



OZARKS TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION

TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN STUDY GROUP

13 August 2009

3:00 p.m.

City Utilities Transit Center Conference Room
1505 N. Boonville, Springfield, Missouri

MEMBERS PRESENT

David Coonrod, Greene County Presiding Commissioner	Frank Miller, MoDOT District 8
Carol Cruise, City Utilities Transit	Kent Morris, Greene County (a)
Howard Fisk, Fisk Limo/OTO	Doug Neidigh, Drury – OCAA
Chris Haller, City Utilities Facilities Management	Lisa Officer, City Utilities Board of Directors
Carmelita Harper, CU Fixed Route Advisory Committee	Ralph Rognstad, Jr., City of Springfield Planning
Ted Higgs, CU Advisory Council	Dan Scott, Citizen
Bob Hosmer, City of Springfield Planning (a)	Bob Stephens, City of Springfield City Council
David Hutchison, City of Springfield Public Works	Dan Watts, SMOG
Scott Kosky, OATS, Inc.	

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Earl Newman, City of Springfield Public Works	Dan Smith, Greene County
Raeanne Presley, Mayor – City of Branson	Greg Williams, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce
Ann Razer, City of Springfield Planning	

STAFF PRESENT

Tim Conklin
Natasha Longpine
Chris Stueve

OTHERS PRESENT

Diane Gallion, City Utilities Transit
Joe Gorski, City Utilities Facilities Management

AGENDA ITEM 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made of everyone in attendance.

Tim Conklin provided an overview of the Ozarks Transportation Organization.



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AGENDA ITEM 2. DISCUSSION OF OTO BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIRMAN LETTER AND CITY OF SPRINGFIELD/CITY UTILITIES LETTER

Lisa Officer reviewed the background of the study for a new transfer station and the question of need for that new transfer station, referring to the letter from the City of Springfield and City Utilities which requested the Ozarks Transportation Organization's assistance and the subsequent letter from Chairman of the OTO, Springfield Mayor Jim O'Neal, which created this study group.

AGENDA ITEM 3. BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF THE CURRENT SYSTEM

Carol Cruise reviewed the history of public transportation in the City of Springfield, beginning in 1881 and culminating with Transit's presence as part of City Utilities. Ms. Cruise also discussed the financial aspects of Transit at CU, as well as the background which led to the current Transfer Station and its status today. The CU transit system had about \$8 million in expenses last year. Of that, 11 percent was paid for by passengers, or about \$900,000. Advertising brought in about \$110,000. Federal and State monies accounted for about \$2.9 million and the CU rate paying customers paid for the balance, about \$4.2 million.

AGENDA ITEM 4. DISCUSSION OF PAST STUDIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Carol Cruise reviewed two previous studies conducted for City Utilities Transit. The Corradino Group Study, *Transit Service Study*, was intended to help CU prepare for the potential loss of federal funding. CU did follow many of the recommendations in this study, but not all of them. The Urbitran Study, *Springfield Planning and Organizational Management Services Study*, reviewed the various transit routes. Many suggestions offered minor changes, and several of these were incorporated by City Utilities.

Natasha Longpine provided an overview of the OTO *Transit Development Plan* and discussed the two recommendations which impacted the Transfer Station discussion.

AGENDA ITEM 5. OTO SURVEY OF COMPARABLE CITIES

Natasha Longpine discussed the OTO Survey of Comparable Cities which gathered input from City of Springfield Benchmark Cities, City Utilities Peer Transit Systems, and several OTO chosen communities. The results showed that all systems had a transfer station, regardless of route type, and all but one had a transfer station in the downtown. The one that didn't, stated that their transfer station was in the central business district. Discussion also focused on the development patterns of the communities. Information regarding population density was provided in the Benchmark Table. It was suggested that Service Area Population be added to that table.

AGENDA ITEM 6. ADDITIONAL RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS TO BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO MAKING A RECOMMENDATION

Chris Haller provided a timeline of the Transfer Station Feasibility Study and the decisions that brought the decision to move forward to this group.



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Lisa Officer then asked the TDP Study Group if there was enough information to make a decision, as one needs to be made by August 20, 2009, so the OTO Board can meet the timeline set forth in the City of Springfield/City Utilities letter.

Discussion ensued about the need for a change from the current station. It was pointed out that the larger bus sizes and possible need for more busses in the future, as well as the statements made in the OTO TDP, indicate that renovation of the existing facility may not be the most appropriate option. A comment was made that there is a need for some sort of transfer station, especially from a safety perspective. The question was also asked if “downtown” needed to remain part of the discussion.

Howard Fisk made the motion that a downtown transfer station is needed, regardless of the type of bus route system in place now or in the future. David Coonrod seconded the motion. Discussion ensued regarding the definition of downtown. A motion was made by Ralph Rognstad, Jr. to remove the word downtown from the previous motion. Dan Scott seconded this motion. Lisa Officer asked for a vote on the amendment to the original motion. Twelve people voted against the amendment and three people voted for it. The amendment to the original motion failed. The vote on the original motion was then called. It passed with fourteen votes and one abstention.

AGENDA ITEM 8. OTHER BUSINESS

As there was time remaining in the meeting, Lisa Officer moved the discussion onto the next two questions that were in the letter from OTO Chairman Mayor O’Neal. The first was “What are the one-time and ongoing costs associated with establishing and operating a complete grid system?”

Carol Cruise provided a spreadsheet to the group that defined the current number of buses and routes on a weekday with the average operating cost per weekday defined as \$17,372. This per weekday cost was determined by using the previous year’s budget and subtracting the indirect costs and depreciation. In comparison to the current system, the spreadsheet outlines the number of routes and buses needed for a grid system with routes every six to eight blocks for both 15 minute and 30 minute service. At 15 minute service, 90 buses would be required at a per weekday cost of \$83,340. For 30 minute service, 45 buses would be required at a per weekday cost of \$41,670. This does not take into account the one time capital expenses that would be required. Those include additional bus turnouts and shelters, a larger maintenance facility, a place to store the 45 or 90 buses, and the cost of those buses. The number of bus drivers needed for a complete grid system would be around 100 to 150. The buses, depending on size, can cost \$360,000 for a 30 foot bus, \$370,000 for a 35 foot bus, and \$375,000 for a 40 foot bus.

This information is consistent with that found in a Boise, ID report that laid out a 15-year plan for moving to a high-density, high-frequency route system. The operating costs in 1994 were a little over \$3 million and were projected to be over \$15 million by 2011. The capital costs to see the project through were stated to be \$47,211,800 for buses, shelters, benches, kiosks, bus stop signs, as well as a maintenance and administrative facility.

By consensus of the group, this information was accepted as an answer to the question. The TDP Study Group felt this was a technical question and did not wish to provide any further input.



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The last of the remaining questions discussed was two parts. “What is the optimal size of the City’s future buses?” Carol Cruise explained the differences in seating capacity between 30 foot, 35 foot, and 40 foot buses. The TDP study group also felt this was a technical question and came to a consensus that City Utilities should build and design for a 40 foot bus, but also that the technical requirements of the system should dictate the size of the buses needed.

The second part of this question was “What fuel should these buses use?” Chris Haller mentioned that diesel technology is improving and City Utilities already has the equipment in place to handle diesel fuel, and currently uses a blend of biodiesel. There is great expense associated with a compressed natural gas fueling station, including the need for a high pressure pipe for fuel delivery and safety retrofits to the building. Doug Neidigh mentioned that diesel may not be as clean as CNG, depending on the pollutant measured, but agreed that there is an infrastructure issue regarding alternative fuels. Mr. Neidigh felt that this was a question that could not be answered at this moment in time, but that it should be left on the table. Frank Miller stated that a new transportation bill and a possible climate change bill might change how this question is answered in the future. The TDP Study Group came to a consensus that this question should be considered at a future date.

AGENDA ITEM 7. NEXT MEETING DATE(S)

The fourth question that the TDP Study Group was tasked to answer will be addressed at a later date. Additional members will be added from the outlying areas. David Coonrod mentioned that perhaps the Greene County Mayors Association should be contacted. The contact for that group is Judy Stainback, the Mayor of Battlefield.

AGENDA ITEM 9. ADJOURN

Howard Fisk made a motion to adjourn and Ralph Rognstad seconded. The motion passed.