Austin Urban Rail Corridors

NOVEMBER 6, 2008
CITY COUNCIL BRIEFING

Today's Council Briefing

- Overview of Rail Proposal
- Summary of CAMPO Transit Working Group Submittal
- Next steps
Overview of Rail Proposal

- Downtown Austin Plan (4/07 through present)
- Phase One Report (presented to Council February 2008)
- Transportation Planning, Including Rail (authorized by Council February 2008)
- Austin Urban Rail Connections Study (presented to Council July 2008):
  - Seek further public input
  - Work with Capital Metro to prepare submittal for CAMPO TWG Decision
  - Tree evaluation
  - Present project submittal to Council for review and forwarding to CAMPO TWG

What We Found

- Transportation is the most significant challenge facing Downtown & region
- Lack of mobility is affecting Downtown’s role as cultural & commercial heart of region
- Lack of transportation options affects affordability & social equity
- Automobile dominance impairs ability to create pedestrian-oriented Downtown
- Rail provides opportunity to carry many more people in the same space compared to roads
What We Heard

- Public desires greater definition on technical elements of proposal:
  - Environmental and community benefits/impacts
  - River crossing options
  - Exact alignment on Congress Ave
  - Future extension options and ability of initial phases to provide adequate capacity (system concept)
  - Use San Jacinto through University
  - Use 9th and 10th street to move around Capitol Complex
  - Funding and procurement options
  - Deployment schedule

Public Outreach
- 6 public meetings
- 1 town hall meeting
- 12+ group briefings

Why Rail?
How Can It Work in Austin?

- Complements & Extends Bus System
  - Greater people-carrying capacity
  - Increased comfort
  - Proven increase in ridership
  - Reduction in operating cost per passenger
  - More environmentally-friendly (fuel, noise, emissions)
  - Influences land use
Why Rail?
How Can It Work in Austin?

- It can extend the reach of commuter rail within the central city.

Recommended Urban Rail Corridors

- Urban system using modern streetcar/LRT technology (15.3-miles)
- Mostly dedicated guideway
- Preserves roadway capacity
- Two overlapping routes:
  - Seaholm to Mueller
  - ABIA to UT
  - Overlap "backbone" segment
  - Long Center service
Transit Working Group Submission

- Decision tree consisting of eleven multi-part questions
  - Designed to establish regional significance of transit projects
  - Encourages regional discussion of proposed projects
  - Unique to Central Texas

Decision Tree

- Process accountability
  - Is process transparent and accountable?
  - Will there be a need for an election or legislative action?
  - What entities will govern (construct, operate & maintain)?
**Decision Tree**

- **Process accountability**
  - Transparent process:
    - Yes
  - Election needed:
    - Yes – funding and/or authority
  - Governing entities:
    - City of Austin
    - Capital Metro

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**Decision Tree**

- **Purpose and benefit of project**
  - Can project create community and environmental benefits:
    - Mobility
    - Economic development
    - Environmental health
    - Social equity
    - Quality of life
Decision Tree

• Purpose and benefit of project
  – Can project create community and environmental benefits:
    • Provides a range of positive benefits to environment and community
    • 32,000 daily ridership reduces air and water pollution
    • Generates positive economic benefits within identified corridors
    • Connects major destinations within Central Austin region

Decision Tree

• Project Costs
  – What does it cost?
  – What are the indirect costs?
  – What jurisdictions can or should fund the project?
  – What mechanisms are available to fund project?
  – How will the financing mechanism be funded?
**Decision Tree**

- **Project Costs**
  - Cost:
    - $625 Million for full 16.3 mile system (less for shared lane service)
  - Indirect costs:
    - Minimize construction impacts to businesses
    - Block by block construction to maximize mobility
  - Participating jurisdictions:
    - Local, state, federal
  - Funding mechanisms:
    - Local bonds, value capture, P3, federal sources, fees & revenue
  - Financing:
    - Local, State, and Federal Options

**Decision Tree**

- **Implementation**
  - What is the project's timeline and should it be phased?
  - What are the opportunity costs of moving forward with the project relative to other projects?
**Decision Tree**

- **Implementation**
  - Project phasing:
    - Four phased approach

  **Phase 1:** "Backbone" → Manor Rd. Sta. to Seaholm & River crossing $290M

**Decision Tree**

- **Implementation**
  - Project phasing:
    - Four phased approach

  **Phase 2:** Lady Bird Lake to Pleasant Valley $120M
Decision Tree

- **Implementation**
  - Project phasing:
    - Four phased approach

*Phase 3: Manor Rd. to Mueller $80M*

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Decision Tree

- **Implementation**
  - Project phasing:
    - Four phased approach

*Phase 4: Pleasant Valley to ABIA $135 M*
**Decision Tree**

- **Implementation**
  - Project phasing:
    - Four phased approach
  - System Ridership
    - 2030 estimate: 32,000 daily ridership
  - Opportunity Costs
    - Total (2008) System Cost: $625M
    - O&M $21M to $23M

**Preliminary Phasing Options**

- **Implementation**
  - Project phasing:
    - Four phased approach
    - Quicker delivery possible based on policy direction

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**Sequential Phasing Plan Authorization**

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**Condensed Phasing Plan Authorization**

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Funding Model

- Full project cost: $625 M
- 15.3 miles in length

Funding Model

- Pursue Federal New Starts funding
  assume 50/50 split local/federal

$Local  $Federal

$625M
Funding Model

- Pursue Federal New Starts funding
  assume 50/50 split local/federal
- Fund Phase 1 with Local Funding Sources $290M

$Local  $Fede

$Phase 1

Challenges
- Requires legislation
directing FTA to accept
early phase investment
as local match.
- Requires local process
consistent with FTA.
- Subsequent phases
must compete based on
own merits.
- Existing Precedents:
  Miami, San Francisco,
  Houston, Salt Lake City

$290M  $625M

Funding Model

- Fund $200M Phase 1 with Local Funding
- Consider Multimodal Local Bond

Local Funding

Multimodal Bond

Rail
Roadway
Rehab
Interchanges
Sidewalks
Bikeways

$Phase 1

$290M
Funding Model

- Fund $290M Phase 1 with Local Funding
- Consider Multimodal Local Bond

Local Funding
- Institution Participation
- Other Jurisdictions
- TCD & Value Capture
- Public/private partnerships
- Bonds

$Phase 1

$290M

Multi modal Bond

- Rail
- Roadway Rehab
- Interchanges
- Sidewalks
- Bikeways

Recommended Next Steps

- Submit response to CAMPO Transit Working Group (11/08)
  - "Step one" submittal
  - Does not include detailed financing plan

- Initiate preliminary engineering and environmental documentation (02/09)
  - Facilitate on-going community discussion and education
  - Answer environmental questions
  - Resolve remaining system questions
  - Improve understanding of costs
  - Follow Federal process
  - Inform subsequent decision making
Recommended Next Steps

- Initiate detailed local financing plan for Phase One "backbone" (01/09)
  - Identify local funding capacity
    - City of Austin and partner agencies
    - Private development opportunities
    - TOD and value capture opportunities
    - On-going discussion with Council
  - Formulate federal strategy
  - Report back to Council and CAMPO Transit Working Group
- Seek necessary voter approval (TBD)
- Seek inclusion in CAMPO 2035 Plan (TBD)
- Complete design and construct (TBD)

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