



**Capital Area
Regional Transit Coordination
Committee
(RTCC)**



**Stakeholder
Involvement Plan**



Updated August 2, 2010



RTCC Stakeholder Involvement Plan

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Stakeholder Involvement Plan

Capital Area Regional Transit Coordination Committee (RTCC)

1. OVERVIEW¹

A reliable and comprehensive public transportation network is vital to Central Texans, especially those who have no personal means of transportation. There are several providers that operate public transit or client-based transportation services. However, the current demand for services is far outweighing the resources available. Therefore, coordination of services is greatly needed.

Recognizing this issue to be crucial not only for Central Texas, but also for regions across the state, the Texas Legislature, through H.B. 3588, amended the state's Transportation Code to add Chapter 461—Statewide Coordination of Public Transportation. The intent is to ensure that resources are maximized through coordination of services. The goals of the legislation are to eliminate waste, generate increased efficiencies, and attain Texas' clean air goals.

The Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) assigned development of regional transit coordination plans in compliance with Chapter 461 to the Regional Planning and Public Transportation Study Group. The Study Group concluded that each region in the state, as defined by council of government boundaries, should develop a regional coordination plan. Each region has been instructed to develop a planning strategy, estimate the resources required to prepare the plan, and designate an agency to lead the region's efforts. The strategy was presented to the Study Group and the original plan for the Capital Area was submitted to the TTC in September 2006.

The Capital Area Regional Transit Coordination Committee (RTCC) was created in June 2005 under the combined leadership of the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Austin District. The RTCC is supported by the RTCC Executive Committee and CAMPO (which currently serves as administrative lead agency for the effort. The RTCC has also been supported by grant funding provided through the TxDOT Public Transit Division to support staff work and retention of outside consultants, where appropriate.

The goal of the RTCC is to develop a seamless transportation system that achieves efficiencies, eliminates duplication, increases coordination, and addresses service gaps. With a coordinated system, transportation programs would share resources, facilities, and information; and coordinate trip reservations, scheduling, dispatching, and passenger trips.

The area covered by the RTCC is defined by the CAPCOG boundaries and includes a ten county area located in Central Texas. The area covers Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Llano, Lee, Travis and Williamson counties. The area is about 8,480 square miles and the population from the Census 2000 population was 1,346,833. About half of this population is within the City of Austin limits.

VISION STATEMENT:

To provide full mobility and access to healthcare, human services, employment, education, commerce, social, and community services for all persons in the region.

MISSION STATEMENT:

To foster the development of a seamless public transportation system that achieves efficiencies, eliminates duplication, increases coordination, and addresses service gaps.

¹ *Source: Capital Area Regional Transit Coordination Strategy for a Regional Transit Coordination Plan*

2. GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

These guidelines provide the overall structure in which public involvement strategies can be implemented:

- *Open meetings;*
- *Access by persons with disabilities;*
- *Subcommittee meetings;*
- *Adequate notice;*
- *Public participation opportunities at RTCC meetings;*
- *RTCC agenda items;*
- *RTCC action items;*
- *Public participation in agenda items;*
- *Public comments;*
- *Time period for public comments; and,*
- *Format of public meetings.*

A. Open Meetings

All RTCC meetings will be open to the public and subject to the *Texas Open Meetings Act*. The minutes and all materials presented at these meetings will be public record and will be available for review online and at CAMPO offices. The availability of these records will be stated on RTCC's website and can be distributed on request.

B. Adequate Notice

RTCC will provide adequate notice of meetings subject to the *Texas Open Meetings Act*. Meeting notices will be posted on RTCC's website as well as posted at CAMPO. If requested, a reading service for the blind will be enlisted to broadcast this information.

C. Public Comments

Public comments may be provided in the following ways:

- Verbally at a public meeting (if applicable);
- During the public participation opportunity of a regularly scheduled RTCC meeting occurring within the review and comment period;
- In writing;
- By fax;
- With TTY (teletypewriter) and/or TDD (telecommunications device for the deaf); and,
- Through email.

D. Format of Public Meetings

Public meetings will provide for open discussions between RTCC members and/or staff and the public.

All meetings will be on the record. The format of public meetings will generally be as follows:

- Presentation by RTCC staff and/or their consultant(s);
- Question and answer period, and discussion period;
- Summary and wrap up by RTCC staff and/or their consultant staff and information about the next steps, if applicable;
- RTCC will accept written comments following public meetings; and,
- RTCC will occasionally survey meeting attendees to gauge effectiveness of the public involvement process.

E. Special Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is landmark civil rights legislation ensuring equal opportunity for people with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local

government services and telecommunications. RTCC and its subcommittees are fully committed to the spirit and intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. In order to facilitate participation by people with disabilities, the following guidelines and activities will apply:

- All public meetings and RTCC formal events will be held in facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities;
- All public notices of RTCC meetings will state that accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities will be provided upon request. One-week notice is required for provisions of appropriate auxiliary aids and services;
- All documents available to the public will be provided in alternative formats for qualified individuals with disabilities, upon request;
- The website will be in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998.
- The telephone number, email, mailing address, fax number, and website address will be included on all RTCC publications; and,
- A list of resources for auxiliary aids and services will be developed and maintained.

3. STAKEHOLDERS

When the RTCC was established in 2005, members set out to determine those most interested in and potentially impacted by public transportation coordination. Guided by knowledge of transportation issues and the geographic region, committee members identified a list of nine stakeholder groups, with 19 categories of stakeholders represented by these groups. These 19 categories of stakeholders remain the focus of planning efforts and are represented on the Regional Transit Coordination Committee, ensuring that a representative group of stakeholders guide the planning process and provide input at each stage. The number of stakeholders participating in the process can be modified based on increased interest or specific geographic area needs.

To engender public trust and understanding, the RTCC will need to communicate with a wide variety of stakeholders. Key project stakeholders can be categorized in to two groups, which include:

Internal

- CAMPO, Capital Metro, CARTS, & TxDOT Staff
- Health & Human Services Staff
- CAMPO & Capital Metro Boards

External

- Neighborhood associations
- Businesses
 - small businesses
 - large employers
- Property owners
- Non-profits
- Chambers of Commerce
- News and Community Media outlets
- Service and community organizations
- Professional associations
- Minority organizations
- State legislators
- Local elected officials

