

TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT  
COMMITTEE MEETING RECORD

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CITY SECRETARY  
DALLAS, TEXAS

**Meeting Date:** October 12, 2009 **Start Time:** 2:04 p.m. **Adjournment:** 4:01 p.m.

**Committee Members Present:**

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

**Committee Members Absent:**

None

**Other Council Members Present:**

David Neumann

**City Executive Staff Present:**

Jill A. Jordan, Assistant City Manager  
A.C. Gonzalez, Assistant City Manager

**TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA**

**1. Approval of Minutes for September 29, 2009**

**Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:**

Motion was made to approve the minutes for the September 29, 2009 meeting subject to corrections. No corrections were suggested and the minutes were approved as submitted.

Made by: Kadane      Seconded by: Jasso      Passed unanimously

**2. Presentation on "Streetcar Business Plan Development"**

**Presenters:** Gary Thomas, Dallas Area Rapid Transit  
Jay Kline, Director for Program Planning, Dallas Area Rapid Transit  
Keith Manoy, Program Manager, Sustainable Development and Construction  
Trip Brizell, Senior Professional Associate, HDR

The briefing provided a status report on the development of a Streetcar Business Plan which included the preliminary alignment for an initial streetcar line, funding options being studied, and potential institutional structures. A final recommendation is expected from the Streetcar Steering Committee in November 2009.

### **Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:**

Ms. Koop indicated that the DART consultant is continuing to review funding options. It is anticipated that we will be applying for funding from every available source similar to what DART does for its light rail system. She explained that the reason this particular downtown alignment was chosen is because it connects with the Woodall Rodgers Deck Park, the Arts District, future UNT Law School, Main Street Garden, and then back to the west to Union Station. It is located to maximize the amount of economic development that can be captured. Ms. Koop indicated that she wanted to form Executive Committees to look at each of the corridor extensions that would serve surrounding neighborhoods.

Ms. Jasso stated that she liked the idea of corridor studies for the neighborhood extensions. She indicated that the Oak Cliff Transportation Authority (OCTA) would be involved on any Oak Cliff line.

Ms. Hunt said that there is not a more critical component for the development of downtown than the streetcar system. The proposed plan gives a good start to a system that will be very robust and connect a lot of areas within and outside of downtown. She mentioned that Seattle's \$50 million streetcar investment generated a billion dollars in development around the line. Ms. Hunt indicated that several departments were represented in the planning meetings, including Planning and Zoning, Economic Development and Transportation to address where the route will be placed, how it will be funded, and what it will mean for development.

Mr. Neumann stated that along with Ms. Jasso, he was eager to get involved and participate in the Oak Cliff extension, which will cross the Trinity River and serve Methodist Hospital, Oak Cliff's number one employer. He also suggested that transportation and economic development are interdependent -- you have to think of one in terms of the other because they cannot act independently.

Mr. Neumann asked who came up with the composition of four-three-three for the proposed structure of the Streetcar Board of Directors. Mr. Kline stated that the consultant team and staff developed the composition for the proposed structure of the Board of Directors. Mr. Neumann stated that he thought it should consist of more City of Dallas members since it would be financed and owned by the City. He stated that he did not agree that DART should have three voting members.

Ms. Medrano mentioned the Denver streetcar system, which operates on one street as compared to the proposed Dallas streetcar plan. She also thanked Ms. Koop for her leadership on the streetcar planning.

Mr. Natinsky stated that the hybrid alignment was a good change of direction for the streetcar system, which gives a good jumping off point for future lines, but serves the downtown area equally well. He added that once people start riding the downtown streetcars they will want one in their neighborhood.

Mr. Natinsky asked how the DART System Plan integrates into the streetcar plan and will DART be picking up part of the cost. Mr. Kline answered that DART wants to make sure that the local circulator system is well integrated into the more regional light rail and bus systems. In regard to the funding issue, he indicated that all of the funding scenarios being looked at have been extremely conservative and do not include any funding from DART.

Mr. Thomas stated the Mr. Kline was dedicated to streetcar planning full-time. He indicated that from a staff perspective there could be some funds available to the streetcar system. As an example, he mentioned that a bus route was replaced when the McKinney Avenue Trolley started to provide more regular service, and that the funds that were spent on that particular bus route were now dedicated to the McKinney Avenue Trolley.

Mr. Natinsky stated that he supports DART participation and it was important to integrate the streetcars with both the light rail and bus systems. He agreed with Mr. Neumann that DART appointments to the Streetcar Board of Directors should be fewer than three and should be limited to City of Dallas DART Board appointees.

Mr. Natinsky asked when DART would return to the Committee with a final recommendation on a business plan. Mr. Kline stated that they hoped to have the business plan complete and back to the Steering Committee by October 31, and then, back to the TEC and City Council in November 2009. Mr. Natinsky asked if we would be in the streetcar business by the end of the year. Mr. Kline responded that we would.

Ms. Koop stated that she had asked A.C. Gonzalez and the Economic Development group to take a look at the financial models. Mr. Brizell indicated that the consultants and their financial advisors were working with the City.

Mr. Atkins stated that his questions were answered on the structure of the Board. He indicated that he wanted to make sure there is a vision for a system similar to what we had 40 years ago when the trolleys traveled from Martin Luther King Blvd. to downtown. He wants to see a system that serves areas other than downtown – such as Lower Greenville and Camp Wisdom.

Ms. Davis stated that it is important to have DART Board members serving on the Streetcar Board of Directors because they may be able to locate and access funds that are not available to the City.

Ms. Davis asked if the system would use tracks or rubber tires. Mr. Kline answered that the streetcar system would use tracks. She suggested that DART had extensive experience in designing and building rail systems and was, therefore, an important partner on this project.

Ms. Koop agreed with Ms. Davis that DART was an important partner. She indicated that one of the reasons to avoid federal funds on the initial line was because the federal processes would take a lot longer and delay the project.

Ms. Hill stated that she supports the Dallas Streetcar Plan and would like to see it complete in four years. She also indicated that she wants to see the system extended into other neighborhoods. Ms. Hill stated that she would like to see the VA Hospital corridor as part of future planning with connections to the new UNT campus and Paul Quinn College.

Ms. Hill said that a new federal initiative, called the Sustainable Communities Initiative, has been put forward that may provide funding more quickly. The Secretary of Transportation has brought together Transportation, HUD, and the EPA in this initiative. She indicated that the program rules are not yet in place, and that Dallas may be able suggest how the regulations should work and how the money should be dispensed.

Mr. Kadane stated that he was excited about the Streetcar Plan and that it will make Downtown more viable place to live and work. Mr. Kadane asked when referring to the PID as a way of financing the streetcar, would we maintain the same PID that we have now. Mr. Brizell answered that the current Downtown Improvement District has told DART that they could commit a half-cent that would generate about \$400,000 annually for future operations. He indicated that there may be an opportunity at some point to overlay another district that would be specifically for the streetcar system.

Ms. Koop asked if the LGC and Board of Directors for the Dallas Streetcar System would be one and the same. A.C. Gonzalez stated that staff would need to look at whether that is the appropriate structure to have regarding the issuance of bonds. He indicated that the structure would need to insulate the City from the issuance of the bonds, as well as provide an operating entity that would manage operations under contract with DART.

Ms. Jasso asked about the different corridor groups and if we wanted to include some language about them in the next steps, so that wording correlates to what the intention is. Ms. Koop indicated that at the next Steering Committee meeting they would formulate the approach for future corridor planning. Mr. Thomas stated that he would like to come back with a recommended framework on how the Corridor Committees are going to work.

Ms. Koop also stated that it would be a shame if the Continental Bridge deck were re-poured without streetcar rails. Ms. Jordan stated that staff is looking at the Continental Bridge. It may be possible to provide one track across the bridge with a passing track, instead of providing two tracks. She suggested that it will be a challenge to do everything that we want to do on the Continental Bridge.

No action was taken on this item.

### **3. Sidewalk Improvement Programs**

**Presenter:** Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager  
Rick Galceran, P.E., Director, Public Works and Transportation

Ms. Jordan provided an overview of the City's sidewalk improvement programs, and identified potential changes to the City's policies regarding sidewalk construction, replacement and assessments.

**Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:**

Mr. Kadane asked who pays for the sidewalk when a builder is building a home. Ms. Jordan answered that if it's a new subdivision, the construction would be done as part of the development and the cost would be included in the cost of the home, with no assessments. Mr. Kadane asked who would pay for the sidewalk if it were a single home. Ms. Jordan answered that if there is a sidewalk, then vacant lot with no sidewalk, and then a sidewalk on the other side, then Building Inspection will require you to install the sidewalk. If it's a single home and there is no sidewalk on the street, then you would not be required to install a sidewalk. Mr. Kadane asked if all new homes required sidewalks. Ms. Jordan confirmed that sidewalks are required, but that there is a waiver provision available. The waiver is why there are so many thoroughfares that do not have sidewalks.

Mr. Galceran stated that some areas have bar ditches such that the aesthetics don't allow for installation of a sidewalk, making it awkward to require a property owner to build a sidewalk.

Mr. Kadane asked if there were funds available if a property owner wanted to repair a sidewalk. Ms. Jordan answered that the City is currently out of funds. Mr. Kadane asked if the homeowner would get their money back if they made the repairs. Ms. Jordan said that the homeowner would not be reimbursed. Mr. Kadane asked what would be the policy if the sidewalk was dangerous. Ms. Jordan answered that the Street Services Department would make repairs using asphalt.

Mr. Natinsky asked staff to provide locations using the "Fast Fix" program.

Ms. Jasso indicated that she did not want to maintain the status quo; she wanted to see sidewalks improved and to specifically address areas where the disabled need to be accommodated so that they are not using the streets.

Mr. Atkins asked that if a neighborhood in his district with hills, large ditches and no sidewalks would be required to install a sidewalk if they were to build a new home. Ms. Jordan said that they would not have to build a sidewalk in that situation. However, she added that what they really need is a street petition to improve the street and sidewalks. Ms. Jordan also stated that there is a new program called the "Target Neighborhood Program" that helps in areas that have mostly rental properties.

Mr. Atkins asked for a map of the locations for sidewalks that are part of the Safe Routes to School Program.

Mr. Allen asked for an overview of the criteria for the Safe Routes to School Program. Ms. Beth Ramirez, the City Traffic Engineer, stated that staff looks at where the children live in relation to the school, and then identify the best routes for them to walk. The

infrastructure is then targeted for improvement along those routes. Ms. Davis asked for a copy of the criteria.

Ms. Koop suggested that it would be foolish to change the rules regarding sidewalk funding in the middle of the current bond program. She asked how much money was left in the 50/50 program. Mr. Galceran indicated that the bond funds have been used, but that there will be some funds to come back through the assessments that can be put back into the program.

Mr. Neumann agreed that we should not change the rules in the middle of the bond program. He asked that the Director be very diligent when the waiver process is used on streets where it's appropriate to have sidewalks and indicated that it is not appropriate to issue waivers where there should be sidewalks. Ms. Jordan stated that the Development Services Department issues the waiver.

Ms. Koop asked if there was a charge for a waiver. Ms. Jordan answered that there is no charge for a waiver.

No action was taken on this item.

#### 4. Complete Streets Initiative

**Presenter:** John Brunk, Program Manager, Sustainable Development and Construction  
Keith Manoy, Program Manager, Sustainable Development and Construction

Mr. Brunk presented a follow-up the September 29, 2009 briefing by RTKL on "Great Streets", which included an overview of the "Complete Streets" movement, potential federal legislation, and the role of the forwardDallas! Comprehensive Plan.

#### **Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:**

Ms. Hunt stated that she feels strongly that we need the "Complete Street" concept in Dallas if we are going to become an urban city. She indicated that she was concerned with the multi-use areas (14-15-foot lane widths) identified in the street cross-section examples for the mixed use and transit streets. She acknowledged that Mr. Brunk's presentation indicated that the forwardDallas! Recommendations were a "jumping off" point and that the updated Bicycle Plan needs to be incorporated into the City's Complete Street program.

Ms. Hunt stated that she would like to see us move forward with demonstration areas in different parts of Dallas as soon as possible so that we can show the public a "Complete Street" and build momentum. Ms. Hunt suggested that we need to change our mind set and start thinking about the movement of people and not just traffic flow.

Ms. Hunt suggested that the Committee view a film entitled, "Contested Streets - 2006", an overview regarding bicycle use in New York City, Paris, London, and Copenhagen. Ms. Koop indicated that it would be scheduled for the Committee.

Ms. Medrano mentioned that the prior week several Council members rode bikes to City Hall. She received comments from the public that they would ride more often if they felt safe on the streets.

No action was taken on this item.

5. Upcoming Agenda Items

Motion was made to approve Council Agenda Items #29 and #41 as presented and send them on for consideration by the full Council on October 14, 2009.

Made by: Atkins

Seconded by: Kadane

Passed unanimously

Ms. Jasso asked that an item be added to a future agenda regarding the "distracted driver" and their impact on safety. Ms. Koop indicated that this item would be added to the agenda forecast.

*Linda L. Koop* (LB)

Linda L. Koop, Chair  
Transportation and Environment Committee

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