April 28, 2006.

If you have any questions, please

contact Eric Dusza at (512) 916-6184.

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client transportation services in the Capital Area.

The RTCC will meet the last Tuesday of the month until completion of the plan and submittal to the Texas Transportation Commission for approval. For more information, please visit the RTCC section of the CAPCOG website or contact Eric Dusza, Community Planner at (512) 916-6184.

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personal visit from Red E. Fox, the 911 mascot, to those students whose artwork appears in the calendars. Each award recipient will be honored at an awards ceremony on September 11, 2006, in Austin.

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pal solid waste landfill siting within the region. The Summit will also be an opportunity to discuss the zero waste philosophy and how it applies to our region.

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