



REGIONAL TRANSIT DIALOGUE

Governance Subcommittee

July 6, 2009 – 11:00 a.m.
ACOG Board Room, 21 E Main St., Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73104

J. Guy Henson, Chair Governance Subcommittee, Midwest City (absent)
Representative Bill Nations, Vice Chair Governance Subcommittee

Attendees

Bob Kemper
Representative Bill Nations
Dick Lee
Commissioner Willa Johnson
Susan Connors
Jay Hannah
Dean Schirf
Bill Bleakley
Mark VanLandingham
ACOG Staff –Kara Chiodo, Meredith Williams, Holly Massie, Doug Rex, Susan Yingling

Summary

I. Welcome/Introductions

Rep. Nations, who chaired the meeting in Mr. Henson's absence, asked the committee members and ACOG staff to introduce themselves.

II. Discussion with Susan Connors (Planning Director, City of Norman) on the Denver and Albuquerque transit experience

Susan Connors gave a brief presentation on her personal experience with the Denver and Albuquerque transit systems.



Ms. Connors said that she left Albuquerque and moved to Denver 15 years ago. She said the Albuquerque to Santa Fe line didn't exist when she moved, but it opened within 13 years. She said that particular track is approximately 65-100 miles in length.

Ms. Connors said the FasTracks in Denver is operated by the Regional Transportation District (RTD). She said there are three lines currently open, with a goal to finish the project by 2017. She said a funding shortfall due to the economy will keep FasTracks from meeting its completion goal.

Ms. Connors said the RTD was made up of a 15-member board and held a 7-county-wide vote to create FasTracks and create a funding source for the project. The project required 51% of the votes to pass. She said the vote passed even though one of the counties voted against the project. She said she was unsure of how the districts were divided, but each member on the board got one vote and not a weighted vote based on population.

Ms. Connors said the funding for FasTracks was provided through several means: Sales Tax Bonds, COP, TIFIA Loan, "Pay-as-you-go" Cash, Federal New Start funds, other Federal funds, Local Contributions, and Public-Private Partnerships. She said the local match was 2.5% and could be in-kind donations in land instead of cash. She said the project would cost \$6.9 billion to complete, but was unsure as to the amount of annual operating costs. ACOG staff said they would research that information and deliver it to the Subcommittee members.

Ms. Connors said she thought Oklahoma City more fit the Denver model than the Albuquerque model since Oklahoma City and Denver are both so spread out.

III. Discussion on New Mexico's Regional Transit District Act

Ms. Williams distributed a handout regarding the Requirements for Regional Transit Certification. She said New Mexico's RTD did not have taxing authority and could only issue bonds. She said if a city did not wish to participate, the city did not sign a contract or provide funding.

IV. Presentation on COTPA Trust Indenture (Dick Lee)

Mr. Lee said the COTPA Trust Indenture was approved in 1966 and set up through Oklahoma legislation. He said the purpose of the Trust is to provide funds and acquire properties for public transit/parking facilities. The Trust has no taxing authority or dedicated funding source.

Mr. Lee said COTPA has approximately 60 buses. He said new ones were purchased recently with bonds and ARRA monies. He said about 14% of funding comes from fares collected from riders. He said they were trying to increase reliability of the buses and install GPS tracking so people could go online and check the status of the bus they wanted to ride.

V. Ideas for next meeting

The Subcommittee set the next meeting for July 27, 2009 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the ACOG Conference Room located at 21 E. Main Street, Suite 100, Oklahoma City. (Bricktown)