



# Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

**Meeting Date:** October 15, 2013

**Prepared By/Phone Number:** Peter Einhorn, 854-9222

**Department Head:** Leslie Browder – TNR,

**Commissioners Court Sponsors:** Bruce Todd, Precinct 2

## **AGENDA LANGUAGE:**

**CONSIDER AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION ON A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE LONE STAR RAIL DISTRICT PROJECT AS PART OF A REGIONAL VISION FOR HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT AND DIRECT COUNTY STAFF TO WORK WITH THEM ON COUNTY PARTICIPATION.**

## **BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution
2. Supporting documents

On August 30, 2011 and May 17, 2012 the Lone Star Rail District (LSRD) and City of Austin (COA) staff provided joint briefings to the Commissioners Court on the LSTAR and Urban Rail initiatives in Central Texas. During the August 30, 2011 briefing the Commissioners Court authorized County staff to meet and work with LSRD to address issues related to providing local funding for the LSTAR passenger rail service on the current Union Pacific rail line between Georgetown and San Antonio. These meetings, as well as meetings with representatives from the Cities of Austin, Buda, Kyle and San Marcos and Hays County resulted in the development of a local funding approach that includes the establishment, under interlocal agreements, of Transportation Infrastructure Zones (TIZ) that capture revenue from future property value growth from new development around the LSRD rail stations. This approach is consistent with the conceptual funding plan developed in the Project Connect regional plan for high capacity transit services in Central Texas. The Project Connect vision was developed with, and approved by the CAMPO Transit Working Group.

LSRD is returning to the Commissioners Court to provide an update on its planning and request the Court affirm the Project Connect vision. Additionally, LSRD is requesting the Court adopt a resolution that would enable it to formally consider Travis County's participating in the local funding of the LSTAR passenger rail service with the above listed other local government entities in Central Texas. The County's participation would be through a TIZ that LSRD is requesting be created by the end of the current calendar year.

**AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE:** All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to the County Judge's office, [agenda@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:agenda@co.travis.tx.us) by **Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.** for the next week's meeting.

The attached resolution is requested to enable the development of a draft interlocal agreement and a draft court order in coordination with the City of Austin and other local governments entities in Hays County. Development of the coordinated draft documents will allow the Court to consider them for adoption in the November-December timeframe this year.

### **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:**

This resolution does not create the TIZ funding mechanism or approve funding of the LSRD passenger rail service but authorizes the development of the interlocal agreement and court order necessary for TIZ consideration by the Commissioners Court. Consideration by the Court on the adoption of the interlocal agreement and court order by the end of the year is requested by LSRD in order to assure the TIZ funding approach will provide adequate revenue for the Travis County and City of Austin portion of the LSTAR passenger service.

### **REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:**

**Commissioner Bruce Todd**

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**A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF TRAVIS COUNTY IN SUPPORT OF THE REGIONAL VISION ADOPTED BY THE CAMPO TRANSIT WORKING GROUP FOR HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT AND DIRECTING COUNTY STAFF TO CONSIDER THE IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING OF THE LSTAR PROJECT (LONESTAR RAIL) AS A “COUNTY PROJECT”; AND DECLARING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, Central Texas, known for its quality of life, environmental resources and economic vitality, has seen its population grow by 475,000 within the CAMPO counties between 2000 and 2010 (from 1.284 million to 1.759 million population) and is expected to grow by an additional 380,000 by 2040; and

**WHEREAS**, to address the transportation needs of a growing Central Texas, it is important for the region to develop a multi-modal approach to expanding and improving its transportation infrastructure; and

**WHEREAS**, the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, as part of its efforts to address the transportation needs of the region, reconvened its Transit Working Group to consider the potential system design, organization and funding of high capacity transit in Central Texas through 2040; and

**WHEREAS**, the Transit Working Group of CAMPO has adopted a Project Connect “Vision” plan, illustrated in the attached Exhibit A, that confirms the role and importance of the Lone Star Rail District’s LSTAR passenger rail service as a foundational investment in an integrated high capacity transit system in Central Texas highlighted in Exhibit B (potentially serving up to eight of the region’s cities and also linking to the City of San Antonio and subject to compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements); and

**WHEREAS**, the Transit Working Group’s “Vision” plan calls for the each of the cities and counties that are served by, and benefit from the System to participate by providing a “fair share” of local funding, including the Travis County; and

**WHEREAS**, Travis County wishes to provide the benefits of LSTAR passenger service to its citizens and has been a member of the Lone Star Rail District since October 8, 2002;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Travis County Commissioners Court affirms its support of the regional Vision adopted by the CAMPO Transit Working Group for high capacity transit and directs county staff to consider the implementation planning of the LSTAR project as a “county project” in its priority and general approach and that it is the Commissioners Court goal to complete its consideration of creating the local funding mechanisms or sources it deems appropriate and adequate for its share of the LSTAR service costs by December 31, 2013; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Commissioners Court requests the Lone Star Rail District include in its consideration of passenger rail service to Travis County up to seven station locations as generally illustrated in Exhibit C and that LSRD's consideration include the stations in the project's environmental impact study for Federal approval in a Record of Decision; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Travis County requests the Lone Star Rail District provide initial drafts of the interlocal agreements and orders necessary to provide value capture revenues from the station areas as generally illustrated in Exhibit C and requests that the Rail District work with the County Attorney and budget staff in the drafting of the agreements; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Travis County proposes that any revenue increment from value capture sources that is provided by Travis County be retained in a restricted fund to be regularly disbursed or available to the Lone Star Rail District only in the event the passenger rail system is to become operational. Funds provided by Travis County in the restricted fund may be otherwise available to the Lone Star Rail District only upon its request and with the approval of the Travis County Commissioners Court; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that County support of the LSTAR project as a "county project" is based upon the understanding that the project will also be supported by other local jurisdictions in Central Texas with which the Lone Star Rail District has initiated funding discussions such as the cities of Austin, Kyle, San Antonio and San Marcos and Hays County and requests the Lone Star Rail District provide their adopted similar resolutions as an indication of their support before the Commissioners Court makes a final decision on financial participation.

**ADOPTED** on \_\_\_\_\_, 2013

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Samuel T. Biscoe, Travis County Judge

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Ron Davis  
Commissioner Precinct 1

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Bruce Todd  
Commissioner Precinct 2

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Gerald Daugherty  
Commissioner Precinct 3

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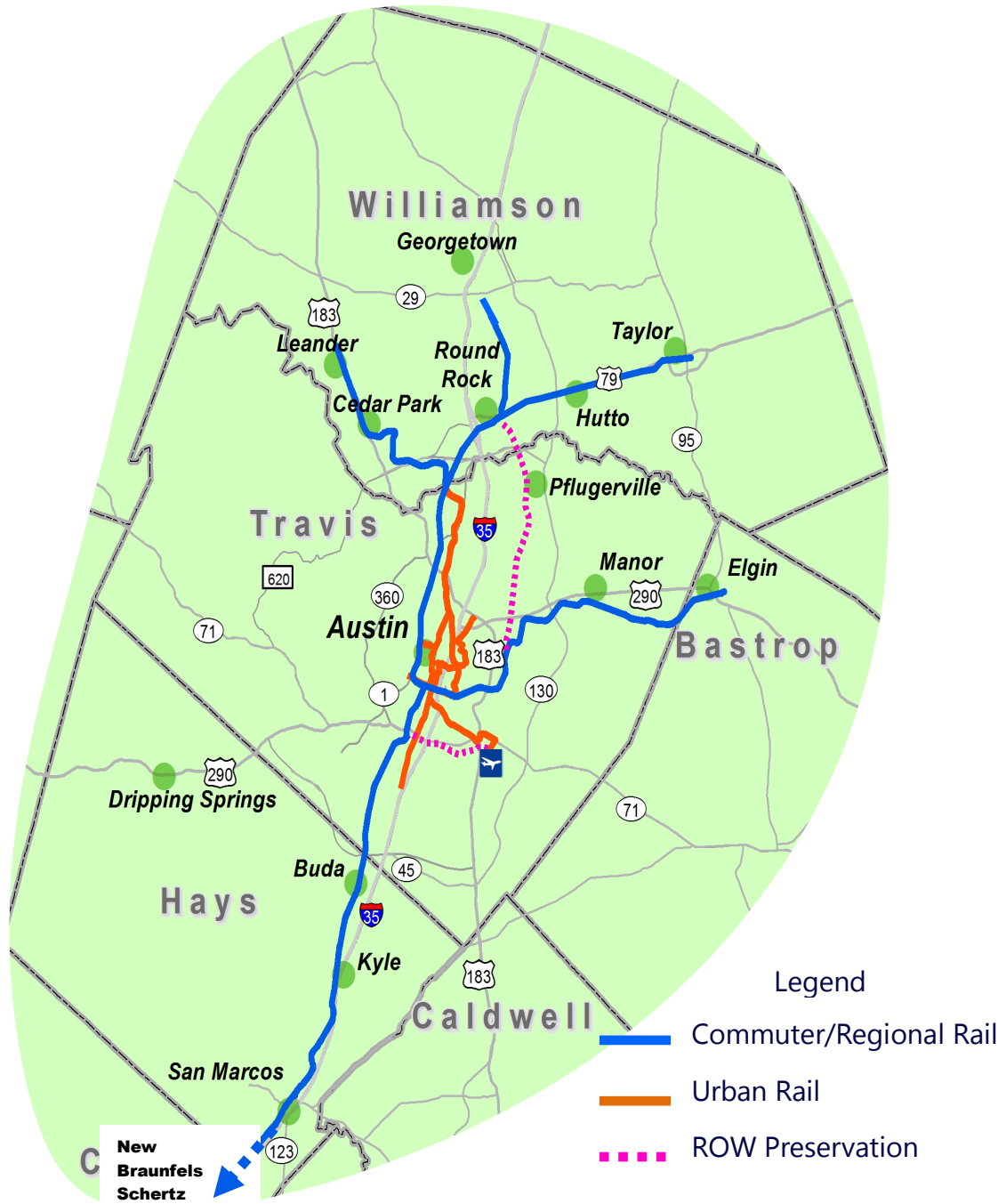
Margaret Gómez  
Commissioner Precinct 4

# EXHIBIT A



**EXHIBIT B**

**TWG “Vision” for Rail in Central Texas Map**



**EXHIBIT C**

