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TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING RECORD 2009 FEB -5 AM 9: 08

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Meeting Date: January 26, 2009 **Start Time:** 11:58 p.m. **Adjournment:** 2:05 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

Linda L. Koop (Chair), Sheffie Kadane (Vice Chair), Jerry R. Allen, Vonciel Jones Hill, Pauline Medrano, Angela Hunt, Ron Natinsky, Carolyn R. Davis

DART Board Members Present:

Randall Chrisman (Chair), Robert Strauss, Scott Carlson, Dr. Claude Williams, Jr., Pamela Dunlop Gates, William Tsao, William Velasco, Faye Wilkins

Committee Members Absent:

None

Other Council Members Present:

Elba Garcia, Mayor Pro Tem
Dwayne R. Caraway, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem

City Executive Staff Present:

Ramon Miguez, Assistant City Manager
Jill Jordan, Assistant City Manager

TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes for January 12, 2009

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Motion was made to approve the minutes for the January 12, 2009 meeting subject to corrections. No corrections were suggested and the minutes were approved as submitted.

Made by: Davis

Seconded by: Natinsky

Passed unanimously

2. Love Field People Mover

Presenters: Dan Weber, Director, Department of Aviation

Mr. Weber briefed the Committee and DART Board on a review of alternatives for connecting the DART Love Field LRT Station and the Love Field terminal. Staff recommended that the City begin schematic design for the single lane bypassing

shuttle option to keep the project on schedule and to refine cost estimates. A supplemental agreement to develop the schematic design will be developed for Council consideration in April 2009. It is anticipated that staff will report back to the Committee on the project budget, schedule, and financing in November 2009.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Mr. Kadane wanted to ensure that the people mover option chosen would provide reliable service.

Mr. Natinsky stated that an important part of the decision to move forward with the people mover project is the prospect of relocating the car rental facilities outside the airport, near the DART station on Denton Drive. This would help alleviate terminal-area traffic congestion and opening up a core part of the airport property to other airport-related development.

Ms. Hunt indicated support for the people mover project, but expressed concern with relocating the car rental facilities outside of Love Field. She would like to get a better understanding of what those facilities would look like and what impact they would have on nearby neighborhoods. Ms. Hunt said that she would be very interested to know Ms. Medrano's thoughts on the car rental facility because it would be in her district. She agreed with Mr. Natinsky that this would allow the land at Love Field to be used more productively.

Ms. Davis also expressed some concern about the impact of a car rental facility on adjacent neighborhoods. She asked where the facility would be located, if land would have to be acquired, and its effect on existing businesses. Mr. Miguez indicated that the car rental facility is only conceptual at this point. There are vacant properties and buildings in the area where property would need to be acquired. A footprint for the potential facility would have to be identified and brought back to the Committee for review.

Ms. Medrano stated that there are some opportunities to design access from Harry Hines that would prevent traffic from cutting through the neighborhood. This could decrease some of the concerns of the Love Field West neighborhoods. Mr. Weber stated that part of the planning of a car rental facility would be a very robust signage program that would pick up returning car rentals from the main arterials and directs them to the correct location.

Mr. Allen stated that he is looking forward to seeing the results of the schematic design effort in terms of the project feasibility, overall return on investment and the cost to run it every year.

Ms. Koop stated that the next federal transportation bill is likely to give transit a much higher profile. Ms. Koop suggested that the DART Chair go with her to Washington to encourage that to happen. She also discussed the proposed

economic stimulus package and indicated that there will be opportunities for us to apply that money on the people mover project.

Mr. Tsao encouraged DART and the City to look for funding to apply on this project.

No action was taken on this item.

3. Downtown Dallas Transit Study (D2) Update

Presenter: Gary Thomas, President/Executive Director, DART
Steve Salin, Vice President, Rail Planning, DART

Mr. Salin provided an overview of the alternative light rail transit (LRT) alignments still under consideration in the Downtown Dallas Transit Study (D2). He indicated that the draft environmental impact statement is targeted for completion in the Spring 2009. Revenue service is planned for 2014.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Ms. Koop asked when DART LRT operations would reach the 2½ minute headway triggering the Interlocal Agreement requirement for a second LRT line in the CBD. Mr. Thomas stated that the Interlocal Agreement between DART and Dallas has two triggers points in it – the first is 2½ minute headways and the second is a ridership threshold. When either of these criteria is met, the planning process for a second downtown LRT line must begin. He indicated that DART is actually ahead of this requirement because the planning process has already begun, but DART won't hit the 2½ minute headway threshold until the Green Line opens in September 2009. Ms. Koop asked when DART believed that ridership would be at maximum for the downtown area. Mr. Thomas said that he believes that would be 2018, when the Southwest Oak Cliff extension comes on line.

Ms. Davis asked what the current transit ridership in downtown is now and what it will be in 2014. Mr. Salin stated that while some preliminary ridership studies have been done, the Regional Transportation Council is currently updating the regional travel forecasting model, so final ridership numbers won't be available until early this spring. Ms. Davis stated that she would like to see those numbers when they are available and asked why DART believes that the ridership will grow. Mr. Thomas stated that two factors go into the ridership projections: (1) what is generated within the downtown area; and (2) and through riders. Ms. Davis asked if the purpose of the second LRT project was to bring more people to shop downtown. Mr. Thomas stated that one of the main reasons for a second alignment in downtown was operational efficiency, but it also allows the system to serve a new market. Ms. Davis asked DART to provide a list of the people that have been attending the public meetings for the project.

Ms. Hunt indicated that she has been an opponent of the Convention Center Hotel, but said that if the City moves forward with the hotel, it would make sense to serve it with a DART station. Ms. Hunt expressed support for the Lamar/Marilla alignment as her first preference and suggested that a station also be located at City Hall. Ms. Hunt asked if signal prioritization for light rail would allow for shorter headways. Mr. Thomas stated that the signalization is needed just to get to the 2½ minute headways.

Mr. Kadane expressed his support for the Convention Center Hotel route. He also suggested using streetcars to move people throughout the city. Mr. Thomas stated that through this study they are looking at all alternatives to determine the best configuration of both the light rail system and streetcars. The projects will be blended to ensure coverage of the downtown area.

Ms. Medrano also expressed her support for the Lamar/Marilla option that would directly serve the Convention Center Hotel.

Mr. Natinsky stressed the need for DART and the Council to effectively address the need for transit access to the Convention Center and Convention Center Hotel.

Ms. Koop emphasized the importance of addressing transit-oriented development with the second LRT line.

No action was taken on this item.

4. Streetcar Update

Presenters: Gary Thomas, President/Executive Director, DART
Jay Kline, Director of Program Planning, DART

An update briefing was given on the Downtown Streetcar Plan. The purpose of the Streetcar planning task was identified. Goals were stated for improving the livability of downtown Dallas, providing predictable circulation, increasing the use of existing transit services, and serving as a base route for future Streetcar expansion.

The purpose of the briefing was to get direction on organization, alignments and funding. Organizational roles were discussed for the City of Dallas, DART, and the private sector. DART and the City will work together to secure funding for the project.

Mr. Kline presented the Streetcar alignment finalists and reviewed the screening criteria such as connectivity, existing venue support, economic development potential and traffic effects. Other considerations were capital and operating costs, ridership, urban design goals, facility location and design issues.

The briefing was concluded by a discussion about potential funding sources/scenarios and the next steps in the project.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Ms. Koop emphasized that there needed to be a sustainable funding source for operations and maintenance of a streetcar system separate from the capital funding. Ms. Koop also suggested that DART needed to be talking with organizers working on redevelopment of Fort Worth Avenue people because they are in the process of planning for streetcars. Mr. Thomas verified that those discussions were already underway.

Ms. Hunt stated that streetcars could transform downtown and create an exciting urban area for people to live, work and play. She emphasized the need to invest in the biggest system that we can afford to make the streetcar project successful – we need to be ambitious with our first phase. Ms. Hunt indicated that she favors an east/west loop, preferably using Elm and Commerce because it maximizes the land that can be developed. She suggested that the streetcar line connect into a Olive/Harwood/St. Paul/Commerce or Elm loop and suggested that the streetcar route be coordinated with the second LRT alignment. Mr. Thomas stated that this was a good suggestion and that DART would take this route into consideration.

Ms. Koop asked DART to transfer Ms. Hunt's suggested route onto the Convention Center LRT alignment which would help the Committee and DART Board to see what it would look like. She also asked DART to develop a map that would show how Oak Cliff streetcar proposals could be connected to DART LRT lines.

Dr. Garcia stressed the need to extend the proposed streetcar system into the southern sector and serve the some of the Oak Cliff redevelopment that is flourishing.

Mr. Natinsky stated that the Convention Center Hotel would work best if it was served by the streetcar system such that visitors could easily go to the other parts of downtown. He also suggested looking for ways to effectively serve the Farmers Market area. Mr. Natinsky stated that he would like to see some ridership numbers for the streetcar options.

No action was taken on this item.



Linda L. Koop, Chair
Transportation and Environment Committee