

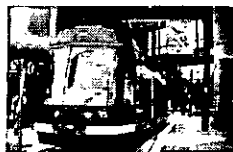
## Strategic Mobility Plan: Urban Rail Briefing



City Council, December 10, 2009

*Urban Rail* 

## Prior Authorizations & Staff Actions



- Feb/08: Council amends Downtown Plan scope to include rail studies
- Jun/08: FY09 budget process - option to aggressively pursue transportation issues
- Sep/08: City Manager hires Transportation Director
- Nov/08: Council reviews and comments on Urban Rail Plan submittal to Transit Working Group (CAMPO TWG)
- Dec/08: Transportation Department studies access to and from Central Austin
- Jun/09: In FY10 Budget Process, Staff requests CIP Budget to develop long-range transportation program (Strategic Mobility Plan, Urban Rail Studies)

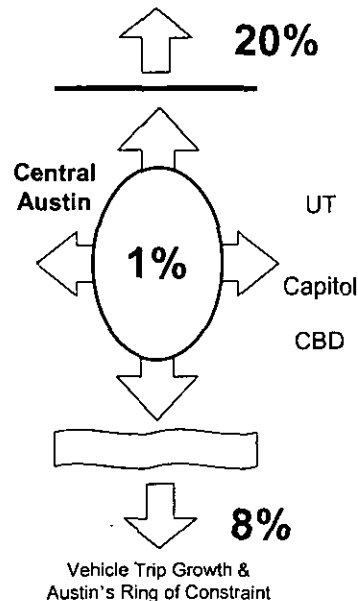
## Current Activity

- **Jul/09:** Transportation Department publishes Downtown Circulation Study, confirming central Austin mobility crisis
- **Sep/09:** Council approves Operating Budget, including Transportation Studies
- **Nov/09:** Strategic Mobility Plan Launches
  - Council authorizes strategic mobility consulting contract
  - Staff begins to address remaining Urban Rail CAMPO planning issues using Environmental Rotation List
- **Dec/10/09:** Staff request approval of Urban Rail Preliminary Engineering Contract



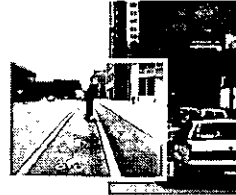
## Mobility Crisis Confirmed

- **Jul/09: Downtown Circulation Study Completed**
  - Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce Grant Funding
  - Focuses on Central Austin (University, Capitol Complex, Downtown)
  - Allows for first full traffic analysis in nearly two decades
- **Ring of Constraint Identified:**
  - Lamar Blvd/Barton Springs/IH 35/38<sup>th</sup> St.
  - Vehicle trips in/out of Central Austin increase only 1% over 17 years
  - Job Growth: +13% to +20%
  - Residential Growth: +118%
- **Roadways Operating at or Above System Capacity**
  - Central Austin Ring V:C = 1.0 (at capacity)
  - South Austin V:C = 1.26 (beyond capacity)
  - All bridges operating at or beyond capacity on a daily basis



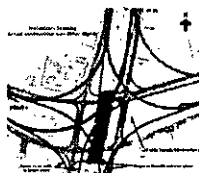
## FY10 Mobility Budget

- **Sep/09: Council approves Austin Mobility Program budget**
  - Directs staff to develop **Strategic Mobility Plan**, including City plan for Urban Rail
- **Staff proposes to:**
  - Implement with existing funding low-cost transportation "quick fix" projects
  - Address wide range of transportation options:
    - Conservation measures including short-term demand management & network "fixes"
    - Pedestrian, trail, & bicycle needs
    - Transit network needs
    - Roadway capacity issues
    - Urban Rail
  - Provide available information to Council by Spring 2010
    - Allow for a decision on a mid-cycle multi-modal bond referendum (potentially as early as Nov 2010)



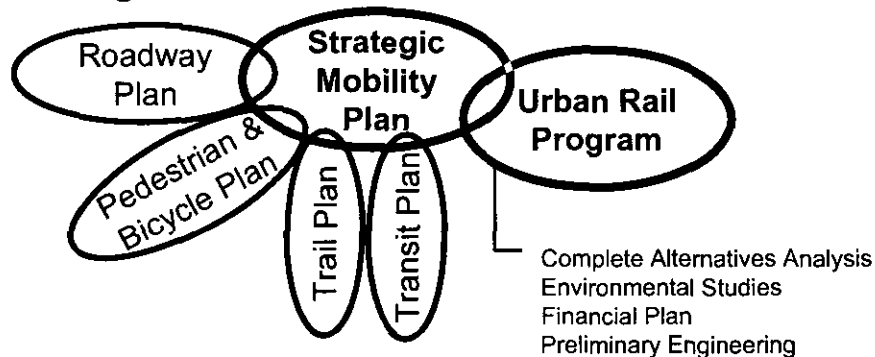
## Quick Fix Projects

- **Implemented:**
  - MoPac at US 290 Interchange partnership with TxDOT
  - IH35 at US 290 Interchange partnership with TxDOT
  - Downtown signal grid improvements
  - Parking meter conversion
  - Introduction of back-in angled parking in University District
  - Accelerated deployment of bicycle network
  - Cars2Go launch
- **Future or In Progress:**
  - New pass-through financing opportunity anticipated with TxDOT
  - Increased attention to commute trip reduction programs
  - Downtown parking policy recommendations



# Delivering a Strategic Mobility Plan

## Austin Mobility Program



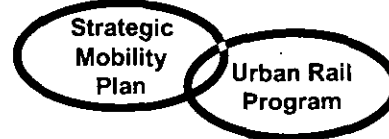
## Strategic Mobility Plan

- **Nov 5<sup>th</sup>: Council approves Consultant Team**

- Network gap analysis (needs assessment)
- Corridor investment studies

- **Nov 9<sup>th</sup>: Staff launches initial public outreach**

- Six formal public meetings in conjunction with Comprehensive Plan
- Multiple neighborhood association and stakeholder meetings
- Result in more than 600 identified gaps to-date
- Initial outreach to continue through January

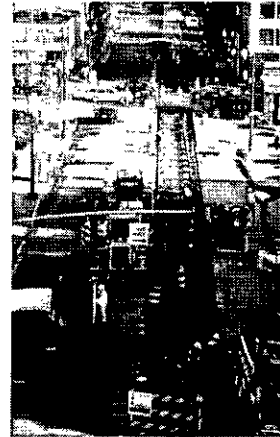


- **Nov 15<sup>th</sup>: Staff launches Urban Rail Program**

- Planning consultants engaged from rotation list
  - Alignment details
  - River crossing options
  - Environmental
  - Cost, ridership, & financing of first investment segment
  - CAMPO TWG questions
- Staff seeks Council action on Urban Rail Preliminary Engineering Contract

## Why City of Austin?

- **Austin is uniquely responsible for mobility within the heart of the Central Texas Region**
  - 74/45 percent of population within Travis County/Region resides within City
  - Austin has responsibility to address economic, quality of life & mobility needs of its residents
  - Mobility constraint surrounds Austin's largest economic engine (Downtown-Capitol-UT)
- **City is modally unbiased**
  - allows analysis and selection of best tools to address individual mobility problems
- **City has proven record of delivering major infrastructure projects on-schedule and within budget**
  - Austin-Bergstrom International Airport
  - Lamar Boulevard Reconstruction
  - Pfluger Pedestrian Bridge



## Why Now?

- Austin's rail program will take 1 to 2 years to prepare for construction
- Moving forward now allows a referendum prior to generating full design costs
- Current federal administration is supportive of urban transportation programs
- Without "ready to go" projects, Austin is potentially missing federal stimulus opportunities and current favorable construction pricing
- Austin's quality of life and sustainability as an urban center is directly tied to the infrastructure decisions we make now

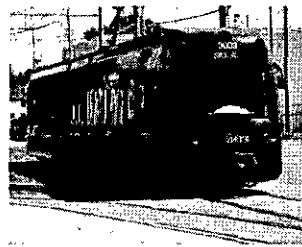
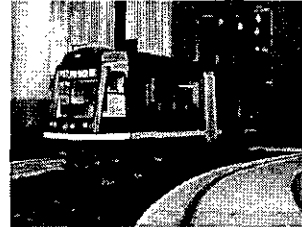




## Austin Urban Rail Program

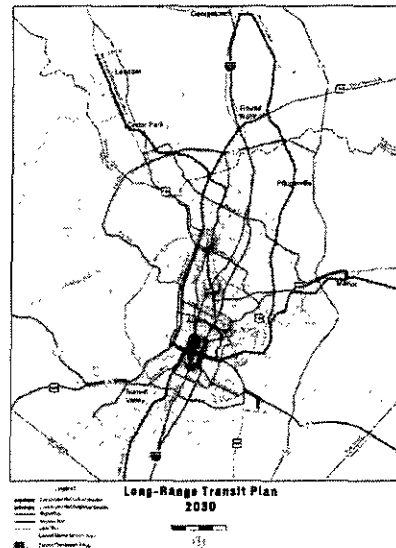
- **Program Goals:**

- Address urban growth mobility needs in Central Austin
- Facilitate urban development
- Expand regional transportation system network and capacity
- Provide diversity of travel options; help complete transit system
- Expand person-moving capacity in/out of central Austin
- Answer remaining technical and financial questions related to deployment



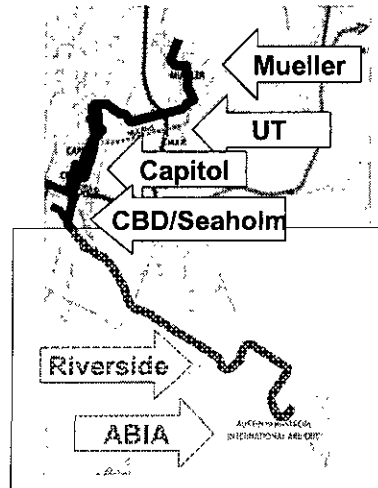
## Austin Program Builds On Previous Efforts

- **2004 (Aug):** Capital Metro board adopts All Systems Go (ASG) Long-Range Transit System Plan
- **2005:** CAMPO incorporates All Systems Go plan into 2025 Regional Transportation Plan,
- **2006 (Nov):** Capital Metro publishes Central Austin Circulator Alternatives Evaluation per ASG plan
- **2008:** City's Downtown Austin Plan updates prior Streetcar & LRT plans to Urban Rail Corridors plan
- **2009 (Jan):** City presents Urban Rail Corridors plan to CAMPO Transit Working Group



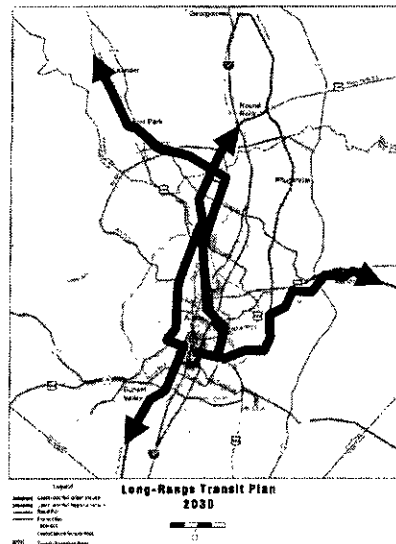
## Cap Metro Completes Streetcar Alternatives Analysis

- 2006: Alternatives Analysis process recommends streetcar circulator
- Connects:
  - Mueller
  - UT
  - Capitol Complex
  - CBD & Seaholm



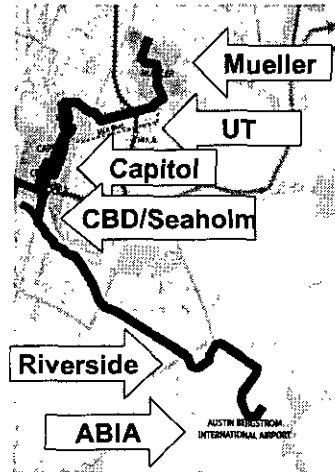
## Cap Metro Completes Streetcar Alternatives Analysis

- 2006: Alternatives Analysis process recommends streetcar circulator
- Connects:
  - Mueller
  - UT
  - Capitol Complex
  - CBD & Seaholm
- Recognizes opportunity for regional and interregional transit network
  - Cap Metro Red Line
  - Manor Rail
  - Austin/San Antonio Corridor



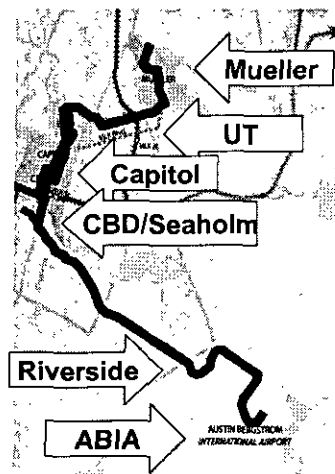
## City of Austin Completes Urban Rail Corridors Analysis

- 2008: Downtown Austin Plan proposes additional connections south of Lady Bird Lake
- Results in two overlapping routes comprising 15.3 mile Urban Rail
  - Seaholm to Mueller (10 min service)
  - ABIA to UT (10 min service)
  - Overlap "backbone" segment (5 min service)
  - Long Center service (Event driven)
- Dec 2008: Rail Plan presented to CAMPO TWG by City of Austin
- Jan 2009: TWG concurs with Austin Urban Rail recommendation contingent upon additional information



## Answers Needed for a Referendum

- Where should the first investment segment be?
- How many people will ride the first segment?
- How does it get constructed?
- Who operates the system?
- How much will it cost?
- How could it be funded?
- How much design is needed?
- How could the remainder of the system be procured?
- What will happen if it's built?
- Can environmental impacts be mitigated?
- What are the possible extensions to the system?



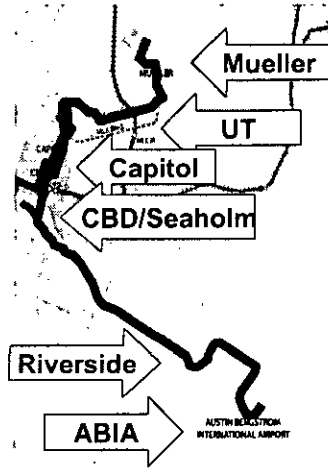


## Getting to a Decision Point: Questions To Be Answered

- **Where should the first investment segment be?:**

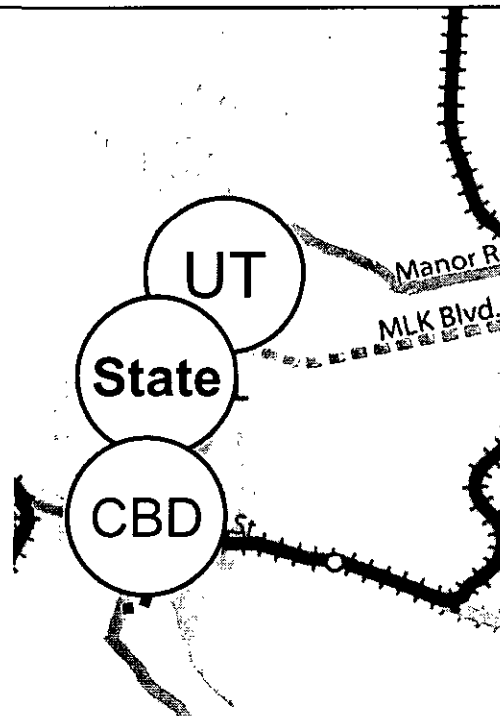
Answers by Feb./March 2010

- Build from Future Connections Study AA & City of Austin Rail Study (part of Downtown Plan)
- COA Alternatives Analysis to review downtown options and best way to cross river
- Identify first operating segment
- Forward community/technical input to Council



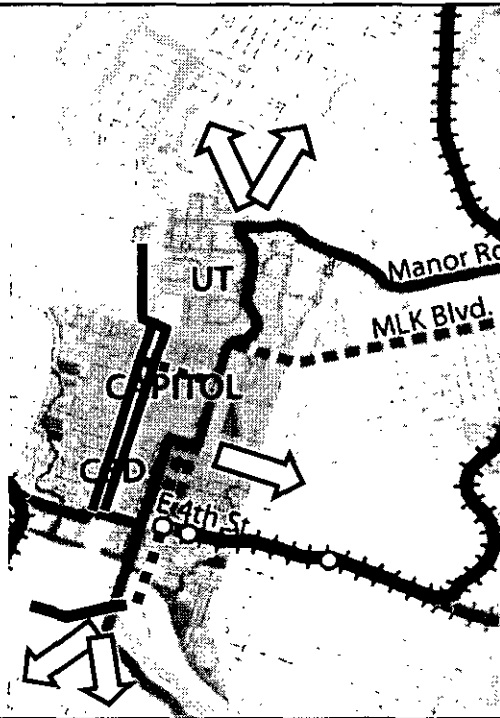
## Defining the First Investment Segment

- Future System Demands and Connectivity
  - ASA Corridor at Seaholm
  - CMTA Red Line at Convention Center
  - Future Manor (Green Line)
  - Additional Urban Rail Routes north and south
- Lady Bird Lake Bridge Options
- Central City Capacity



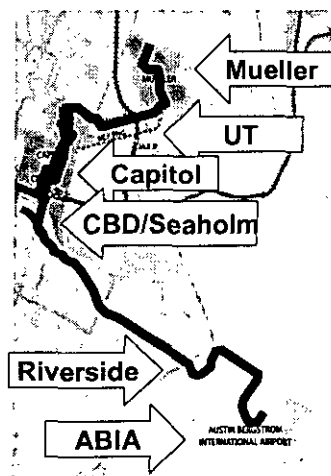
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## Getting to a Decision Point: Questions To Be Answered

- **How many people will ride it?:**  
Answers by Spring 2010
  - Modeling of alternatives by University of Texas (Center for Transportation Research)
  - Estimates will depend on first operating segment and full rail line scenarios
- **How does it get constructed?:**  
Answers by Feb./March 2010
  - Alternatives analysis will propose approach based on minimizing impacts
  - Delivery methods (design-bid-build, design-build, other) will be determined



## Getting to a Decision Point: Questions To Be Answered

- **Who Operates the System?**

Answers by May/June 2010

- **Options include:**

- Creating a new not-for-profit rail operating entity
    - Contracting with Lone Star Rail District
    - Contracting with Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority
    - Contracting with Capital Metro
    - City operations

- **Criteria for consideration likely include:**

- Regional system and financing benefits
    - Financial viability of operating entity
    - Sustainability.
    - Integration with other investments



## Getting to a Decision Point: Questions To Be Answered

- **How much will it cost?**

Initial answers by Feb. 2010

Additional detail May 2010

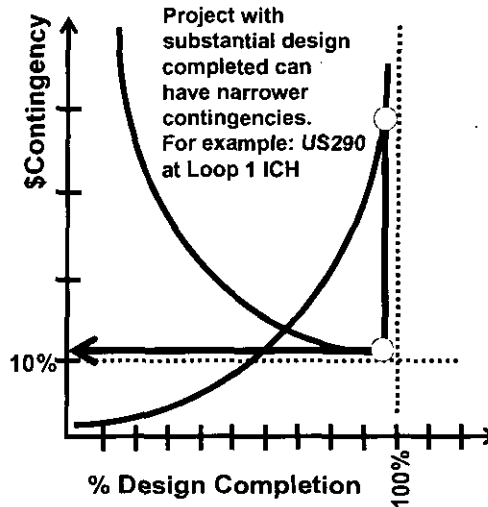
- Alternatives Analysis to refine previous system estimates
  - Costs for first investment segment (Jan/Feb 2010)
  - Preliminary Engineering to further refine areas of risk and develop final pre-engineering estimates by May 2010
  - Pre-engineering estimates will account for risk by incorporating programmed contingencies



# How Much Design is Needed?

## Managing Cost & Risk

- Percent design completed directly relates to the inherent risk of a project
- More design typically equates to better information and less risk
- Risk exists with every infrastructure project
- Risk can be managed through the budgeting process
- Percent design to be completed depends on tolerance for risk and delivery method
- Design-bid-build requires more design be completed than does design-build



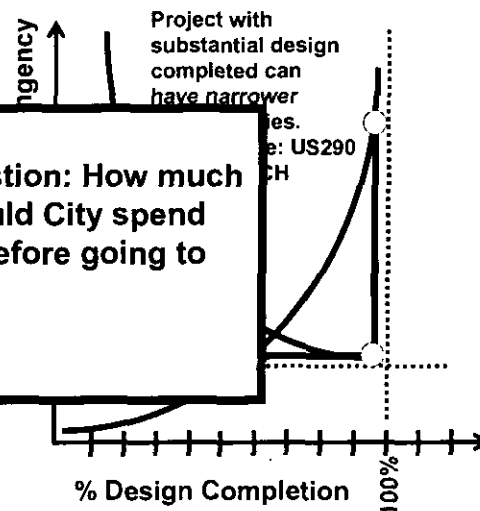
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# How Much Design is Needed?

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• **Design Question: How much budget should City spend on design before going to voters?**



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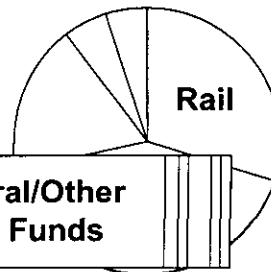
# Funding Model

- ☐ Rail
- ☐ Roadway Rehab
- ☐ Interchanges
- ☐ Sidewalks
- ☐ Bikeways

## Local Funding

Institution Participation  
Other Jurisdictions  
Value Capture  
TOD Value  
Bonded

## Multimodal GO Bond



\$Phase 1

Federal/Other  
Local Funds

## Getting to a Decision Point: Questions To Be Answered

### • How could it be funded?

Answers by Spring 2010

- Financial feasibility to be assessed once operating plans, initial segment costs, and potential fare revenue are determined
- Staff to work with financial advisor and legislative representatives to identify funding options for construction, maintenance & operations



### - Financial issues to be explored:

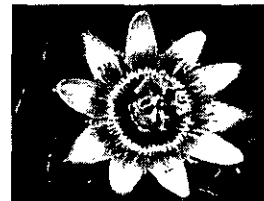
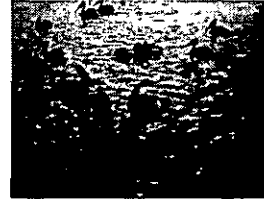
- How can we maximize Federal grant funding?
- Are there new funding sources through future State legislation?
- Estimated impact on property tax rates if general obligation bonds used?
- Estimated impact on bonding capacity and how does it affect the City's ability to fund other non-transportation capital needs?
- Are there logical, local partners willing to participate financially?
- What tax increment or other value would the investment generate?
- What mix of projects should be considered for inclusion in a funding discussion with the public (roads, sidewalks, trails, bicycle facilities, rail, transit, other)?

## Getting to a Decision Point: Questions To Be Answered

- **How could the remainder of the system be procured?**

Summer 2010

- Use of federal dollars from FTA New Starts program
- Other federal transportation related grants outside New Starts program
  - Federal Highway funds
  - Transit enhancement grants
  - Federal stimulus funds
- Combination of local funds (future general obligation bonds, TIF, TOD, other jurisdictional partnerships, private investment, etc.)



## Getting to a Decision Point: Questions To Be Answered

- **What will happen if it is built?**

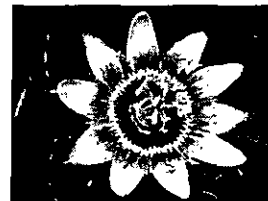
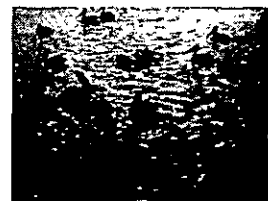
Preliminary answers Spring 2010

- Environmental Analysis will evaluate:
  - Land Use and Socio-economic impacts
  - Visual Quality and Aesthetic impacts
  - Biological Resources & Endangered Species
  - Archeological/ Cultural Resources
  - Environmental Justice
  - Water Quality, Air Quality, Noise
  - Geology and Hazardous Materials
  - Cumulative Impacts

- **Can environmental impacts be mitigated?**

Preliminary answers Spring 2010

- Identify magnitude of potential impacts
- Identify ability to mitigate potential impacts

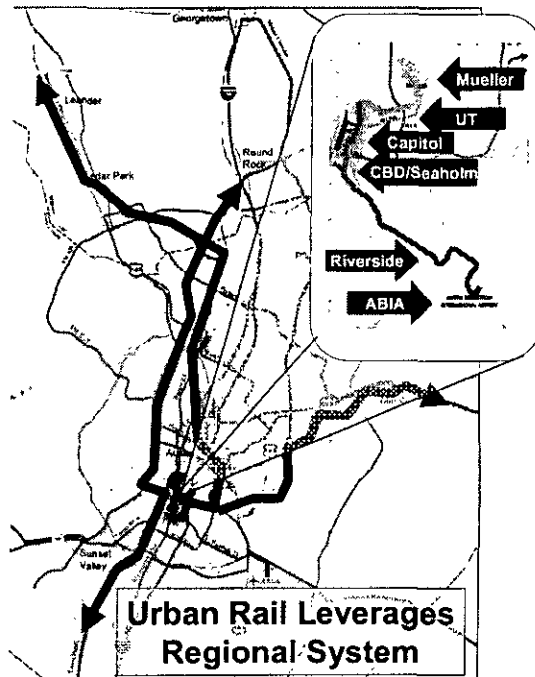


## Getting to a Decision Point: Questions To Be Answered

- **What are possible extensions to the system?**

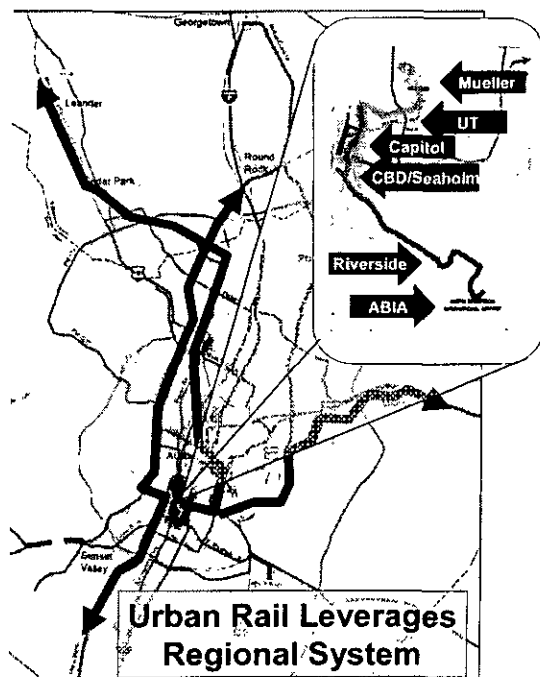
Initial answers by Feb. 2010

- Strategic Mobility Plan will identify potential extensions
- Preliminary Engineering will ensure that initial operating segment can handle possible expansions



## Next Steps

- Transit Working Group briefing - 12/14
- Public Involvement beginning - 12/14
- Boards and Commissions briefings – Jan/2010
- Engage other agencies & cities that have implemented rail Jan/2010
- Propose Federal funding strategy Feb/2010
- Council Updates Feb/2010



# Strategic Mobility Plan: Urban Rail Briefing



**Robert Spillar, P.E.**  
**Austin Transportation**  
**Department**

City Council, December 10, 2009