

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
Austin, Texas

Special Meeting -- January 25, 1967

A special meeting of the Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Room, Municipal Building.

Present

W. Sale Lewis
Edgar Jackson
Barton D. Riley
Ben Hendrickson
Ed Bluestein
Howard Brunson
W. A. Wroe

Absent

S. P. Kinser
Jack Goodman

Also Present

Hoyle M. Osborne, Director of Planning
Richard Lillie, Assistant Director of Planning
L. Wayne Golden, Planning Coordinator
Mrs. Evelyn Butler, Chief, Advanced Planning

PUBLIC HEARING

C2-67-1(b) AUSTIN DEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT

Consideration of proposed expressway and
major arterial street plan

Mrs. Butler, Chief of Advanced Planning, reviewed the history of the Austin Urban Transportation Study with the Commission, noting that the City and State Highway Department had developed the Origin and Destination Study in 1962-63, and proceeded in 1964 to establish the Joint Study office including Travis County. The Study and the recommended plans were completed in 1965 and published in 1966. It was also noted that the City, County and Highway Department have an agreement for continuing study and evaluation of the plans.

Mrs. Butler noted that the proposed Expressway and Major Arterial Street Plans were based on the present Austin Master Plan with the following additions or modifications:

1. Addition of the Central Expressway and the Crosstown Expressway
2. Enlargement of West 34th Street to Expressway status
3. Enlargement of Riverside Drive to Expressway status
4. Various additions, deletions and alterations of arterial streets (comparable to primary and secondary thoroughfares) although the basic system is quite similar.

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5. The addition of outlying arterial streets, over and above those recommended in the published Transportation Plan report, in order to provide for adequate street development in outlying subdivisions and to recognize the street requirements beyond the 1982 Study period.

Mrs. Butler noted that where the present Austin Master Plan recommends right-of-way and development standards in terms of the general type of street (major thoroughfare, primary thoroughfare, secondary thoroughfare, collector, etc.), the new Expressway and Arterial Street Plans have detailed standards for each street and for each major segment of a street. It was noted that these details make the new plan more definable and realistic, particularly in built-up areas.

Mr. Osborne reviewed some additional basic planning elements: (1) a forecast population of over 400,000 people by 1980; (2) a forecast of more than 200,000 vehicles by 1982; (3) the increasing number of trips per automobile; (4) the continuing dependence on the private automobile as the primary transportation element in Austin; (5) the apparent inability of a city the size of Austin to provide rapid transit; (6) the rapidly increasing traffic volumes on present expressways and divided highways; and (7) the forecast major increases in the sizes of such large generators as the University and State government.

Mr. Lewis asked about the proposed plan in relation to the Capital Improvements Program. Mr. Osborne noted that no conflicts had been discovered and that the new Capital Improvements Program was being prepared and the staff work should be completed in about three months. The Commission will then review the Program and recommend to the City Manager. The Council then adopts the annual budget to accomplish the desired projects.

Mr. Wroe asked about the flexibility of the Plan and it was noted that the Plan can be altered through the procedure spelled out in the Charter -- consideration and recommendation by the Commission and hearing by the Council.

Mr. Brunson and Mr. Hendrickson inquired about the Central Expressway. Mr. Osborne stated that the Central Expressway is part of the Plan and that the development and traffic conditions in the University and Capitol areas essentially "fix" the location of the Central Expressway within a four to five block area. It was noted that the exact alignment was not identified in the Plan and that minor changes in alignment, not affecting the function of the road, could be accomplished without amending the Plan. Mr. Riley asked about the consideration of the "human" elements in locating the Central Expressway. Mr. Osborne stated that the University area is in the process of rapid change from a section of older homes and rooming houses to large high-density apartments. Also, the area is becoming more commercialized with daily inundation of commuter traffic as more and more students, faculty and staff live away from the University.

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Mr. Tom Shefelman asked the Commission to consider the following: (1) the planning for alternate transportation systems (transit in addition to the private car); (2) careful location and design of the expressways in relation to neighborhoods, uses and buildings; (3) protection of areas from additional problems of traffic; and (4) recognition of the development of other major centers in the future.

Mr. Osborne stated that the Plan shows the approximate or general locations of future expressways and important roads plus basic standards for their development in order to carry the anticipated traffic. He noted that the design of the expressways and major roads to properly fit into the community, particularly in built-up areas, is extremely critical. Ingress and egress to the expressways, relationship to the local street system, proper pedestrian-ways and the appearance of these large-scale structures must be carefully done. The Plan, however, does not attempt to solve these problems. This must be done through the use of the required professional designers and the careful review of the proposed detailed plans.

The various members of the Commission discussed the general nature of the Plan and it was noted that the priority schedule for the expressways was not to be included. The Commission noted that the Plan was an up-dating of the present Thoroughfare Plan and would have continuing review for amendments and modifications.

After further discussion, the Commission unanimously

VOTED: To recommend that the Expressway and Major Arterial Street Plan, as presented by the Planning Department, be ADOPTED as a portion of the Austin Development Plan.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Executive Secretary

APPROVED:

Chairman