



Austin-San Antonio Intermunicipal Commuter Rail District

Executive Committee Meeting

Friday, May 2, 2008

10:00 a.m.

Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council

304 N CM Allen Parkway

San Marcos, Texas

1. Call to Order

Notice was duly posted and a meeting of the Austin-San Antonio Commuter Rail District Executive Committee meeting was held on Friday, May 2, 2008. Chairman Covington called the meeting to order at approximately 10:06 a.m.

Participants:

Sid Covington, Chair

Jeff Barton

Mary Briseño

Mariano Camarillo

Will Conley

Patty Eason

Carroll Schubert

John Thomaides

Other participants included Ross Milloy, Bill Bingham, Alison Schulze, Tony Kimmey and Mike Marler.

2. Chairman and Member Comments

Chairman Covington welcomed Executive Committee members. In accordance with Board action on March 7, the Executive Committee will meet monthly as needed, and the Board will meet quarterly. Mr. Covington introduced Tony Kimmey with Jacobs Carter Burgess, Clif Davis' interim replacement as Project Director of the Planning & Preliminary Engineering Team. Mike Marler, Jacobs' Rail Group Manager, and Don Karban were also introduced as key members of the P&PE Team. There were no other comments from Committee members.

3. Committee Reports

A. Public Information Committee Meeting March 28, 2008

Committee Chair Mary Briseño reported the Public Information Committee approved drafting a Request for Proposals (RFP) for branding services, and will meet in May to review and approve an RFP and timeline. The Committee will recommend the RFP to the Board on June 6 and, upon Board approval, will issue the RFP. The RFP will be discussed further under Agenda Item 4. The PI Committee also discussed future public outreach activities such as developing a communications

packet for Board members. A summary of the March 28 Committee meeting is included in the agenda packet.

B. Program Management Oversight Committee Meeting April 18, 2008

Committee Chair Mariano Camarillo directed members' attention to the PMO Committee meeting summary included in the agenda packet. The Committee discussed three items, each of which will be presented to the Executive Committee under subsequent agenda items. The Committee approved a Jacobs Carter Burgess proposal to conduct a fatal flaw analysis of the SH 130 corridor, which will be discussed further under Agenda Item 5. The Committee discussed the upcoming Amtrak Feasibility Study, which will be discussed further under Agenda Item 6. Finally, the Committee discussed TxDOT's San Antonio Freight Study, Phase 3, which will be presented under Agenda Item 7.

4. Consider and Take Appropriate Action on RFP for Branding Services

Mary Briseño noted the PI Committee is currently reviewing the draft RFP for branding services, and summarized the Committee's discussion on the purpose and need for branding the Rail District. The Rail District needs traction in terms of its identity, needs a name that is simpler to understand, and needs an image that increases public awareness. The term "commuter rail" has a legal connotation that could limit federal funding opportunities and a potential partnership with Amtrak.

Ms. Briseño reported the Public Information Committee will meet on May 14th to review and finalize the RFP and timeline. The Committee will recommend the RFP to the Board on June 6, select a consultant at the September Board meeting, and complete the branding process in early 2009. Board members will be involved in the branding process as a stakeholder group and as part of focus groups.

Upon a motion by Mary Briseño and second by Councilmember John Thomaidis, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to send an RFP for branding services to the Board for approval.

5. Consider and Take Appropriate Action on Jacobs Carter Burgess Proposal to Conduct Analysis of SH 130 Corridor

Chairman Covington introduced the item as a discussion item to inform the Board of the upcoming analysis. Mariano Camarillo reported that Jacobs Carter Burgess will analyze the SH 130 corridor as a potential future passenger rail route. On April 18th the Program Management Oversight Committee voted unanimously to approve the Jacobs Carter Burgess proposal to conduct a fatal flaw analysis of the corridor for a lump sum of \$50,000.

Chairman Covington noted TxDOT suggested the Rail District look at the corridor in light of the phenomenal population growth along SH 130. He emphasized the analysis will look at the corridor as a future, additional route—the SH 130 corridor would not be in lieu of the Union Pacific corridor. The analysis will indicate whether the SH 130 corridor is physically and economically feasible for passenger rail. The Rail District will commit \$50,000 for the fatal flaw analysis and then, if the study determines passenger rail is feasible, work with TxDOT on the next steps.

Ross Milloy asked whether the proposal should be modified to include an analysis of high-speed and higher-speed rail in the SH 130 corridor. Chairman Covington stated a change in scope and fee

would require that the proposal go back to the PMO Committee for a recommendation. Mike Marler noted the fatal flaw analysis will look at the results of previous studies and the physical geometry of the corridor. If the initial analysis determines the corridor is feasible for passenger rail service, an evaluation of high-speed rail could be included in the next phase. If the analysis determines the corridor isn't suitable for passenger rail, there is no need to evaluate the corridor for high-speed rail.

6. Consider and Take Appropriate Action on Amtrak Feasibility Study

Chairman Covington briefed the Committee on recent correspondence and meetings between Amtrak, TxDOT and the Rail District on Amtrak's proposal to improve intercity passenger service in the Union Pacific corridor. Mr. Covington directed the Committee's attention to two letters in the agenda packet between TxDOT and Amtrak on the feasibility study, which will begin in May with preliminary study results expected in September 2008. Amtrak will contract with TxDOT, and TxDOT will pay for the study which is estimated to cost \$20,000-\$25,000. The Rail District may be asked to contribute to the study if capacity modeling is required. If the Rail District is asked to contribute funds, the request will be reviewed by the Program Management Oversight Committee and then sent to the Board for approval. Chairman Covington also noted UP has requested a meeting next week with TxDOT, Amtrak and the Rail District. Committee discussion ensued on Amtrak's current intercity systems, the scope of the feasibility study, passenger service operations and operators, and next steps. Once the feasibility study is complete, next steps would likely include an agreement with Union Pacific, track improvements, and procuring equipment.

7. Consider and Take Appropriate Action on TxDOT Freight Mobility Study, Phase 3

Bill Bingham briefed the Committee on TxDOT's freight study, which is being conducted in three phases. Phase 1 was an inventory of the freight rail system and freight operations from south of San Antonio to Taylor. Phase 2, which is a more detailed analysis of freight operation capacity, is complete and its release is imminent. Phase 3 will determine the feasibility of using existing freight lines for passenger rail service. The Phase 3 study would build on the Amtrak study discussed under Agenda Item 6, and would provide a more detailed analysis of required improvements and costs. The Rail District would likely fund Phase 3 due to TxDOT budget constraints.

Chairman Covington noted Phase 1 and Phase 2 dealt mostly with freight rail relocation; Phase 3 will focus on passenger service in the UP corridor once the through-freight has been relocated. The Program Management Oversight Committee voted unanimously to move forward with the Phase 3 study with the intent that the Rail District would fund the study once a reasonable cost is defined. The item will be presented to the Board for action when the cost is identified.

8. Financial Report

Ross Milloy directed the Board's attention to two financial reports in the agenda packet—the second quarter statement and the reconciliation report—and noted the Rail District's finances remain on budget. There was substantial activity in trade group participation due to members attending the TxDOT Transportation Forum. Mr. Milloy also noted staff is working to collect delinquent dues payments.

ASACRD Executive Committee Meeting

May 2, 2008

Page 4

9. Legislative Update

Ross Milloy reported on recent efforts on forming a statewide coalition to support funding the Rail Relocation Fund. Mr. Milloy thanked the City of San Marcos for passing resolutions in support of rail relocation, for writing letters to Senators Hutchison and Cornyn, and for committing funds for the coalition's efforts. Mr. Milloy will be meeting with the city officials in El Paso, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Houston and Beaumont in the next few weeks about the rail relocation funding efforts.

Councilmember John Thomaides noted that when the San Marcos delegation went to Washington DC in March, the Austin-San Antonio passenger rail project generated the most response and interest.

10. Other Business

Chairman Covington directed Committee members to the March 7 Board meeting summary in the agenda packet. He noted the Board approves Board minutes and the Executive Committee approves Executive Committee minutes, but unapproved minutes will be included in agenda packets as information items.

Commissioner Jeff Barton reported the CAMPO Transit Working Group (TWG) meets each Monday morning to discuss passenger rail solutions in the Austin region. The TWG has been process oriented as it developed a "decision tree" for transportation investments. Mr. Barton directed the Committee's attention to the draft decision tree included in the agenda packet. The purpose of the decision tree is to create a transparent process to guide CAMPO and/or local government funding decisions on transportation projects. Committee discussion ensued on how CAMPO intends to use the decision tree and when to take the Austin-San Antonio rail project through the process.

11. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

12. Adjourn

Chairman Covington reminded the Committee that the next Board meeting would be June 6, 2008 at the San Marcos Activity Center. There being no further items, the meeting adjourned at 11:23 a.m.