

**TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING RECORD**

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Meeting Date: October 13, 2008 **Start Time:** 2:07 p.m. **Adjournment:** 4:03 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

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

Committee Members Absent:

Vonciel Jones Hill, Absent on City Business
Angela Hunt

Other Council Members Present:

Dr. Elba Garcia, Mayor Pro Tem

City Executive Staff Present:

Frank Poe for Ramon Miguez, Assistant City Manager
Jill Jordan, Assistant City Manager

TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes for September 22, 2008

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Motion was made to approve the minutes for the September 22, 2008 meeting subject to corrections. No corrections were suggested and the minutes were approved as submitted.

Made by: Natinsky

Seconded by: Allen

Passed unanimously

2. Sidewalk Briefing

Presenter: Rick Galceran, Director, Public Works and Transportation

Mr. Galceran provided a summary of Council comments about sidewalks from their September 24, 2008 meeting and briefed the Committee on the history, funding and challenges associated with sidewalk construction and maintenance. He reviewed the City's current sidewalk programs and presented the new "Fast Fix" sidewalk replacement program.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Dr. Garcia stated her approval for the new program and indicated that she would like to see more money put into a no-cost program, possibly using CDBG funds, for citizens to replace sidewalks.

Ms. Davis asked if there were programs available specifically for senior citizens to cover the cost of sidewalk replacement. Mr. Galceran stated that the current programs do not differentiate senior citizens from other citizens. Ms. Davis asked who decides what amount a property owner will pay in the 50/50 sidewalk replacement program. Mr. Galceran explained that the City determines the amount assessed to the citizen. Ms. Davis asked for clarification on how to start a petition for sidewalk replacement. Mr. Galceran gave a brief overview on the steps to get a petition started. Ms. Davis said that she would like to get a head start on a list of those sidewalks that need to be replaced in her district to be ready for the next bond program. Ms. Koop said this was a good idea and encouraged other Council members to identify sidewalk projects early in anticipation of the next bond program.

Mr. Kadane asked for clarification on the Code requirements for sidewalks and sidewalk repairs. In particular, he asked if a citizen could choose the type of material used for the sidewalk. Mr. Galceran stated that he would provide that specific information for Mr. Kadane. Mr. Kadane also asked if new developments were required to install sidewalks. Mr. Galceran confirmed that they were required to provide sidewalks.

Ms. Medrano requested an update on the status of sidewalk projects included in the 2006 Bond Program and on the Safe Routes to School program. Mr. Galceran stated that he would provide an update.

Mr. Natinsky noted that in the past the City had often waived the requirement for developers to provide sidewalks and left sidewalks out of thoroughfare projects. He felt that it was critical that the City continue its more recent practice of not approving sidewalk waivers. He asked how many requests had been received for the new Fast Fix Program. Mr. Galceran said that 107 requests had been received to date and that construction was scheduled to begin on 24 of those requests this month.

No action was taken on this item.

3. Love Field People Mover Connector Financial Analysis and Recommendations

Presenter: Dan Weber, Director, Department of Aviation

Mr. Weber began by summarizing the September 22, 2008 Committee briefing that reported on the findings of the people mover feasibility study. This briefing covered the financial implications of building the people mover within the context of the

airport's financial resources and other capital improvement programs. Implementation of the Modernization Program and People Mover would consume nearly all PFC revenue for the life of the bonds and limit future capital improvement. It was recommended that staff evaluate alternative transit connections between Love Field and the DART LRT system and report back to the Committee in January 2009.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Ms. Koop said that a decision on a Love Field transit connection needs to be made quickly. She suggested that staff look at two alternatives that have been addressed in the past: (1) a partial grade separated transit connection from the Inwood LRT station, and (2) an at-grade connection that would be on airport property parallel to Denton Drive, around the south end of the runway at Mockingbird and then back to the terminal. She felt that a bus connection on local streets would not provide quick enough connection and that signal preemption along Denton and Mockingbird would not be feasible. Ms. Koop asked Aviation to bring alternatives back to the Committee as quickly as possible. She emphasized that the chosen option should be environmentally sensitive and provide a very high level of service that would be attractive to airport passengers.

Mr. Kadane agreed that an underground option appeared to be too costly. He suggested that staff examine the at-grade option that goes around the southern end of the runway near Mockingbird.

Ms. Davis asked how much revenue would be generated by the People Mover. Mr. Weber stated that it would not generate significant revenue. Ms. Davis asked how much airport passengers would be charged. Mr. Weber stated that the passenger facility charge is currently set at \$3.00 per passenger and would be capped at \$4.50 per passenger.

Mr. Allen also felt that the People Mover was too expensive. He suggested that staff examine the cost of a rubber tire alternative when this item is brought back to the Committee.

Mr. Natinsky was disappointed that the current People Mover option was too expensive and that it took this long to come to that conclusion. He asked Mr. Weber to check with the FAA to see if they would allow a trench under the runway rather than a tunnel. Mr. Weber said that he would add this option to the list of alternatives.

Mr. Natinsky asked that this be brought back to Committee before January and that he preferred that it come back within thirty days. Ms. Koop asked that this be put on the Committee's November agenda.

Ms. Medrano asked that a security component be included in any future plans for the People Mover.

Motion was made for the Department of Aviation to bring this item back to the Committee on November 24, 2008 with an evaluation of alternative solutions and a recommendation.

Made by: Natinsky

Seconded by: Medrano

Passed unanimously

4. Transit Signal Priority at Traffic Signals in the Downtown Transitway Mall

Presenters: Beth Ramirez, Assistant Director, Public Works and Transportation

Ms. Ramirez briefed the Committee on the Transit Signal Priority (TSP) system that will be implemented when DART's Green Line opens for revenue service in September 2009. The system is intended to keep the trains on schedule going through the CBD transit mall while minimizing their impact on cross street traffic. The City and DART are working jointly on the project and all costs are being paid by DART. Council action will be requested on October 22, 2008 to approve the acceptance of funds from DART, and on December 10, 2008 to approve an engineering services contract for design and testing.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Ms. Davis asked if the new Transit Signal Priority system would be in place for DART's grand opening at Fair Park. Ms. Ramirez indicated that testing would begin in March 2009 and that the system would be operational when DART begins service to Fair Park next fall. Ms. Davis asked what would be done to keep people from moving across the tracks when the lights are flashing. Ms. Ramirez stated that in areas where this is known to be an issue, arms are installed to prevent crossing, as well as signs warning drivers not to cross the tracks when the lights are flashing.

Mr. Natinsky talked about the importance of unloading and loading the trains efficiently and stated that DART needed to have the policies and training in place to make this work.

Mr. Kadane asked for clarification on the timers. Ms. Ramirez explained that the timers would be placed so that they could be seen by train operators, but not by others so as not to cause confusion.

Motion was made to move this item forward to full Council on October 22, 2008.

Made by: Medrano

Seconded by: Davis

Passed unanimously

5. Traffic Barricades

Presenter: Beth Ramirez, Assistant Director, Public Works and Transportation

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Due to time constraints, this item was not briefed.

6. Plastic Bag Policy

Presenter: Eric Griffin, Interim Director, Office of Environmental Quality

Mr. Griffin briefed the Committee on the environmental impact of single use plastic shopping bags and outlined several options to reduce their use and/or impact on the environment. The staff recommendation included a three phase program: (1) a recycling/reduction program for the short term, (2) a surcharge program as a medium term step, and (3) a complete ban as a long term plan.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Ms. Koop stated that she does not favor a tax for plastic bags. She feels that it is better to educate the community on why recycling is important to the environment. Ms. Koop suggested that we entice recycling vendors to take these plastic bags and recycle them for reuse.

Mr. Natinsky also said that he does not favor taxing plastic bags. Mr. Natinsky is concerned about the costs of city cleanup required by these bags but is in favor of an education plan. Ms. Medrano agreed that an education plan would be best and possibly partnering with volunteer organizations such as the Boy Scouts in this effort.

Ms. Davis stated that she supports looking at an alternative to plastic bags. Ms. Davis asked if the City would try to ban the plastic bags. Mr. Griffin stated that they were not recommending a ban at this time.

Mr. Kadane suggested that we have discussions with manufacturers about looking for alternatives to the plastic bags. Ms. Jordan stated that she had spoken with a group in Washington that has been working with groups across the country on an education program.

No action was taken on this item.

Linda L. Koop (LB)

Linda L. Koop, Chair
Transportation and Environment Committee

