City of San Marcos

Work Session - Final
City Council

Tuesday, June 2, 2020 3:00 PM  Virtual Meeting

Due to COVID-19, this will be a virtual meeting. To view the meeting please go to www.sanmarcostx.gov/videos or watch on Grande channel 16 or Spectrum channel 10.

I. Call To Order

II. Roll Call

PRESENTATIONS

1. Receive a transit update presentation on the Five Year Transit Strategic Plan. Hold Council discussion regarding key Strategic Plan elements and provide direction to staff.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

2. Executive Session in accordance with the following Government Code Sections:
   A. §Sec.551.071 of the Texas Government Code: Consultation with attorney - to receive advice of legal counsel regarding state law preemption of city ordinances regulating the sale or use of single-use packages and containers.
   B. §Sec.551.071 of the Texas Government Code: Consultation with attorney - to receive advice of legal counsel regarding pending litigation, to wit: The Mayan at San Marcos River, LLC and City of Martindale v. City of San Marcos, Docket No. 04-19-00018-CV in the 4th Court of Appeals of Texas

III. Adjournment.

POSTED ON THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2020 @ 12:30PM

TAMMY K. COOK, INTERIM CITY CLERK

Notice of Assistance at the Public Meetings

The City of San Marcos does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to its services, programs, or activities. Individuals who require auxiliary aids and services for this meeting should contact the City of San Marcos ADA Coordinator at 512-393-8000 (voice) or call Texas Relay Service (TRS) by dialing 7-1-1. Requests can also be faxed to 855-461-6674 or sent by e-mail to ADArequest@sanmarcostx.gov
AGENDA CAPTION:
Receive a transit update presentation on the Five Year Transit Strategic Plan. Hold Council discussion regarding key Strategic Plan elements and provide direction to staff.
Meeting date: June 2, 2020

Department: General Services

Amount & Source of Funding
Funds Required: NA
Account Number: NA
Funds Available: NA
Account Name: NA

Fiscal Note:
Prior Council Action: Approval of the Five Year Strategic Plan contract to Nelson-Nygaard in the not to exceed amount of $180,000

City Council Strategic Initiative: [Please select from the dropdown menu below]
Multi Modal Transportation
Choose an item.

Comprehensive Plan Element(s): [Please select the Plan element(s) and Goal # from dropdown menu below]
☐ Economic Development - Choose an item.
☐ Environment & Resource Protection - Choose an item.
☐ Land Use - Choose an item.
☐ Neighborhoods & Housing - Choose an item.
☐ Parks, Public Spaces & Facilities - Choose an item.
☒ Transportation - Multimodal transportation network to improve accessibility and mobility, minimize congestion and reduce pollution
☐ Core Services
Background Information:

- The Five Year Transit Strategic Plan is a multi-agency initiative of the City, Texas State University, and Texas Department of Transportation-Public Transportation Division.
- The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to provide recommendations to coordinate the City’s transit system and Texas State University’s Bobcat Shuttle.
- The Strategic plan staff team and Nelson-Nygaard held a kick-off meeting for the Five Year Transit Strategic Plan on July 30, 2019.
- The first round of public outreach was conducted October 1-2, 2019 which included three public meetings, a stakeholder meeting, and a meeting of Council’s Multimodal Transit Committee.
- The second round of public outreach was conducted January 28-29, 2020 which included three public meetings, a stakeholder meeting, and a meeting of Council’s Multimodal Transit Committee.

Council Committee, Board/Commission Action:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Alternatives:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Recommendation:

Provide direction to staff.
To: The Honorable Mayor and Council  
From: Bert Lumbreras, City Manager  
Date: May 20, 2020  
Re: Transit Plan Update and CARES Act Funding – Multimodal Transportation Strategic Initiative

The following memo is to inform Mayor and Council of the upcoming work session presentation on the Five Year Transit Plan Update and recent developments regarding the $6.4M (million) in CARES Act transit grant funds received by the City.

For several years Council has placed special emphasis on Multimodal Transportation, and one of the key priorities of this Strategic Initiative is a seamless transit system created from the coordination of the City’s transit service and the Texas State University Bobcat Shuttle. To execute that vision, both agencies, in partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation, have been developing a Five Year Transit Plan with the consultant firm Nelson-Nygaard.

**Five Year Transit Plan Update**

After months of study, eight public meetings and two Multimodal Transit Committee meetings, we are pleased to inform you that the Plan’s current proposals for the City’s service, capital and policy recommendations are ready for Council’s consideration.

On June 2, 2020 Council will receive this update presentation on the Transit Plan. The focus will be the Plan’s current recommendations for the City. Staff will request Council direction on key elements that will allow Nelson-Nygaard to finalize the Plan recommendations.

These key elements include:

- Service Expansion Plan
- Downtown Transit Plaza
- Paratransit Policy
- Zero Fare Policy
- Transit Center
- Interlocal Agreement

This exciting next step will be the catalyst for completing the Transit Plan. The Five Year Transit Plan will form a core foundation from which we can continue forward with our University partnership to forge the seamless transit system. The draft Transit Plan will return for Council consideration and adoption in August of 2020.
CARES Act Transit Grant Funds
On April 2, 2020, U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao announced $25 Billion to help the nation’s public transportation systems respond to COVID-19. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) allocated these funds to recipients of urbanized and rural area formula funds. The funding is provided at 100 percent federal share with no local match required. These funds are available for reimbursement of the City’s eligible transit expenses and there is no lapse date for use of the funding. FTA’s normal program requirements of direct recipients do apply to the CARES Act funding.

Following the announcement of funding and the FTA’s allocation of funds, staff began intensive coordination with the FTA and Texas Department of Transportation to ensure the City could apply for these funds under optimal conditions. To maximize the benefits of the funding, the recommended approach is to reimburse the City’s transit operations costs at 100 percent with the CARES Act funds. This will account for lost local revenues and reduce pressure on the general fund.

I am pleased to report that staff has completed the CARES Act grant application for the $6.4M and has programmed the funding to support the City’s transit operations through the end of fiscal year 2021 and beyond. The FTA has streamlined the review processes and placed recipient’s CARES Act applications as the Administration’s top priority.

Additionally, we have coordinated with the FTA and Texas State University to clarify the University’s eligibility to potentially receive some portion of these funds to support their public transit system. Those discussions are ongoing, and we are making every effort to support this community partner with CARES Act funding.

We will keep you informed as developments continue to proceed on this vital resource and as we implement City Council’s Strategic Initiative of Multimodal Transportation.
Project Team

• City of San Marcos
  • Lee Hitchcock, Director of General Services
  • Pete Binion, Transit Manager
  • Amy Cogdill, Transit Specialist

• Texas State University
  • Steven Herrera, Director of Transportation Services
  • Nancy Nusbaum, Associate Vice President for Finance and Support Services Planning

• Nelson\Nygaard
  • James Gamez, Project Manager
  • Hazel Scher, Deputy Project Manager
Purpose

Determine the best approach to coordinating San Marcos Transit and Texas State University Bobcat Shuttle.
Opportunities

• Qualify for additional federal funding
  • Eligible uses: capital, operations, planning, engineering, design, etc.

• Expand transit access for the entire community

• Improve multimodal connectivity, particularly downtown
Opportunities

• Respond to continued population and enrollment growth
Challenges

• Cost and ridership implications of COVID-19
• Infrequent local service
• Coordinating two vastly different systems
### Days & Hours of Service

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Mon-Fri 7am-8pm</th>
<th>Mon-Fri 7am-11pm</th>
<th>Sat 11am-6:30pm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Mon-Fri 7am-8pm</td>
<td>Mon-Fri 7am-11pm</td>
<td>Sat 11am-6:30pm</td>
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### Routes

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### Vehicles

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### Bus Stops

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### Daily Ridership

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<td>17,000</td>
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Community Feedback

• Requests for more frequent and later city service
• Requests for more bus stop shelters
• Support for a downtown hub and elimination of fares
Key Items for Council Consideration

Service expansion plan

Downtown Transit Plaza

Paratransit policy

Zero fare policy

Transit Center

Interlocal agreement with Texas State University
Existing City Routes
Existing City Routes

- Low ridership along Bishop
- No service to The Village
- No service to Amazon Fulfillment Center

Only 55% of city stops have 30-minute service

Low ridership in Redwood
Proposed City Routes
Proposed City Routes

- Discontinue service along RR 12
- Discontinue service along Bishop
- Discontinue service to Redwood
Proposed City Routes

- Upgrade Route 5 to 30-minute service
- Extend service to The Village
- Extend service to Amazon Fulfillment Center
- Increase 30-minute service to 85% of city stops
- Increase service to Sunrise Village and Lamar School
- Increase service on Senior Shuttle
Proposed Coordinated City and University Network
Service Plan

• Establish Downtown Transit Plaza (9-12 months)

• Phase 1:
  • Revise city routes
  • Expand Senior Shuttle from 2 to 4 days per week
  • Introduce new coordinated branding and information
  • Eliminate on-board fare collection
Service Plan

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• Phase 1:
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• Phase 2: Add Saturday service on city routes
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- Phase 3: Extend weekday evening span on city routes
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• Phase 4: Increase frequency during morning and evening periods
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• Phase 2: Add Saturday service on city routes

• Phase 3: Extend weekday evening span on city routes

• Phase 4: Increase frequency during morning and evening periods

• Phase 5: Increase frequency on Route 1 to every 15 minutes
City Fixed Route Service Hours

<table>
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<th>Phase</th>
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<td>Phase 5</td>
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San Marcos Station

**Strengths**
- Regional connections
- Passenger amenities
- Operator facilities

**Challenges**
- Proximity to downtown
- One-way streets
- Rail impacts
Proposed Downtown Transit Plaza

Transit Plaza Enhancement Opportunities

- Support bus operations, rider experience, and communications
- Extend beyond transit plaza to nearby sites (mobility hub and parking garage)

Bike and Pedestrian Enhancements

- Provide easy-to-find bike storage on Hutchinson
- Prioritize buses and pedestrians/riders on Edward Gary

Crosswalks & Pavement Treatments

- Highly-visible and attractive pavement treatments to support pedestrian access
- Function as traffic calming tools, wayfinding tools, and placemaking features
300 block of Edward Gary Street
Proposed Downtown Transit Plaza
Paratransit Policy

• Elimination of fares for fixed-route service would also eliminate paratransit fares

• FTA minimum requirements
  • Persons with a disability traveling within ¾ mile of a fixed route

• Current City policy
  • Also includes seniors age 65 and older and entire city limits

• Scenario 1
  • Reduce service area to ¾ mile of fixed routes
  • Cost neutral

• Scenario 2
  • Maintain existing service area policy
  • Requires one extra vehicle and 2,000 additional hours
City Service Hours

- **Fixed Route**
- **Existing Paratransit**
- **Paratransit Scenario 1**
- **Paratransit Scenario 2**

Comparison of hours across different phases:

- **Current**
- **Phase 1**
- **Phase 2**
- **Phase 3**
- **Phase 4**
- **Phase 5**
City Fleet Options

30’ heavy-duty bus

25’ light-duty cutaway
Potential Downtown Transit Center
Funding Opportunities

• CARES Act Funding
  • $3.8M of $6.4M allocated for operating costs through 2021

• Expend awarded FTA 5339 funds ($500K) to purchase 5 new paratransit vehicles

• FTA 5307 Small Transit Intensive Cities Funding ($2.6M for FY 19 and FY 20)
  • Awarded based on combined performance of City and University systems
  • Establish a reasonable and equitable share for both entities
Council Direction

- Service expansion plan
- Downtown Transit Plaza
- Paratransit policy
- Zero fare policy
- Transit Center
- Interlocal agreement with Texas State University
Next Steps

• Finalize interlocal agreement with Texas State University
• Finalize transit plan report
• Present final recommendations to City Council
AGENDA CAPTION:
Executive Session in accordance with the following Government Code Sections:
A. §Sec.551.071 of the Texas Government Code: Consultation with attorney - to receive advice of legal counsel regarding state law preemption of city ordinances regulating the sale or use of single-use packages and containers.
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Meeting date: 6/2/2020

Department: City Clerk’s Office on behalf of the City Council

Amount & Source of Funding
Funds Required: Click or tap here to enter text.
Account Number: Click or tap here to enter text.
Funds Available: Click or tap here to enter text.
Account Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Fiscal Note:

Prior Council Action: Click or tap here to enter text.

City Council Goal: [Please select goal from dropdown menu below]
Choose an item.
Choose an item.
Choose an item.

Comprehensive Plan Element (s): [Please select the Plan element(s) and Goal # from dropdown menu below]
☐ Economic Development - Choose an item.
☐ Environment & Resource Protection - Choose an item.
☐ Land Use - Choose an item.
☐ Neighborhoods & Housing - Choose an item.
File #: ID#20-317, Version: 1

☐ Parks, Public Spaces & Facilities - Choose an item.

☐ Transportation - Choose an item.

☐ Not Applicable

**Master Plan:** [Please select the corresponding Master Plan from the dropdown menu below (if applicable)]
Choose an item.

**Background Information:**
Click or tap here to enter text.

**Council Committee, Board/Commission Action:**
Click or tap here to enter text.

**Alternatives:**
Click or tap here to enter text.

**Recommendation:**
Click or tap here to enter text.