



## REGIONAL TRANSIT DIALOGUE

### Technical/Land Use Subcommittee

July 8, 2009 – 10:00 a.m.  
ACOG Board Room, 21 E Main St., Suite 100  
Oklahoma City, OK 73104

Shannon Entz, Chair Technical/Land Use Sub-Committee, CDBG Coordinator, Edmond  
Mark Seibold, Vice Chair Technical/Land Use Sub-Committee, City Planner, Choctaw

#### **Attendees**

Shannon Entz – Edmond  
Mark Seibold – Choctaw  
Marisa Wells – OSDH-OKC  
Susan Connors – Norman  
Randy Entz – OKC  
Larry Hopper – COTPA  
John Bowman – ODOT  
Billy Harless – Midwest City  
Nathaniel Harding – Harding & Shelton, Inc  
Hans Butzer - University of Oklahoma  
Grant Humphreys – The Humphreys Company  
ACOG Staff – Ryan Billings, Kara Chiodo, Daniel Fazekas, Holly Massie, Doug Rex, John Sharp,  
Susan Yingling

## Summary

### I. Welcome/Introductions

Ms. Entz welcomed everyone and committee members and ACOG staff introduced themselves.



## II. Homework Discussion – U.S. Transit System Examples

Ms. Entz asked for the attendees to share the findings of their homework assignments with the group.

### **Austin**

Mr. Entz gave a brief presentation on his research of Austin, Texas. He said the transit operator in Austin, Capital Metro, started in 1985 when the surrounding areas approved a one percent sales tax. He said a referendum for a Light Rail system was voted down in 2000, which he suspects is the result of poor public outreach and education where people were not aware of what they were voting for and were discouraged in the large price tag.

Mr. Entz said the initial failure taught the area a valuable lesson that resulted in the creation of a 20-year plan branded "All Systems Go" which passed. He said the Urban Commuter Rail and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) are scheduled to open later this year or next year. He said there are nine commuter rail stations along approximately 32 miles of track that serve mostly the downtown area. He said it was along an existing freight track.

Mr. Entz said prior to the plans being implemented, Austin changed their land use to include a transit-oriented land use development category on their map. He said there are four different types of stations that have a different feel to them depending on what type of area they are in. (urban, neighborhood, etc.) He said some park and ride lots are available. He also said the setup was similar to Dallas in that communities could choose whether or not to fund the project and participate.

### **Charlotte, NC**

Billy Harless gave a short presentation about the transit system in Charlotte, NC. He said Charlotte focused on new development, regeneration of corridors, creating better uses for existing infrastructure; increased development within the corridors; accessibility to business, culture and entertainment destinations; and a wider range of housing choices which would cut down on traffic impacts in neighborhoods.

Mr. Harless said a half cent sales tax was proposed in 1998 to support the transit plan. He said there were ordinances in place that allowed for temporary parking facilities for a limit of five years. He said the project is currently in the second phase.

Ms. Connors added that there is a zoning overlay for the entire plan to prohibit certain uses, and each station has its own plan. She said it is a very complicated project.

## **Denver**

Susan Connors and John Bowman gave a brief presentation on the transit system in Denver.

Ms. Connors said the Regional Transportation District (RTD) started in 1969 and the Denver city metro system blended into the RTD in 1974. She said FasTracks didn't get started until the late 90's with a ballot issue in 1999 and 2004. She said the completed system will include four commuter rail lines with 94 miles of commuter rail, five light rail lines with 28 miles of track, one Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) 18-mile corridor, redevelopment of the Denver Union Station, three maintenance facilities – one for commuter rail, one for light rail, and one for the buses.

Ms. Connors said the vote to approve this plan was inclusive of the entire RTD and did not separate the individual cities and counties. She said one of the counties did not vote in favor of the project, but the plan passed anyway because it was based on the whole area. She said it is funded through a combination of funding sources including a 0.4 percent sales tax (4 cents on every \$10) and the vote included the funding and the implementation of the project. Additional funding for the system comes from local match, federal funds, loans, "pay as you go," public/private partnerships and other sources. She said every local government has to contribute about 2.5 percent into the system – either cash or in-kind contributions.

## **Ft. Worth**

Marisa Wells and Hans Butzer gave a brief presentation on the transit area for Ft. Worth.

Mr. Butzer said Ft. Worth started coordinating their bus system in 1974, and the Ft. Worth Department of Transportation was created in 1978. He also said the Ft. Worth Transportation Agency was started in 1983.

Mr. Butzer said Ft. Worth has commuter rail, but no light rail system. However, he said they rely mostly on an extensive bus system. He said the commuter rail system is relatively well-used, but there are funding challenges for a light rail system.

### **III. Speaker Panel Discussion**

Ms. Entz discussed the benefit to bring in guest speakers from some of the peer cities as well as people with different transportation and development expertise within central Oklahoma.

Mr. Seibold asked if anyone had names of potential speakers to submit them to ACOG staff. He said he would like to hear from a speaker from the railroad. Other suggestions included Joe Kyle with the ODOT Rail Programs Division and a representative from JACOBS (formerly Carter Burgess).

**IV. Steering Committee Summary Discussion**

This item was tabled due to lack of time and will be discussed at the next meeting.

**V. Adjourn**