

**TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING RECORD**

RECEIVED

2009 OCT -7 PM 2:42

The Transportation and Environment Committee (TEC) meetings are recorded. Agenda materials and audiotapes may be reviewed/copied by contacting the Public Works and Transportation TEC Staff Coordinator at 214.670.4545.

CITY SECRETARY
DALLAS, TEXAS

Meeting Date: September 29, 2009 **Start Time:** 2:06 p.m. **Adjournment:** 4:19 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

Linda L. Koop (Chair), Sheffie Kadane (Vice Chair), Jerry Allen, Tennell Atkins, Carolyn R. Davis, Angela Hunt, Delia Jasso and Pauline Medrano

Committee Members Absent:

Ron Natinsky, Absent on City Business
Vonciel Jones Hill, Absent on City Business

Other Council Members Present:

None

City Executive Staff Present:

Jill Jordan, Assistant City Manager

TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes for September 15, 2009

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Motion was made to approve the minutes for the September 15, 2009 meeting subject to corrections. No corrections were suggested and the minutes were approved as submitted.

Made by: Atkins Seconded by: Kadane Passed unanimously

2. Presentation on "Great Streets"

Presenters: Thomas Brink, AIA, LEED AP, Vice President, RTKL Associates Inc.
Erich Dohrer, Urban Design Director, RTKL Associates Inc.

Mr. Brink gave a brief background on RTKL Associates Inc.

Mr. Dohrer briefed the Committee on the "Great Streets" concept showing examples of streets that address the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users as well as the automobile.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Ms. Koop indicated that during her term on the DART Board the owner of zip car briefed the DART Board and that you would need a certain number of people downtown taking the train in order for the zip car to work; and that there may be prototypes in the Dallas area. Ms. Koop also mentioned the DART emergency ride home program, but was not sure if DART currently provides the service.

Ms. Koop stated that she and Jill Jordan have had some discussions regarding Jefferson Boulevard in Oak Cliff. There was a bond program many years ago, where planting, hardscape and seating were put in place, but over a number of years as budgets declined the amenities were removed.

Ms. Jasso stated that Jefferson Blvd. was one of the oldest retail streets in Dallas and it was her goal to begin to reenergize the area, not only through retail, but through streetscape and the application of "great streets" concepts. She asked where we start to convert a corridor into a "great street."

Mr. Dohrer answered that we needed to establish a hierarchy identifying what's most important; this establishes an overall Master Plan that prioritizes significant experiences. In addition to Jefferson Blvd. Ross Avenue would be an example of something that could tie East Dallas into Downtown. Mr. Brink mentioned that there was an urban vitality on Jefferson Blvd.; it already has the structure so that you are not starting from scratch; the first step then is coming up with a vision and getting people excited about what Jefferson Blvd. could become.

Ms. Jasso indicated that there is already a Task Force made up of merchants, tenants and property owners that is looking forward to working on this type of project.

Ms. Jasso asked what is the optimal width of a bicycle lane. Mr. Dohrer stated that it depended on the type of street and that generally four or five feet is the narrowest that you could make a striped bike lane.

Ms. Hunt stated that there was a consultant from Portland working on creating a connection between the Katy Trail and downtown Dallas through Uptown. Their observation was that we lament the fact that we have enormous streets, but alternatively it can be viewed as an opportunity because we have so much right-of-way that can be adapted to accommodate different modes. Dallas may have more opportunities than some other cities.

Ms. Hunt stated that she, Mr. Kadane and Ms. Koop have been working on updating the Bike Plan for the City. She indicated that one of the challenges would be changing our mindset away from how do we move cars as fast as possible to how we move people in the most enjoyable way.

Ms. Hunt also asked how we move forward toward creating "great streets." Ms. Hunt indicated that she and Ms. Medrano represent a number of areas that would be ideal, including Ross Avenue and Lower Greenville. Ms. Hunt asked Ms. Koop if they could possibly talk off-line about moving forward on some demonstration areas by installing bollards, planters, and painting.

Ms. Hunt stated that she did not agree with using a four foot bicycle lane as compared to other bicycle friendly treatments that provide ten feet for one-way direction.

Mr. Allen asked what city was illustrated in the presentation for the Smart Meters. Mr. Dohrer stated that they were stock photos but that a number of cities around the country were beginning to use the multi-space meters.

Ms. Davis said that she would be contacting Mr. Dohrer and Mr. Brink for more information. She indicated that she had begun to implement this type of plan on Malcolm X Blvd. by upgrading the streetscape. Ms. Davis indicated that she hoped the City would be looking at this type of program for the long term.

Ms. Davis asked what cost would be involved if done in small scale. Mr. Dohrer indicated that it depends on what changes are involved, but that it could be started on a small scale and build to something bigger going forward. Mr. Dohrer agreed that changing a right-of-way area for the better would help create positive momentum, and change the mind set of people.

Ms. Medrano asked staff to monitor the four cities that received more than \$90 million in allocations for projects to make roads safer and more enjoyable. Ms. Koop stated that the four cities were Columbia, Minneapolis, Cheboygan County Wisconsin, and Marin County California, which will each receive \$22.5 million to make them more bicycle and pedestrian friendly.

Ms. Koop commented that Dallas did not receive the Green Cities grant, but asked Ms. Jordan to continue to research other grant programs with the EPA that support "green" transportation.

No action was taken on this item.

3. Motor Vehicle Tow Rate Increase

Presenter: John Brunk, Assistant Director, Public Works and Transportation
Gary Titlow, Program Manager, PWT Transportation Regulation

Mr. Brunk briefed the Committee on a recommended rate increase for motor vehicle tows that would raise their rates to the same level that was approved by Council for emergency tows earlier in 2009. If endorsed by the Committee, staff will develop an ordinance revision with the City Attorney's Office and schedule it for full City Council consideration in November 2009.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Ms. Koop stated that most of the tows in her district are done out of apartment complexes and that the Apartment Association is in support of the vehicle tow rate increase. Ms. Koop also referred to an email of support from Southwest Tow Operators, a Dallas-based towing association, that is involved the education and training of tow operators.

Ms. Koop indicated that she supported the rate increase. She also asked staff to continue to work on an update to the motor vehicle tow ordinance so that the City has regulations in place to ensure that all tow operators operate legally.

Ms. Jasso thanked Southwest Tow Operators for training new operators and helping to bring all operators into compliance with state and local regulations.

Motion was made to approve the Motor Vehicle Tow Rate Increase as presented and send it on for consideration by the full Council.

Made by: Jasso Seconded by: Davis Passed unanimously

4. Valet Parking

Presenter: John Brunk, Assistant Director, Public Works and Transportation
Zena Fernino, Program Manager, Public Works and Transportation

Mr. Brunk provided a status report and update on the Valet Parking Task Force and requested feedback from the Committee. Mr. Brunk stated that staff would hold a public meeting with the valet industry, businesses, and general community to obtain input on their experiences with valet services. Staff will develop final recommendations and bring them back to the Committee for review.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Ms. Hunt stated that she was comfortable with the valet modifications listed on page 19; the license going from one to two years, provision for a temporary license, review of valet stand requirements, review of application and license fees, review and update insurance requirements, and review of company requirements. She added that the review of valet attendant requirements is critical on both public and private property.

Ms. Hunt stated that she was opposed to the idea of allowing paid valet services to use required parking spaces because of problems that develop in areas where retail, restaurants, bars, and high intensity uses are located next to residential neighborhoods. Ms. Hunt indicated that if they are using free spaces for paid valet, then those who don't want to pay are pushed into the neighborhoods. Ms. Hunt stated that she liked the idea and hoped that people would carpool and walk, but

didn't think it was realistic because we don't have walkable communities in Dallas. She stated that she thought it was reasonable to keep the current policy.

Ms. Hunt did say that there were other points in which she agreed with the business community. For example, she believed that private lots who are doing paid valet should be regulated so that the public is assured that these services have proper insurance and have passed background checks.

Ms. Hunt stated that she would like to see valet stands have a map of their paid and free spaces, which would be physically marked.

Ms. Davis stated that she also agreed with the license going from one to two years, provision for a temporary license, reviewing valet stand requirements, reviewing application and license fees, reviewing and updating insurance requirements, reviewing company requirements, and reviewing valet attendant requirements.

Ms. Davis asked how we would go about regulating valet services on private property. Mr. Brunk said that it would be done in a similar fashion to the recently approved regulations for booting vehicles on private property.

Ms. Davis said that valet parking at NorthPark was seven dollars and asked who receives the money and how would it be different if it was regulated by the City. Mr. Brunk answered that the money for valet service goes either to the valet service company or the business depending on the contract agreement between the two entities. This would not change if the City were to regulate these services. Ms. Davis asked how many spaces would be required for valet use – at NorthPark, for example. Mr. Brunk explained that the number of spaces used for valet services was a business decision. Ms. Davis asked if the business or valet service sets the valet parking charge or does the City get involved. Mr. Brunk answered that the City is not involved in setting valet rates.

Ms. Davis asked what the intent was for the map on the last page of the presentation. Mr. Brunk answered that the map was meant to show visually the locations of existing valet service licenses.

Ms. Davis asked what would happen next after this Committee briefing. Mr. Brunk answered that staff is interested in feedback from the Committee on the key issues. The Committee feedback would be combined with comments received through a public meeting, and discussed by the Valet Task Force in developing final recommendations.

Ms. Davis stated that she was in support of Ms. Hunt concerns regarding pushing those who don't want to pay for valet services into neighborhoods.

Ms. Jasso stated that she was also in support of the valet modifications listed on page 19. In regard to free versus paid parking, Ms. Jasso indicated that in her district they were just beginning to acquire popular restaurants and that she would

hate for people not to be able to come because they could not afford parking. She also indicated a concern for places like NorthPark Mall where they are charging for valet services, but the City does not know whether they are allowed to charge.

Mr. Allen asked how big of a problem is paid versus free parking and how many spaces are involved. Mr. Brunk answered that the problem areas such as lower Greenville don't meet the parking requirements for a restaurant or bar built from the ground up on a new lot. Mr. Brunk stated that there are elements of the Code that provide for grandfathering in lower parking requirements and/or using shared parking. Mr. Allen stated that free parking in these areas was minimal at best and that he was thinking in terms of balance. He suggested that since there is a minimal amount of free parking to begin with, any negatives resulting from allowing it to be paid valet parking are offset by the good that valet parking can do. Mr. Allen asked for confirmation that valet parking services are able to get more cars in a smaller space, and that without valet; you would have more cars going into the neighborhoods. Mr. Brunk stated that Mr. Allen was correct.

Mr. Allen stated that he would have a problem with not allowing people to have a level playing field since valet parking is recognized by the experts to be the most efficient way to handle a limited parking situation.

Mr. Kadane asked for an explanation of the valet related license fees. Mr. Brunk explained the purpose of the different valet fees included in the presentation.

Mr. Kadane asked if a certificate of occupancy is required to use parking for a nearby bank building as an off-site parking lot. Mr. Brunk confirmed that a certificate of occupancy would be required by Building Inspection. Mr. Kadane asked who gets the certificate of occupancy. Mr. Brunk answered that the bank building would get the certificate of occupancy.

Mr. Kadane stated that it should be made easier to use off-site parking. Mr. Kadane asked if staff was meeting with the industry. Mr. Brunk confirmed that staff was meeting with the industry.

Ms. Medrano agreed that prior to developing a recommendation staff should hold a public meeting. She requested that the meeting be held at night with at least one month's notice, and located in the vicinity of most of the valet services.

Ms. Medrano asked for an example of tandem/packed parking in the East Dallas area. Mr. Brunk indicated that when a valet service completely controls a parking lot, assuming that there is significant parking demand, then they will pack the lot to make it as efficient as possible. Mr. Brunk stated that he would attempt to identify an example for Ms. Medrano.

Ms. Hunt stated that the requirement for a certificate of occupancy for a commercial parking lot is important, but did not see why parking agreements with deed restrictions were needed.

Ms. Koop asked that the problem areas be identified to point us toward a recommended strategy that specifically addresses the problems in those areas. She asked staff to develop a map showing the current problem areas.

Mr. Jasso indicated a desire to have consistent treatment of valet services and stated that she would like to see an ordinance where if one group is allowed to charge for valet services, then everyone should be allowed to charge.

No action was taken on this item.

Linda L. Koop (LB)

Linda L. Koop, Chair
Transportation and Environment Committee

DRAFT