AUSTIN REGIONAL ITS ARCHITECTURE UPDATE WORKSHOP MINUTES

MEETING DATE: March 25, 2014

MEETING TIME: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

MEETING LOCATION: Combined Transportation, Emergency, and Communications Center (CTECC), Austin, TX

ATTENDEES:

- Sabas Avila, City of San Marcos
- Pete Baldwin, Travis County
- Imelda Barret, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
- Rachid Breir, Capital Area Rural Transportation System (CARTS)
- Joey Briggs, Williamson County
- William Brooks, City of Austin
- Jasper Brown, City of Austin
- Vinnie Cherrone, City of Round Rock
- Ed Collins, TxDOT
- Jim Dale, City of Austin
- Dan Dargevics, Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO)
- Alesia Gamboa, TxDOT
- Shane Glasier, City of Round Rock
- David Greear, Travis County
- Rene Guajardo, (CARTS)
- Joe Iannello, Capital Metro
- Orlando Jamandre, TxDOT
- Jianming Ma, TxDOT
- Scott Mount, Williamson County
- Mark Olson, Federal Highway Administration, Texas Division
- Alex Power, TxDOT
- Marisabel Ramthun, TxDOT
- Jane Schroter, Capital Metro
- Paul Schulze, Texas Department of Public Safety
- Scott Swearengin, City of Austin
- Chris Swenson, City of Austin
- Robert Turner, City of Austin
- David Walther, City of Round Rock
- Catherine Wolff, TxDOT
- Chad Wood, City of Round Rock
- Billy Wusterhausen, City of Round Rock
- Ning Zou, City of San Marcos
- Thomas Fowler, Kimley-Horn
- Vivek Deshpande, Kimley-Horn
- Terrance Hill, Kimley-Horn

SUBJECT: Austin Regional ITS Architecture Update – Project Kick-Off Workshop

Introductions

Tom Fowler of Kimley-Horn welcomed everyone and thanked the stakeholders for their participation in the update of the Austin Regional Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Architecture. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves and identified the agency or organization they were representing

Project Overview Presentation

Tom Fowler gave a presentation on the Austin Regional ITS Architecture Update project. The presentation included an overview of ITS, explanation of a regional ITS architecture, and a description of the steps that will be used to update the Austin Regional ITS Architecture.

The purpose of a regional ITS architecture is to provide a vision and framework for the deployment, integration, and operation of ITS. The regional ITS Architecture is also necessary in order to meet the FHWA and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) ITS Architecture conformity requirements, which require that any ITS projects funded with federal transportation funds conform to a regional ITS architecture. Although updating the regional ITS architecture does not guarantee funding for a region, it does allow the region to be eligible for federal funding of ITS projects.

In addition to the Kick-off Workshop, there will be a series of stakeholder interviews conducted in April and May. The purpose of the interviews will be to identify any changes that have occurred since the last update of the Austin Regional ITS Architecture in 2007, identify ITS needs, document any current or planned ITS projects, and develop a list of project needs. Once the interviews have been completed, a Draft Regional ITS Architecture and Deployment Plan Update report will be developed. A second workshop, tentatively scheduled for mid to late May, will allow stakeholders the opportunity to comment on the document before it is finalized.

A list of stakeholder agencies that were invited to participate in the process was also presented. Tom asked the attending stakeholders to identify any missing stakeholders from the list. Tom also encouraged everyone to extend an invitation to anyone else within their own agency that they thought might be interested in participating.

Existing and Planned ITS Projects

Tom led a discussion to identify any new projects that have been deployed or planned in the Region since the last Regional ITS Architecture in 2007. The inventory will assist the project team in preparing a Draft Regional ITS Architecture and Deployment Plan Update for the next workshop. The following is a summary of ITS deployments and projects identified by the stakeholders in attendance at the workshop:

City of Austin

- The City has a goal to operate their communications system as one cohesive and integrate all of their facilities during special events or incidents and possibly divert travelers to other modes of transportation similar to strategies that exist in Dallas;
- Eighty traffic signals will soon have cell phone communications technology (though an app) which would allow cyclists to use their phone as a form of detection so that the signal will provide them with a green indication. Additionally, the City would like to increase the number of bike lanes and expand the technology citywide;
- There is a need to implement an advance traffic management center (TMC) to better manage all traffic signals, signs, closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras, and other field equipment;
- There are plans to create a new traveler information website for commuters;
- The City would like to install new dynamic message signs (DMS) along many of the local and arterial streets;
- There are currently 270 CCTV cameras throughout the city, and there are plan to expand coverage along Lamar Boulevard, Burnett Road, and other major streets;
- Currently, forty travel time sensors have been deployed (200 total have been planned) throughout the city;
- The City would like to add travel times to DMS along arterial streets and possibly along Interstates and other controlled access facility;
- The addition of volume count stations would aid in signal timing plan implementation;
- The City would like to move possibly relocate to CTECC.

City of Round Rock

- The City of Round Rock is completing an automated transportation management system (ATMS) master plan, and has discovered that many field communication devices are not operable. They would like to install communications devices at all city traffic signals;
- There are plans to have a functional TMC within 12 to 18 months and have interconnectivity with cameras, signals, etc. with the cities of Austin, Georgetown, and Cedar Park; however, coordination between other neighboring cities needs to improve. The TMC may have the ability to operate 24 hours a day with the assistance of CTECC.

Capital Metro

- CapMetro has implemented computer aided dispatch and automatic vehicle location (AVL) tracking components;
- A new bus rapid transit (BRT) route has been started, and CapMetro collaborated with the city of Austin for signal priority. The new BRT system is call MetroRapid;

- DMS have been installed for the MetroRapid and MetroRail that display estimated arrivals based on real time data;
- A mobile ticketing application now allows riders to purchase tickets on smartphones and tablets and use the smart devices as a ticket. Vehicles can scan the phones/tablets;
- Next route of MetroRapid is to be launched in the summer of 2014;
- There is a need for a more comprehensive fare collection system across all transit agencies and services;
- There is also a desire to improve paratransit services (MetroAccess) with ITS;
- CapMetro would like to implement positive train control to MetroRail to observe and control train movements to help increase safety;
- Project Connect is an initiative that Cap Metro and the City of Austin would like to initiate to provide better regional transportation solutions.

CARTS

- CARTS has deployed intercity bus services (using coach buses) to enable outlying communities to gain access to the city of Austin;
- There is a hope to add service to the city of Luling through San Marcos;
- CARTS also serves Fayette County, which is outside of the Austin Regional Architecture boundaries;
- CARTS coordinates with other transit agencies including Greyhound and Amtrak;
- CARTS was one of the first transit agencies to use the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) radio system;
- There is interest in sharing weather related information between core agencies instead of relying on the news channels.

City of San Marcos

- The city of San Marcos maintains about 50 traffic signals and they are connected through broadband radio; however, there is no established TMC;
- All City fire trucks have emergency vehicle signal priority;
- City Police cars are expected to have an AVL systems installed;
- San Marcos borders the CTECC and TransGuide boundary, but the City feels that it needs to improve communications with CTECC;
- The City would like access to TxDOT's CCTV cameras on I-35 and give access to the city's CCTV cameras to TxDOT.
- San Marcos is bisected by two major railroads, but there are only have two overpasses.
- The City is in the initial stages of trying to identify when trains are scheduled to pass through and where the trains are located for preemption at crossings. One possibility includes using radar detection and video equipment, located off of Union Pacific's right-of-way, to monitor trains location.

TXDOT

- TxDOT would like to develop a more cohesive system for field devices;
- TxDOT also needs assistance in the repair of field devices;
- Two graphic route information panel (GRIP) signs will be installed along two highways north of Austin to that display route travel information by color.

CTECC

- CTECC has the ability to send out helicopters or other aircraft to capture video during incidents and send the video feeds to various agencies. There is a desire to integrate different agencies with aircraft during Formula 1 and other events or incidents.

ITS Needs

Tom led a discussion on the Region's ITS needs. The following general regional needs were identified:

- There should be an improved way to share data among agencies such as information on bus schedules and roadway detours. Establish a repository where agencies will deposit information and make it available for everyone;
- Functionality sharing would integrate various transit systems so that individuals will not have to purchase separate tickets when transferring;
- The Region should embrace vehicle safety equipment being mandated by NHTSA in the coming years. Although the mandates are geared toward auto manufactures, the Region could benefit from the technology.

Concluding Comments and Next Steps

Tom Fowler thanked everyone for their participation and reiterated that stakeholders will be contacted in the coming weeks to set up an appointment for an interview. Stakeholders were encouraged to contact any of the project team members if they had any questions or if they would like to add additional items to the ITS inventory or needs. Contact information is included below:

TxDOT – Austin District:
Brian Burk
brian.burk@txdot.gov
(512-974-0899

Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.:
Tom Fowler
thomas.fowler@kimley-horn.com
(615) 564-2710

Vivek Deshpande
vivek.deshpande@kimley-horn.com
(512) 418-4536

Terrance Hill
terrance.hill@kimley-horn.com
(615) 564-2869