CITY OF SAN MARCOS
TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

JULY 5, 2018

COORDINATED TRANSIT PLAN STUDY

PHASE I - DIRECT RECIPIENT REPORT

KA ASSOCIATES
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Executive Summary

The City of San Marcos and Texas State University jointly hired KA Associates to develop and evaluate options to enhance transit and maximize grant funding opportunities for the community. Phase I of this study presents potential options for direct recipient status of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds directed to the San Marcos area and operating models that could be utilized in a coordinated transit system. Phase II, to begin at the conclusion of this phase, will identify implementation measures necessary to put a coordinated system in place.

The recommendations of the Phase I report include:

a. **Direct Recipient Funding** – The Study recommends the City accept the direct recipient role in all federal and state operating and capital transit funding immediately. This action will allow for greater direct involvement and local autonomy of both current and future transit systems.
b. **Continued Operation** – Continue with their respective service providers to allow time to review the specific coordination options.
c. **Proceed with Phase II** – KA Associates along with Study Team members, review and report on a preferred coordinated transit model with recommended funding, operations, and governance.

A variety of factors are used as the basis for these recommendations. These features, more specifically described within the Phase I report, include:

I. **A Summary of Community Stakeholder Involvement –** At a series of stakeholder listening sessions conducted both within the community and on campus, a general vision emerged of what a robust and coordinated transit system in the San Marcos / Texas State community could be - seamless, high frequency, and attractive to choice riders to enhance the overall quality of life in the community and on the campus. Funding, how citizens view public transportation, and access to and from the system are viewed as barriers to this vision.
II. **Review of Consolidation Factors** – The City and University currently commit significant administrative and operational resources to their respective transit systems, many of which are duplicative. However, if planned correctly, a successfully coordinated system – which combines the performance statistics of both the City and University transit systems – could result in reduced duplication and in opportunities for over $1million in new Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) federal monies to a coordinated transit operation in San Marcos.
III. **A Detailed Description of Coordinated Operation Models** – KA Associates presented five operating models used in other community / university settings throughout the United States. These operating models, while meeting their community's needs, have varying pros and cons. While the Phase II portion of the study will investigate the appropriate model for San Marcos and Texas State University, in four of these models the City stands as the direct recipient of federal operating and capital formula funding. The details of these models will be useful as the Study continues into Phase II.

A. Introduction

For decades, the City of San Marcos has offered fixed route and paratransit service to the citizens of San Marcos within the community and surrounding regional communities. This service has been operated by the Capital Areas Rural Transportation System (CARTS). Separate from the service offered by the City, Texas State University provides a service primarily designed to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff. The University service is operated by a third-party transportation contractor, Transdev. In several instances, the service offered by each system duplicates service areas and hours, while leaving other areas and time underserved.

After the 2010 United States census, the City of San Marcos' Federal Transit Administration (FTA) title designation changed from "Rural" (FTA Section 5311) to "Small Urban" (FTA Section 5307) for operating and capital assistance grants. This change meant the City was assigned by the Governor direct authority over these FTA transit formula grants. Since 2013, these grants have been allocated to CARTS. Section 5307, Small Urban transit operating and capital funds provided by the FTA are based on a formula using factors of service area population and area density. Throughout this document, these FTA operating funds may be referred to as "formula grants". The FTA does offer as well, other operating and capital funds that are awarded on a competitive basis.

While both system provide useful service to community and campus constituents, the City and University believe there may be advantages to taking a more coordinated approach to transit and combining certain efforts and resources. The purpose of this student is to review current services provided by both the City and the University clientele and make more effective use of limited resources.

This study will review the performance of current services as well as what potential exists for future consolidated transit service, evaluating them based on:

- Administrative and Operating Costs
- Additional Funding Opportunities Available
- System Performance Metrics

Finally, the study will show a variety of operating model alternatives, and will present:

- An evaluation of each model that includes the pros, cons, and benefits for both the University and City.
- How well each model embodies the Vision for transit as voiced in the University and Community listening sessions (included in Attachment A).
- Recommendations on direct recipient status for federal transit funding.

B. Current Operations

1. City of San Marcos

The San Marcos transit system, performing under the marketing brand of "The Bus" is operated by the Capital Area Rural Transportation System (CARTS). Besides the San Marcos fixed route service, CARTS provides rural transportation service to a nine-county area surrounding Austin, Texas. The majority of CARTS' services in the area are rural demand response. CARTS does operate three distinct fixed route services, in Bastrop, Georgetown, and San Marcos. CARTS' San Marcos service is funded through an agreement between the City of San Marcos and the transit system, where CARTS is authorized to use the Federal Transit Administration Section 5307 Small Urban operating grant allocated to the San Marcos area. CARTS is governed by a Board of Directors who appoint a local, voluntary advisory committee with five members. The San Marcos Transit Advisory Committee advises the CARTS administration and Board on transit related issues and services within San Marcos. CARTS is assigned the direct recipient status by the City of San Marcos for the FTA Section 5307 funds assigned to the San Marcos urban area.

The San Marcos service has an operating budget of $1,647,918 and a $117,500 capital budget for fiscal year 2018. Revenues for the system include $801,459 in Federal Transit Administration Section 5307 formula grants, $450,000 in funding from the City of San Marcos, $273,299 in State of Texas operating assistance, $45,000 in farebox revenue, and $39,130 in other local revenue. The budget also includes $156,530 in federal and state capital grants.

The Bus operates on seven routes Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. with frequency of service between 30 minutes to one hour. The regular passenger fare is one-dollar with reduced fare for elderly and disabled. CARTS operates a twice per week senior transportation service. Also included in the San Marcos service is ADA complementary paratransit service for those unable to access a bus stop due to a cognitive or physical disability. CARTS administers ADA eligibility certification

Texas State University students, faculty, and staff can ride The Bus for no fare by presenting their University ID. The University is billed back for use by students and employees. During fiscal year 2017, approximately 17% of The Bus' ridership was University students or employees.

CARTS also operates an intercity bus route, Interurban Coach South, that provides four trips, Monday through Friday, to Austin. Interurban fare is $2.00 to $4.00 per trip based on boarding location and final destination.

The Bus fleet consists of twelve fixed route lift-equipped buses with seating capacity ranging from 16 to 27. Additionally, there are three disability vans in the fleet.

Key Performance Statistics – FY 17

- Fixed Route Passenger Trips – 63,511
- Revenue Miles of Service – 260,074
- Revenue Hours of Service – 17,938
- Passengers per Revenue Hour – 3.5

2. Texas State University Bobcat Shuttle

The Bobcat Shuttle is a transportation service administered by Texas State University Transportation Services, a department within the Finance and Support Services Division. Besides the Bobcat Shuttle, the Department also manages alternative transportation programming and parking services for the University. The University operates the Bobcat Shuttle via a purchased bus service contract with Transdev. All operations and maintenance are provided by Transdev under this contract. Generally, the service area for the Bobcat Shuttle includes intra-campus shuttle circulators, routes to remote parking and campus academic and support facilities, and to major off-campus student housing areas.

There are 38 buses in the Bobcat Shuttle system that operate on eleven routes during maximum peak service, carrying approximately 24,000 riders per day, with a one-day ridership peak of more than 33,000 boardings. During the academic year, service hours are Monday through Thursday between 7:00 a.m. and 10:20 p.m.; Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., and on Saturday between 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Evening and Saturday service is not available during the summer months and there is no service offered on Sundays, official university holidays, or between semesters when classes are not in session.

The Bobcat Shuttle is open to students, faculty, staff, and the general public. Currently there is no bus pass validation or fare collection required to board. Texas State University is in the process of developing a new fare policy. All buses are ADA compliant and are wheelchair accessible. Funding for the Bobcat Shuttle is generated from a semester-based student fee. The bus fee was last increased to $95 per semester prior to the fall 2014 semester. The bus fee is capped by law to $100 per semester and may only be increased upon student referendum approval. The FY2017 operating revenue for the transit service is $7,020,621 with operating and capital expenses totaling $6,804,350.

Key Performance Statistics – FY 17

- Passenger Trips – 2,786,033
- Revenue Miles of Service – 788,287
- Revenue Hours of Service – 65,820
- Passengers per Revenue Hour – 42.32

C. Community Understanding

Modal choices are ever evolving. What were standard mobility alternatives ten years ago – personal car, bus, bicycle, walking – have now progressed to – car sharing, bicycle sharing, trips sharing, even autonomous vehicles – and what were considered essential elements of a robust community and/or campus transportation system have been replaced by these new consumer demands. However, the same essential transportation needs exist.

Within the community, these needs include access to work, play, medical, and shopping that supports a local economy and enhance the community's quality of life. Needs also extend to special transportation services for disabled, elderly, youth, and those without cars.

For universities, transportation is necessary to meet critical campus goals by providing mobility within the campus and service to remote parking to preserve interior open spaces and future building sites. Campus transportation services are essential in providing students access to the community including shopping, entertainment, employment, and other community activities. A vigorous campus transit system and other mobility services such as bike and car sharing and carpool matching are critical for student recruitment.

To understand the community's and campus' ideas regarding transit in San Marcos, KA Associates conducted stakeholder listening sessions both on the campus of Texas State University and within the City of San Marcos. These four sessions took place June 11th and 12th. A summary and transcribed record of comments and responses are included as Attachment A of this report.

These meetings provided insight into the vision participants had regarding transit and mobility in the San Marcos community, on the Texas State campus, and in the regions surrounding San Marcos. They help to identify the expectations that can assist in fashioning a model for a future coordinated transit system.

While the detailed summary is included as part of Attachment A, these meetings clearly represented the desire for a coordinated transit system. Generally, those who participated imagined a transit service that was a primary transportation choice and well used by the citizens. They envisioned a transit system that supported economic development and tourism.

Also, the envisioned transit service would provide seamless transportation with fares accepted between both a community and University system. Access to regional destinations was important as well as service coverage where riders and population centers exist. Important too was access for University students to city areas all the time, not just on weekends, and that remote campus parking areas were served with quick, back and forth "bullet" shuttles.

To be successful and meet needs, the participants saw that a future system has to be frequent (ten-minute service during the day and 15-20 minute service at night), efficient (minimize travel times), and reliable. Safety of the passengers is important to the vision including adequate sidewalks for approaching and leaving a bus stop, safety lights and call boxes.

New technologies that report the location and predicted arrival of the bus are important, as well as integrating the buses with other modes of travel. This would include trip sharing (Lyft and Uber), bicycle racks on the buses and other programs that support Transportation Demand Management.

However, there are barriers participants identified that may prevent achieving this vision of transit. Most important was identifying the funding needed to invest in a robust transit service and the political will at the local, state, and federal levels to support the necessary funding. Another was cultural and image issues with transit – that Texans don't ride buses or that riding a bus was not cool, was for poor people, or the service was unreliable.

A physical barrier that may delay achieving the vision is the current infrastructure in the community – street capacity that is too narrow for buses and bicycle lanes, lack of shelters, benches, and lighting at stops, and walkable and ADA compliant sidewalks to bus stops. Another important barrier identified was communication about the services and routes to the community and campus.

While a list of barriers can be daunting, fortunately there are equally identified institutions and programs in place that support the vision of a coordinated transit system. The current transit operators and their bus drivers have an image of being friendly and inviting to passengers and making the service enjoyable. Employers are motivated to get their employees to work and data is available to support this need. The population and physical growth of the community supports the need for a vital transit system. However, and most important, as we move through the Coordinated Transit Planning process, the participants viewed the common interest both the City and University have in solving the transportation problems in the community as a strong support to the vision.

D. Consolidated Transit Considerations

The purpose of this Phase I report is to identify optimum roles between the City of San Marcos and Texas State University in a potential coordinated transit system. As part of this review is the question regarding which entity should take on the role of direct recipient of federal operating funds available to the San Marcos area. The report is to also identify various operating and funding models for the City and University. Phase II of this study will center on the preferred coordinated transit model with recommended funding, operations, and governance.

In order to make a well-informed decision as to which operating system is the best fit for the community and University, several topics pertinent to a consolidated system should be addressed. Below are four major areas that will influence the choices – administration and staffing needs of the models and recipient roles; operation and maintenance of the services; the timing of implementation of a consolidated system, and; funding opportunities that influence the choices.

1. Administration

Operating and policy leadership is essential no matter which coordinated system approach is taken. Clearly, with two distinct transit operations and management teams, duplication of leadership positions and administrative functions will occur. Should either or both the City or University accept a direct recipient role, there will be a commitment to increased oversight of general administrative functions.

Typically, administration of a transit system the size of San Marcos consists of broad areas of general administration, finance, planning, human resources, communications, customer services, operations, dispatch, and maintenance. With direct operation of the ADA paratransit service, certification of applicants and processing applications will introduce a new administrative activity. Additionally, the direct recipient of federal operating or capital grants will be required to collect data and submit the annual National Transit Database (NTD) reports that include areas of financial (both operating and capital funding), operations, maintenance, ridership, and safety performance.

Many of these roles are currently handled for the University service through the third-party contractor Transdev – operations and maintenance management, dispatch, customer service, personnel – or through the University administrative functions – administration and policy, planning, customer service, human resources, data collection, and finance. These same roles for The Bus system in San Marcos are being taken care of by CARTS – operations and maintenance administration, personnel, finance, dispatch, communications and customer service, and NTD data collection and reporting. The City of San Marcos shares management of The Bus through administrative oversight, planning, capital improvements, and communications.

Consolidated approaches to a San Marcos transit system will eliminate many of these duplications. Additionally, support services, including but not limited to human resources, finance, and communications could be incorporated into the administrative functions of either the City of San Marcos or Texas State University.

2. Operation

While the operating features of a consolidated system have not been set – contracted service to a third-party transit operator versus direct operation of the system – there is a long history of both the City of San Marcos and University systems being operated by organizations with a clear transit expertise.

With contracted operations, the City and/or University would set the parameters of service that the contractor would provide. Contract roles would definitely include the hiring and management of bus operators, dispatch and maintenance staff; but, could include as well services such as ADA certification and administration, NTD data collection and reporting, and customer services. Typically, the commissioning entity will retain administrative oversight, planning, finance, grant administration, communications, and any engineering functions within its purview.

3. Timing

Implementing a new coordinated transit operation is complicated and time consuming. The transition towards a successful start is dependent in large part on planning and programing. Federal contracting, third-party operations start-up, marketing, and service planning can create timing issues that will impact a new, successful transit launch.

Specifically, these timing details include –

- Federal contracting – any new recipient of federal operating or capital funds needs to be aware of the federal conditions and restrictions placed on contracts. The development and execution of federal operating and capital projects may be hindered by the need to insure federal procurement regulations are properly followed.
- Operations implementation – with a contract in place, a new transit operator may need additional time to find sufficient existing space for new transit operations and maintenance facilities or to build a new one.
- Route planning – Concurrent with contract bidding and award, planning staff needs to be busy with the development of a route system that provides maximum coverage to transit-oriented service areas. Federal guidelines will require additional time for needed public notice of route changes and a public review and comment period.
- Marketing and Communication – For a new transit system launch to be successful, media coordination and advertisement of the new services needs to be planned and purchased well in advance of the start date.

4. Funding

Expenses

Operating and organizational expenses (personnel and administrative overhead) are dependent on the operating model that is finally chosen and are critical in understanding the costs associated with a new transit organization. As previously mentioned in the Administrative considerations, many administrative indirect costs can be borne by the sponsoring organization. Support services such as personnel, finance, grant administration, and communication could be part of a charge back to either the City of San Marcos or Texas State University.

Currently, the FY 2017-2018 San Marcos operating budget is broken down into the following major categories –

- Personnel – $676,800 (San Marcos Transit Director, Supervisors, Dispatchers, Bus Operators, Station Manager/ADA Coordinator)
- Fringe – $251,660
- Travel – $2,500
- Bus Operations – $268,000
    - Fuel, Vehicle Maintenance, Radios, etc.
- Vehicle Insurance - $55,000
- Facility Operations - $145,000
    - Utilities, Janitorial, Facility Maintenance
- Other Expenses - $248,958
    - Recruitment and Training, Licenses, Uniforms, Office Supplies, Physicals and Drug Screening, Marketing, and CARTS Cost Allocation.

Correspondingly, the Texas State University Bobcat Shuttle has similar operating expenses.

- Administration – $191,700
    - Personnel (Transportation Director, Marketing Coordinator – 50%, Shuttle Manager and Administrative Assistant II – 100%, Alternative Transportation Coordinator – 70%)
    - Fringe
- Bus Operation and Maintenance to Transdev – $5,655,609
    - Operators, Vehicle Maintenance, etc.
- Fuel - $406,493
- Services - $289,127
    - DoubleMap, Studies, University Overhead
- Cart Subsidy - $10,632
- Facility Operations - $3,476
- Other Expenses - $4,685

From this information, there are areas where current duplication of expenses could be eliminated under a coordinated transit operation. In four of the five models discussed in the next section, administration, marketing, and operations and maintenance are all potential areas of cost savings.

Revenue

Besides the expenses associated with a consolidated transit system in San Marcos, a consolidated transit service could generate significant and substantial new funding revenues. Currently, operating revenue for both The Bus and Bobcat Shuttle operations consist of the following –

- The Bus (San Marcos) for FY 2018
  - Federal Operating Grants (Section 5307 Small Cities and Growing States) - $801,459
  - City of San Marcos - $450,000
  - State TXDOT Formula Grant - $273,299
  - Farebox - $45,000
  - Other Local - $39,130
  - **Total Operating Revenue** - $1,608,888

- Bobcat Shuttle (Texas State University) for FY 2017
  - Student Fees - $7,010,621
  - Parking Subsidy - $10,000
  - **Total Operating Revenue** - $7,020,621

These are significant funds that provide a quality service to the community and University; however, additional funding could be achieved through a consolidated transit effort. Under current federal legislative and administrative policy, there are opportunities for new formula grants through the Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) program. These grants are based on performance indices of the transit system and regional population statistics. For Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2017, the University collected and submitted to the Federal Transit Administration all performance data necessary to be considered in the six STIC categories. CARTS was not required to provide passenger mile data so the FFY 2017 National Transit Database (NTD). Statistics for The Bus are only available for three of the six formula categories.

Based on FFY 2017 data, the combined performance of the two systems exceeds the average criteria in five of the six categories. This would qualify the San Marcos region for an additional $1,010,000 in operating assistance in STIC monies based on current federal funding allocations, double the current federal operating assistance. For FFY 2018, each category milestone achieved garners $202,000 in grant funds. Please note that passenger miles not reported by CARTS may impact overall statistic calculation under a coordinated system. Formula performance statistics include:

- Service Area Population – 54,076[1]
- San Marcos (The Bus)[2] –
  - Revenue Miles – 260,074
  - Revenue Hours – 17,938
  - Passenger Trips – 63,511
  - Passengers Miles – not required to report

- University Operation (Bobcat Shuttle)[3] –
  - Revenue Miles – 788,287
  - Revenue Hours – 65,820
  - Passenger Trips – 2,786,033
  - Passenger Miles – 6,675,434

- STIC Categories and Performance

Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) Category	**STIC Performance Threshold**	**San Marcos Regional Performance**
Passenger Miles Per Vehicle Revenue Mile*	6.34	**6.37**
Passenger Miles Per Vehicle Revenue Hour*	111.53	79.70
Vehicle Revenue Miles Per Capita	11.48	**19.39**
Vehicle Revenue Hour Per Capita	0.73	**1.55**
Passenger Miles Per Capita*	82.31	**123.44**
Passenger Trips Per Capita	12.57	**52.70**

*Passenger Miles reflect Texas State University statistics only. CARTS is not required to collect Passenger Miles data.

[1] From CARTS' FY 2016 NTD Report
[2] FY 2017 NTD statistics provided by CARTS
[3] FY 2017 NTD statistics provided by Texas State University

E. Transit Operating Model Options

Model 0: University and City Jointly Maintain Their Separate Transit Systems with Federal Operating Assistance Supporting the City System Only

City of San Marcos:

Within this scenario, the City of San Marcos would manage The Bus community system with both fixed route and paratransit service, either directly as a City operated transit system or through a third-party contractor. Planning support for route service areas, marketing of the system, administration of ADA certification, and determinations of frequency of service and hours of operation would be determined by the City staff. With the City of San Marcos as the direct recipient of federal transit funds, the City would have authority regarding the use of federal monies to support the operation of the system and capital funds for the use by the City to purchase new transit vehicles, construct passenger amenities, and invest in operational and maintenance facilities to support the operation.

Texas State University:

The University would continue to operate its Bobcat Shuttle service to provide the necessary transit service for the University students and employees – mostly to provide intra-campus transit and service from remote parking areas to the campus core. The University would have options regarding service out to major off-campus student housing areas. The University could:

- Stop offering service to off-campus apartment at which time these complexes would have to rely on The Bus to provide transit service to the campus;
- Provide secondary, and many times duplicative, transit to the apartments as funding and service priorities allow, or;
- Ask that these complexes subsidize the University's service to their development or that the apartments operate their own shuttles to and from a designated campus transit hub (the University of Oklahoma gains approximately $240,000 in operating revenue through subsidies from apartment complexes).

Features of This Model:

As this model mirrors in many ways the current operation of the two systems, there is no urgency or pressure to coordinate the services to reduce or eliminate duplication of service, provide joint access between the systems, or share facilities. Mobility within San Marcos and the University goes down divergent paths with both constituencies underserved for a seamless access to the campus and community. This model could include agreements for a universal pass (student/employee ID) for University students and staff to access the City system but typically does not allow community access to the University service, although the University service at this time does not turn any passenger away.

Table 1: Model 0 Evaluation		
	City	**University**
Pros	• Involves minimal change of the City operating model • Provides the option for the City to directly operate the system or contract to a third-party • City has complete control and management over the system administration • Federal funding would be directed at a community system • City would be the direct recipient of the federal operating funds • Decision making for service and operational issues stays within the City control	• University controls the extent of on- and off-campus service provided • University can focus their dedicated transit funds to the needs of the University • Operationally limited to shuttle services and as needed to high density off-campus student housing locations • Minimal compliance to federal and state operational guidelines • University can contract with the City service for students and employees for no fare with ID.
Mutual Benefits	• City and University are both familiar (comfortable?) with this model	
Cons	• By keeping the City and University separate, the potential for additional federal funding will be difficult to achieve • City must identify and contract with a third-party operator or create a new administrative/operating department within the City to directly operate the system • City staff will take on additional administrative and policy responsibility with direct transit operation • City takes on the responsibility to report federal performance data and comply with federal administrative and procurement regulations resulting in increased personnel and administrative costs • Increased management and oversight • New service areas and/or frequency must be locally funded	• No access to shared federal operating and capital funds • Capital costs borne by University • Limits expansion without additional University funding
Mutual Barriers	• Little incentive for collaboration • Duplicative transit services between the City and University continue unless negotiated • Unless specifically negotiated, limits access to services between constituencies	

Table 1: Model 0 Evaluation (cont.)	
	• Fosters the status quo of uncertainty between the City and University transit systems
Notes	• **Supports the Vision by:** o None identified • **Does not support the Vision by:** o Maintains separation of service and limits cross access o Frequencies, hours and locations of service not coordinated to need o Passenger amenities (shelters, benches) not coordinated o Piecemeal planning and implementation of Transportation Demand Management activities o No coordination on service outside the region o Fosters the "Texans don't ride buses" mentality and image of buses o Disregards interest in promoting a coordinated system • **Other Comments** o Typically occurs in larger metropolitan areas where: ▪ the City or a transit authority operated system runs without consideration for the needs of the University and; ▪ the University supplements transit for intra-campus service circulators and shuttles to remote parking and university residence halls. • **Examples of this model in City/University relationships include:** o The University of Rochester / Rochester Regional Transportation Service o The Ohio State University / COTA o Oregon State University / City of Corvallis

Model 1A: City Is the Sole Operator of Community-Wide Transit Service with the University Purchasing Campus Shuttle Services as Needed

City of San Marcos:

In this model, the City serves as the primary provider of transit service within San Marcos and has overall management responsibility for all phases of the transit service either as a City administrative department or through an operational contract with a third-party provider. The administration, planning of routes, hours of operation, and service area are under the City's purview. The system would operate not only fixed route service but also be responsible for the ADA paratransit service and administration. The University would purchase transportation from the City. The City would be the direct recipient of the region's federal operating funds. As the broker of transit service within the community, the system would benefit from being able to count ridership and other performance criteria generated from the University. This would make the system eligible for enhanced STIC federal funding. Conversely, the City takes on compliance responsibilities for federal procurement, administrative, and reporting requirements.

Texas State University:

As the consumer of transit service instead of the provider, the University would "purchase" transit service for its needs, including the intra-campus circulators, shuttle services to remote parking and necessary route service to high-density housing. As a major funder of the community transit system operated under the City control, the University would have influence in planning services that would primarily serve the high-density student housing areas. Typically, universities that work under this scenario include universal pass access for students and staff using their campus ID. This would require earnest discussion on University representation on the governing board.

Features of This Model:

Under this model, the University will be the major consumer of transit within the region provided by the City. As such, they are the major funder of the service. This model requires that the transit needs of the University are a major part of the service and the University directs their funding to meet the needs of students and employees. It eliminates City and University routes duplicating service areas. Concerns over service to high-density housing off campus – routes, frequency, and hours/days of service – would be negotiated between the City, University, and the residential developer / owner.

Table 2: Model 1A Evaluation

	City	University
Pros	• City has complete management over the system administration • Federal funding would be directed at one community system • Decision making for service and operational issues is within the City control • City recipient of additional University ridership statistics for grant funding enhancement	• University can continue to focus their dedicated funds to campus mobility needs • Potentially could minimize operational and administrative overhead – out of the bus operations business • Maintains mobility access for students and staff • Shift costly collection and processing of performance statistics needed for additional federal funding to the City
Mutual Benefits	• Opportunities for additional federal funding exist • More incentive for collaboration • Relationship and trust building between the City and University • Potential to eliminate duplication of routes to the same service areas	
Cons	• May cause conflicts for allocation of limited resources between needs of University in competition with community • May result in the City having to increase funding to meet the share commitment for new federal funds •	• Reduction in control over transit service decisions • Special event / special student need transit services are potentially limited • Ability to respond immediately to an unforeseen transit demand greatly reduced •

Table 2: Model 1A Evaluation (cont.)		
Cons	• Community expectations for service may exceed what the City can afford to provide • Increased management and oversight • Additional costs associated with federal issues / compliance	• Decision making for non-campus service needs outside the University control • Reduced influence in service decisions Does not insure that non-campus service benefits the University • Representation on decision making board negotiated
Mutual Barriers	• Concern the City operator will serve the University's constituents as well as the current system does	
Notes	• **Supports the Vision by:** ○ Creates seamless transit system within the community ○ University students and staff have access to City system ○ Viewed as a "community" system ○ Increased potential for new service areas, frequency, and hours of operation ○ Coordinated passenger amenities and infrastructure improvements ○ Promotes coordinated planning of route services ○ System becomes the sole "mobility" authority within the area and can plan for other "TDM" services • **Does not support the Vision by:** ○ While has the potential to generate additional federal operating assistance, it does not guarantee the overall increases in service • **Other Comments** ○ Very common approach to transit relationship between a community and university • **Examples of this model in City/University relationships include:** ○ Texas Tech University / Citibus ○ University of Wisconsin / Metro Transit ○ Colorado State University / Transfort ○ West Virginia University / Mountain Line Transit	

Model 1B: University Is the Sole Operator of a Community-Wide Transit Service with the City Purchasing Community Service as Needed

City of San Marcos:

Completely the opposite of Model 1A, in this approach the City is the purchaser of transit service that is administered by the University. The City assigns its control of federal operating funds and any local matching share to the University. Collaborative opportunities are at the administration of the University. The City relies on coordination between the University and City to ensure that transit needs are provided to the citizens. Would require earnest discussion concerning City representation on the governing board.

Texas State University:

In this model, the University would be the direct recipient of the federal operating funds and thereby takes on compliance responsibilities for federal procurement and administrative requirements, provision of ADA paratransit administration and service, and new administrative responsibilities of planning routes in the community with associated decisions regarding service area, frequency, and days and hours of service. With the federal funds, the University services become open to the public and necessitate collecting fares and selling passes. With combined ridership statistics, the system would have the ability to access enhanced federal operating funds.

Features of This Model:

This model relies on the University being the provider and administrator of the transit service to the community. This model works best in instances where – 1) the city administration has no interest in transit within the community and abdicates their interest to the university, or; 2) where there exists a shared goodwill and trust between the city and university administrations so the city is comfortable with the university providing a level of transit service that meets the need of the citizens of the community.

Table 3: Model 1B Evaluation

	City	University
Pros	• Potentially could minimize operational and administrative overhead – out of the bus operations business • Maintains mobility access for community • Shift costly collection and processing of performance statistics needed for additional federal funding to the University	• University has complete control over the transit administration and management • University transit has access to additional federal and local funds for operation and capital purchases • Decision making for service and operation are within the University control • Students, faculty, and staff have universal access to the system • Insures the priority for University mobility needs • Retains the ability to respond to new transit demand
Mutual Benefits	• Minimizes duplication of services • Increases the need for cooperation and collaboration • Relationship and trust building between the City and University • Provides potential for more federal operating and capital funds	
Cons	• Decision making for service and operational issues is outside the City direct control • Loss of influence in service decisions • Does not insure that community transit needs are being fully met	• With acceptance of federal money, special event / special student need transit services may be restricted • Could be viewed by the San Marcos public as a "University" system even though open to the public

Table 3: Model 1B Evaluation (cont.)		
Cons	• Removes influence from community mobility planning and operation • System becomes seen as a "University" transit system • Community expectations for service are lowered • Representation on decision making board negotiated Services to youth, elderly and disabled may get lost in the shuffle of a University operated system	• University staff will take on additional administrative and policy responsibility with direct transit operation • Additional services outside the core of University business • May cause conflicts for allocation of limited resources between needs of University and community • Adds responsibility to be pro-active to public and disability transit need • Additional costs associated with federal issues / compliance • University would need to purchase fare collection equipment and develop security procedures and staffing
Mutual Barriers	• Concern the University operator will serve the City's constituents as well as the current system does	
Notes	• **Supports the Vision by:** ○ Creates seamless transit operation within the community ○ University students and staff have access to University system ○ Increased potential for new service areas, frequency, and hours of operation ○ Coordinated passenger amenities and infrastructure improvements ○ Promotes coordinated planning of route services ○ System becomes the sole "mobility" authority within the area and can plan for other "TDM" services • **Does not support the Vision by:** ○ May be viewed as a "University" system ○ University focus may not serve interest of the community • **Other Notes** ○ Very uncommon approach to transit relationship between a community and university ○ Transit is not typically a core business or service of a university • **Examples of University operated public transit systems include:** ○ Oklahoma State University / City of Stillwater ○ University of Arkansas / City of Fayetteville ○ University of Oklahoma / City of Norman	

Model 2: University and City Maintain Separate Services But Share Federal Operating and Capital Funding Either as Direct Recipient or in a Direct Recipient / Sub-Recipient Relationship Role

General Service:

In this model, the City of San Marcos would continue to administer The Bus while Texas State University would maintain operating control over the current campus bus service. Through a controlling agreement, both the City and University would agree through a Memorandum of Understanding to -

- Maintain separate operating systems and service characteristics and needs.
- Provide common access between both systems for all passengers – City passes and fare accepted on University routes and University students and employees fare free on City routes.
- The City and University combine route performance statistics to achieve greater federal funding opportunities through the STIC funds and share these gains to the mobility benefit of both parties.
- Share operations and maintenance contractors, marketing, and passenger amenities.
- Service planning, funding, and operational decisions addressed in the MOU and made jointly.

Federal operating assistance could either be shared between the City and University as co-direct recipients for both current and new, or the City, as the primary direct recipient, could focus federal funds on routes that jointly benefit the needs of both the community and campus. In this case, the University could maintain their independence from federal funding and thereby provide the University with greater flexibility for bus service to special events and programs.

City of San Marcos:

The City would maintain their existing authority over The Bus system that serves the community. Paratransit services and administration would continue with the City operation. The level of transit service would be proportionate to the funding commitment the City makes to the service.

Texas State University:

Through this coordinated system, the University would continue to operate the current transit service to meet the needs of their constituents and the University would maintain its authority and control over the current services. However, as either a co-direct recipient or sub-recipient of federal operating and capital funding, the system would need to be open to the public and comply with FTA rules and regulations.

Features of This Model:

The shared manner of this model requires a high level of coordination between both parties. It has the potential to move towards the robust and synchronized community and campus

service included in the stakeholder vision. To make this model work to its greatest potential, both parties must go into planning and implementation with a united approach on the possibility it presents and the benefits that can be achieved. A collaborative effort between both parties would create a coordinated route structure and shared opportunities for marketing, passenger amenities, operations, and maintenance. With the combined performance statistics between the City and University systems, additional incentive operating grants would be available to provide supplemental operating revenues.

Table 4: Model 2 Evaluation

	City	University
Pros	• Maintains control over the management and services to the citizens • Joint operating and maintenance with the University may create additional savings through economies of scale • Maintains a Community transit identity that is welcoming to local citizens • Promotes heightened coordination with the University • City has control over services to elderly and disabled constituencies	• Maintains control over the management and services to the University • Joint operating and maintenance with the City may create additional savings through economies of scale • Promotes heightened coordination with the City • Maintains a University transit identity • Maintains special event / special student service responsiveness
Mutual Benefits	• Provides opportunities for shared services and facilities • Provides potential for new federal operating and capital funds • New savings opportunities are created by elimination of duplicative services	
Cons	• Does not create a consolidated system with one identity	• University will need to accommodate fare collection and security • Imposes new federal and state administrative and operational requirements • Does not create a consolidated system with one identity
Mutual Barriers	• Requires concentrated and honest negotiation regarding shared responsibilities and governance • Has the potential for creating a sense of independence with overall vision focused on the individuals that participate in the decision-making process	
Notes	• **Supports the Vision by:** ○ Moving towards a seamless transit system within the community ○ University students and staff have access to City system and citizens to University system ○ Increased potential for new service areas, frequency, and hours of operation ○ Promotes coordinated planning of route services and passenger amenities and infrastructure improvements	

Table 4: Model 2 Evaluation (cont.)	
Notes	• **Does not support the Vision by:** o Beyond the mutually agreed upon shared operations and funding, direction of planning and vision for the transit system is narrow • **Other Comments** o Requires mutual trust and cooperation between the City and University o Promotes coordinated marketing and shared route service responsibility o Provides a "success story" from which other collaborative programming can occur • **Examples of this model in City/University relationships include:** o University of Kansas / City of Lawrence

Model 3: Mutually Created Public Transit Authority as Direct Recipient of Federal Funding and Transit Operation

General Service:

In this model, the City and University would jointly agree to the creation of a public transit authority or district to operate a unified transit system for the City of San Marcos and the University. The funding of this system would be through shared sources of both entities and would maximize the fullest extent of federal monies available through the unified system. All planning, operation, marketing, maintenance and administration would be conducted by the Authority staff. Fixed route and ADA paratransit service would be either directly operated by the Authority staff or contracted to a third-party transit operator. The Authority could serve as a bridge that supports service interests of both the City and University. Representation on the governing Board that maintains policy and fiscal responsibility would be negotiated. Service goals for both the City and University would be commonly addressed and the Authority Board and staff would have the potential to address other mobility concerns and needs of the City, University, and region.

City of San Marcos:

The City would yield their interests in the community transit system to their representatives on the Authority Board and the University Board membership and Authority staff. All transit functions and would be determined by the staff and Board membership.

Texas State University:

The University would yield their interests in the community transit system to their representatives on the Authority Board and the City Board membership and Authority staff. All transit functions and would be determined by the staff and Board membership.

Features of This Model:

The creation of a transit authority provides the opportunity to combine the interests of both the City and University through a shared proportional governance. The staff would maintain focus on the planning of transit services with a common transportation interest.

Table 5: Model 3 Evaluation		
	City	**University**
Pros	• Enters into a shared governance that focuses on common transportation interests of both the City and University • Seen as a seamless transit system to the community • Optimizes operation with one operator for both City and University needs • Requires heightened coordination with the Authority • Federal and state reporting will be the responsibility of the Authority	• Enters into a shared governance that focuses on common transportation interests of both the City and University • Seen as a seamless transit system to the University • Optimizes operation with one operator for both City and University needs • Requires heightened coordination with the Authority • Federal and state reporting will be the responsibility of the Authority
Mutual Benefits	• Creates community transit operating system • Provides opportunities for shared services and facilities • Bridges the opportunities for City and University collaboration • Maximizes potential for additional federal operating and capital funds • New savings opportunities are created through one transit operation • Virtually eliminates duplication of current transit services • Can be nimble to the needs of either the City or University	
Cons	• Sole control of transit future placed in a representative board • Service needs of the City weighed independently with the overall needs of the community • Startup funding may be needed prior to operation	• Sole control of transit future placed in a representative board • Service needs of the University weighed independently with the overall needs of the community • Startup funding may be needed prior to operation
Mutual Barriers	• Governance representation is based on financial stake in operation • Has the potential for creating a policy independence outside the direction or desires of either the City or University	
Notes	• **Supports the Vision by:** ○ Creates seamless transit system within the community ○ University students and staff have access to City system ○ Increased potential for increases in service areas, frequency, and hours of operation ○ Common direction under single leadership ○ Coordinated passenger amenities and infrastructure improvements ○ Promotes coordinated planning of route services ○ Has the potential to plan regionally as well as locally ○ Becomes the mobility Authority with program coordination beyond transit to other modes ○ Consolidates funding and makes it more efficient ○ Consolidated marketing and communication	

Table 5: Model 3 Evaluation (cont.)	
Notes	• **Does not support the Vision by:** o Beyond the mutually agreed to shared operations and funding, direction of planning and vision for the transit system is independent of the City and University • **Other Comments:** o Has both of the same pros and cons for each entity o Requires mutual trust and cooperation between the City and University • **Operational examples include:** o Iowa State University / City of Ames

F. Summary and Recommendations

From the study, KA Associates found that The Bus, the San Marcos transit system operated by CARTS, and the Bobcat Shuttle, operated by Texas State University, provide an important service to their passengers. However, while the service may be providing value to current users, opportunities definitely exist that could provide even greater transit performance and benefit for the City and University.

The listening sessions conducted by KA Associates provided the vision of what a robust transit system in the San Marcos / Texas State community could be, including the system being "cool", a higher frequency of bus service, extended hours of operation, all resulting in a transit operation that competes for "choice" riders in San Marcos and adds to a variety of other mobility options.

The participants clearly identified funding as a serious barrier to achieving their vision. Based on other coordination efforts of the past between the City and University, the "political will" necessary to consolidate the two systems was also seen as a major obstacle. But with difficulties come opportunities. The fact that the City and University are jointly studying this question of coordination again is an opportunity to create a new chapter in the City / University relationship.

In order to enter into a coordinated relationship, it is essential to understand the operating and administrative issues associated with shared services. Presented within the study is a breakdown of the costs and responsibilities direct transit operation and receipt of federal transit funds will have on both City and University service and funding. There will be additional costs by accepting the direct recipient role. However, a coordinated transit system has the opportunity to provide significant savings by elimination of duplicative costs and services and, through combined performance data of both the City and University, a potential to double the federal operating funds to the area through the STIC program. STIC fund access is based on previous year performance. In order to access for the region these new STIC funds as quickly possible, it is recommended that the City and University work jointly on consolidated performance metrics that satisfy the timing of these funds.

From this analysis, KA Associates identified a variety of operating models that support the vision. The models include a "no action" model that maintains the current operating service and structure up to one that calls for a combined "transit authority" created for the mutual benefit of both the City and University. These models can serve as the basis for discussion regarding a final coordinated transit operation that will be part of Phase II of the study.

In four of the five operating models, the City would serve as the direct recipient of the FTA's Section 5307 Small Urban transit funds. By accepting this direct recipient designation, the City would create more governing control over the operation of the system and potentially protect the system from potential consolidation into larger transit systems as the result of

the 2020 census. The report supports the City as the direct recipient of these funds moving forward immediately.

The operating agreement with CARTS expires on September 1st. Concurrent with accepting the role as direct recipient, the City should as well continue the operating relationship with the current provider. It is during the time of the extended service agreement that the second phase of this study can be completed with a final report addressing the best approach to a coordinated transit system in San Marcos and the operating, governance, and funding options that will work best for the community and University.

Attachment A

Summary of Stakeholder Input Meetings
Texas State University, June 11, 2018
and City of San Marcos, Texas, June 12, 2018

KA Associates facilitated four meetings on June 11 and 12, 2018 to discuss a vision for transportation in San Marcos, Texas. Groups discussing the vision included students, faculty and staff at Texas State University, and City Council members, City staff and community stakeholders for the City of San Marcos. A detailed listing of all the comments and a list of the meeting participants for each meeting is attached. Following is a summary of the discussions.

Overall Vision for Transportation at Texas State University and San Marcos, Texas

Vision, Qualities of Service:

- "C.A.R.E:"
    - Convenient
    - Accessible
    - Reliable
    - Easy
- Image is cool
- First choice or main choice for getting around San Marcos; attracts choice riders
- Well used by entire community. Serves Texas State student, faculty and staff and San Marcos community members including youth for after school activities, ADA, and elderly passengers
- Supports tourism and economic development efforts, including employment and special events
- Plenty of room for all passengers, seating capacity meets demand
- Vehicles are accessible for all

Vision, Service Areas:

- One service for City and University; City and campus residents can ride each other's buses. There could be separate service for specific destinations, but passes / fares work across systems and the systems are integrated
- There is connectivity within city and to other regional cities (like Megabus)
- Bus covers all areas where there are riders and population centers. Geographic coverage is provided (by some mode) for all stakeholders
- As new locations are developed, service is adapted to cover (e.g. Star Park)
- Students can get to city areas, there is seamless transition. Target/Walmart (shopping) available by bus regularly, not just weekends
- Remote parking served by quick bullet shuttles

Vision, Service Frequency and Timing:

- Service is frequent, efficient and reliable
- There is coordination between travel modes and bus schedules
- There is service during breaks
- Service like a taxi or an Uber to drop off early and late closer to home
- Ten-minute service during the day and 15-20-minute frequency at night

- Routes are efficient with minimal travel times
- Service hours match the libraries and exam schedules

Vision, Amenities and Technology:

- There are benches, shelters, safety lights callboxes at stops
- Next bus arrival information at stops, real time bus information is available to passengers
- Real time parking location is available
- There are bike racks on buses
- There is good traffic infrastructure (e.g. ADA pickups not blocking traffic)
- First Mile - Last Mile coverage
- There are mobility hubs with walkable / bike-able infrastructure at bus stops and Transportation Demand Management
- University ID covers fare collection on The Bus

Barriers to Achieving the Vision:

- Money/Funding
- Culture and Image: "Texans don't ride buses" (or bicycle, or walk); stigma that transit is "only for poor people who can't afford a car"
- Lack of political will at local, state and federal level
- Lack of coordination between City and University systems; town/gown conflicts
- Service doesn't cover all geographic areas
- New developments on outskirts of San Marcos desire transit but they are not offering to fund it
- Service seen as unreliable as passengers are skipped at heavy ridership times due to buses being full
- Lack of existing infrastructure (and the cost to upgrade) including:
    - street systems that don't support increased transit vehicle frequency along with regular vehicular traffic and bike lanes,
    - lack of shelters and benches, call phones, safety lighting
    - lack of walkable, ADA infrastructure at bus stops and beyond
- University service changes during breaks and can't be relied on by year-round riders
- Communication about existing service is not getting information to passengers (e.g. mis-information heard at meetings regarding bus locator app, ability to ride Sam Marcos' The Bus by Texas State community, bike racks on buses, etc.)

Supports to Achieving the Vision

- University and City have common interest in solving transportation problems for the whole community
- Bus drivers are excellent, helpful and make the service enjoyable
- App gives real time information about bus location
- Studies available that show foot traffic patterns, travel patterns and retail frequency
- Employers are motivated to get employees to work reliably
- Population growth supports more service; planning occurring as growth continues; there are areas of population density; future modeling of city growth is dependent on transit alternatives
- Rebranding is good, buses look cool

- Community is progressive and would support transit if efficient. There's creativity and research knowledge in San Marcos and at Texas State University
- Using bus saves money (parking and gas money not needed), and can study on the bus

Meeting Notes

Stakeholder Input Meetings
Texas State University
Student Group
Noon, June 11, 2018
Comal Hall Conference Room

Vision

1. Bus covers all areas of riders, population centers
2. Make it to class on time
3. Plenty of space for everyone
4. Nighttime service every 15-20 minutes
5. Service ours match the library schedule
6. Exam hours, need to get to campus early/ service schedule takes into account
7. Smaller vehicles with faster pickups (passenger loading)
8. Service like a taxi or an Uber to drop off early and late closer to home
9. Call box by late night bus stops for safety
10. Accessibility vehicles regardless of weather
11. Students can get to city areas, seamless transition
12. Push notifications for bus arrivals
13. App with bus location to schedule arrivals and departures
14. Push notifications
15. Flexible bus configuration for peak riders (seats that fold up for more standing space)
16. Next bus arrival information at stops
17. No fare for city transit
18. Target/Walmart (shopping) availability by bus regularly not just weekends
19. Service during breaks
20. Service to Posie Road facility

Barriers

1. Ridership is heavy and passengers skipped 8:45/9:00 AM
2. Funding
3. More staff
4. Inflexibility of contract for more (or adjustments to) service
5. Weather / flooding

Supports/ Things Liked About Current Service

1. Enough service to get me to classes
2. Save money, don't need parking or gas money
3. Saves time, can study on the bus
4. Convenient campus loop

Texas State Students (con't)

5. Drivers are so nice, they go out of their way to make your day good, they are interactive and friendly
6. Advertising on the bus is there to help me (primarily campus related)
7. App and navigation showing where the bus is located is very helpful
8. Can still use shuttle even if an off semester/not enrolled
9. Benches and shaded areas at stops

Participants

Claudia Carmona
Allyson Schlandt
Claudia Gasponi
Pablo Oliveras
Alisha Casteneda
Abiel Sifuentes Jr.
Vanessa Batz
Jobelle Mariano

Observed by

Steve Herrera, Texas State University
Stephanie Daniels, Texas State University
Margarita Pitti, Texas State University
Pete Binion, City of San Marcos

Meeting Conducted by

Hugh Kierig, KA Associates
Judith Kierig, KA Associates

Stakeholder Input Meetings
Texas State University
Staff and Faculty Group
1:00PM, June 11, 2018
Comal Hall Conference Room

Vision

1. Geographic coverage provided (by some mode) for all stakeholders
2. Various campus locations (e.g. new campus reading room, e.g. Star Park/University Archives) – service adjusted as new locations needed
3. Encourage walkable areas (protection from heat, provide shade) and bikeable areas connecting with bus stops
4. Computer matching of riders and cars (like Uber)
5. Strong connections between various campus modes (e.g. start of trip to end of trip/like in NY where you walk to subway, end of route.) Connections are walkable, bus-able between campus and remote parking, campus and downtown.
6. There are benches, shelters, safety lights at stops
7. Frequency is approximately 10 minutes. There may be difference between wait times for city and campus
8. Ideally one service for City and University
9. City and campus residents can ride each other's buses. There can be separate service for each the city and campus especially for specific destinations
10. Coordination between travel modes and bus schedules
11. Last mile amenities e.g. bike share areas, sidewalks, lighting
12. Good infrastructure (e.g. ADA pickups not blocking traffic)
13. Bike racks on the bus
14. Knowledge of where parking is available in real time, where it's located, socialization to be flexible
15. Fares and passes work across systems
16. Energy efficient, non-polluting electric vehicles and solar power generation at parking structures
17. Reliable schedule through breaks and year round

Supports to Achieving Vision

1. Creativity and knowledge in departments on campus
2. Bus pass, fare on interurban
3. Bus drivers – excellent transit staff
4. Sustainability curriculum could promote research, beta testing, grants
5. Reliable – easy to know schedules, riders can just show up
6. Real time bus information is available
7. Outreach to new students at orientations, Paws Preview
8. Bus stops are visible

Texas State Staff & Faculty (con't)

Barriers to Achieving Vision

1. Money for infrastructure, technology, service levels
2. Culture "Texans don't ride buses, walk or bike"
3. City and University don't talk – service is not coordinated, need to think of whole population, now double service in some areas and no service in others
4. No shelters, lighting, sidewalks – they are either lacking or need improvement
5. Political will (lack of) including state, federal and local
6. Constant turnover of student population
7. Road conditions / construction / coordination

General Comments About Service from Faculty/Staff Group:

1. Need more information given out about how to access the app with the bus locator
2. City transit should cater more to student population, low frequency
3. Transit provider is willing to cooperate and is helpful
4. Identify best practices and copy them
5. Tailor services to current population levels

Participants

Peter Siegenthaler, Faculty
Rebecca Bell-Metereau, Faculty
Stephanie Daniels, Staff
Margarita Pitti, Staff

Observed by

Steve Herrera, Texas State University
Pete Binion, City of San Marcos

Meeting Conducted by

Hugh Kierig, KA Associates
Judith Kierig, KA Associates

Stakeholder Input Meetings
City Council "Lunch and Learn"
Noon, June 12, 2018
City Hall, City of San Marcos

Vision for Transit in San Marcos

1. Well used by community
2. Extended hours -- cover work, shopping, medical, school, e.g. 7am – Midnight M-F, Until 11pm Saturday and Sunday
3. Image is seen as transportation for all people. Choice riders. Image is cool
4. Youth are active users of the system
5. Service going into neighborhoods
6. Accessible for after school programs
7. Convenient – Accessible – Reliable - Easy **"C.A.R.E"**
8. Connectivity -- travel to major cities
9. People can choose not to own a car
10. "First Mile / Last Mile" covered
11. Mutual benefit and respect for all partners' Vision
12. Senior mobility without car dependence
13. Texas State students are served for employment
14. Bullet runs from commuter parking areas to campus
15. Buses run on time
16. Student parking behavior is improved because transportation is so reliable
17. Seating capacity of buses meets demand
18. There are special event shuttles e.g. Sights and Sounds of Christmas
19. Tourism and economic development friendly. Supported by transit. Enhances tourism, e.g. convention spouses
20. Mill Street / housing density / remote parking areas served
21. Downtown employees served by transit
22. Frequency is sufficient for demand / desires
23. There is route efficiency, minimal travel times
24. Transit Demand Management
25. Integrated system (transfers)
26. Mobility hubs with connections - electric cabs, bike share
27. Pleasant amenities
28. Highest technology
29. Megabus hub
30. Best provider
31. Communication between entities about service
32. Becomes a primary choice for transportation. First choice OR main choice
33. Count on getting where you need to go in a timely manner
34. Improves the quality of life

City Of San Marcos / City Council "Lunch and Learn" (con't)

Barriers to Achieving Vision

1. Money
2. Money
3. Collaboration – lack of cooperation
4. Lack of coordination
5. Lack of access to routes / frequency
6. There is not a feeling of safety while riding or waiting
7. Stigma – it's for poor people
8. Lack of cultural shift / education about transit
9. Inconvenient
10. Riding with college students (e.g. language)
11. Incompatible value systems with youth / elderly
12. Use of apps not part of older adults' skills
13. Marketing strategies
14. Cultural change to work with the schedule
15. Traffic and road size restrict the possibility of frequency
16. Lack of flexibility with federal funds
17. 2020 census

Support Achieving the Vision

1. Staff and City Council support alternative mobilities
2. City staff highly educated and knowledgeable about transit
3. CARTS – improving services, marketing
4. Future modeling of City growth is dependent on transportation alternatives - sidewalks, ADA
5. There is existing demand and there are riders
6. There is untapped demand
7. Community is progressive and supports multi-modal transportation and would use if efficient
8. City and University have common interests and want to solve [transportation] for the whole community
9. New buses with Wifi are sharp looking, cool
10. Rebranding is good
11. Hotels, outlet malls, Amazon - employment centers – want to participate in transit solutions
12. TXDOT and FTA money
13. Legislators
14. The Master Plan is going to be revisited in one year

Item Placed in the "Parking Lot" for Later Discussion

Image of transit

a. Only if no other means of transportation

City Of San Marcos / City Council "Lunch and Learn" (con't)

b. Relative size of community
c. Just not on regular resident's radar as a first choice for transportation
d. Enhancing people's income and employment possibilities

Participants

Jane Hughson, San Marcos City Council
Ed Mihalkanin, San Marcos City Council
Saul Gonzalez, San Marcos City Council
Kristy Stark, City of San Marcos
Stephanie Reyes, City of San Marcos
Collette Jamison, City of San Marcos
Lisa Prewitt, San Marcos City Council
Melissa Derrick, San Marcos City Council
Bert Lumbreras, San Marcos City Manager
Steve Parker, Assistant City Manager

Observed by:

Rodney Cobb, City of San Marcos
Oscar Hairell, City of San Marcos
Pete Binion, City of San Marcos

Meeting conducted by:

Hugh Kierig, KA Associates
Judith Kierig, KA Associates

Stakeholder Input Meetings
San Marcos Community Stakeholders
5:30 – 7:00 PM, June 12, 2018
Activity Center, City of San Marcos

Vision for Transit in San Marcos

1. Easily accessible (safely)
2. Stops are comfortable -- rain, sun protection
3. Residents have affordable options for getting to work. Transit stops are walkable distances from destinations
4. Hours of operation provide service for employers
5. There is special service for employment areas (as opposed to shopping)
6. Buses go to all neighborhoods
7. Outlet mall has service to support shoppers and employees
8. People want to live here because of easy access to employment
9. Transportation serves San Marcos and ETJ
10. Night areas are lighted
11. There are safe street crossings (plus ADA)
12. There are bike lanes and sidewalks
13. Star Park / Innovation Lab has bike lanes, sidewalks and transportation
14. Look at areas / unique areas to promote mobility
15. Everyone doesn't need their own car
16. Remote parking is served by transportation
17. Train traffic is not obstructing travel
18. Reliability
19. Everyone knows how to ride the bus and what is available
20. There is a tracking system with info about bus arrival
21. There is a bus every 15-minutes
22. ADA and seniors would have access to transportation for special events, especially City and Texas State events
23. There is access to childcare facilities
24. City requires developers to provide planning for transportation e.g. bike, bus, etc.
25. All neighborhoods connect with trails

Barriers to Achieving the Vision

1. Separation of the University and the community (Town/Gown)
2. Money
3. Size of streets – no bike lanes, traffic jams
4. Train traffic
5. Wonder World
6. The number of infrastructure items that have to be constructed
7. Bus is "low class," prefer car. Image – should be a good thing
8. Employer demand is unknown

City Of San Marcos / Community Stakeholders (con't)

9. Hear that service doesn't work for riders
10. People want instant access to transportation (such as the need to pick up a child unexpectedly)

Supports for Achieving the Vision

1. There are studies that have shown where foot traffic is. Also retail frequencies and travel patterns
2. Development of homes along and Hunter might support transportation density
3. Increased density of seniors could support transportation
4. Population in general is growing
5. Seniors and people in wheelchairs would use service
6. If University wants collaboration and partnership that is huge
7. City size is still small and planning is taking place as the growth is starting
8. There is City and Texas support for transportation

Participants

Cara Ryan, Greater San Marcos Partnership (GSMP)
Sandra Martinez, San Marcos Senior Citizen Advisory Board
Madalyn Webber, San Marcos Area Chamber of Commerce
Dr. Marianne Reese, San Marcos Senior Citizen Advisory Board
Sara Lee Meyers, San Marcos Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA)

Observed by:

Rodney Cobb, City of San Marcos
Oscar Hairell, City of San Marcos
Pete Binion, City of San Marcos
Steven Herrera, Texas State University

Meeting Conducted by:

Hugh Kierig, KA Associates
Judith Kierig, KA Associates