

**LAS COLINAS APT SYSTEM
EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

**ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS
AND
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**



**Scoping Meeting Summary
Meeting of May 18, 2009**

**Prepared
June 24, 2009**

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INTRODUCTION

The Dallas County Utility and Reclamation District (DCURD) held a Public Scoping Meeting/Open House from 6-8 PM on May 18, 2009, for the Las Colinas Area Personal Transit (APT) System Expansion and Improvement Project. The meeting was held at the Williams Square Conference Room, located at 5221 O'Connor Blvd, East Tower Conference Center, Irving, TX 75039. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the project, describe the Alternatives Analysis (AA) and Environmental Assessment (EA) being carried out to develop future improvements, and to discuss with interested parties and stakeholders, the following:

- The purpose and need for improvements
- The definition of the study area
- Conceptual alternatives
- Other possible alternatives
- Environmental and community impacts

Scoping was carried out in compliance with the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) AA practices, and with the National Environmental Policy Act's (NEPA) requirements for early coordination of the EA with local, state and federal agencies. Notification of this meeting included advertisements in four local newspapers, mailing of individual letters and copies of the Project Initiation Package to 67 local, state and federal agencies and elected officials, billboards placed in all of the residential buildings, direct emails to the management of all residential and office buildings in the Urban Center, and announcement on DCURD's website.

This report is a summary of the Scoping Meeting, summarizing and presenting the comments, questions and answers at the meeting. The entire Scoping Process extends from May 4, 2009 when the meeting was announced, to June 19, 2009, when comments are requested from the public, and from agencies that received letters. Following that date, a Scoping Summary Report will be prepared documenting the newspaper advertisements, the list of agencies and elected officials, this summary of the meeting, and all comments received through June 19, 2009.

There were 52 total attendees at the meeting consisting of 35 public attendees and 17 project team members. The attached sign-in sheets (Appendix A) lists 33 public attendees. In addition, two staff attended from The Greater Irving - Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce.

The first half hour of the scoping meeting was an open house, so attendees could review 11 exhibits placed around the conference room. These exhibits showed plans and graphics of the existing APT System, Conceptual Alternatives, purpose and need, matters addressed in the Environmental Assessment, and how to stay involved throughout the project. Project staff members were available to address questions regarding the project.

Jacky Knox, DCURD General Manager, opened the presentation, acknowledging the presence of many local leaders. He gave an overview of the purpose of the scoping meeting, the background of the Las Colinas APT System Master Plan, development of the Urban Center, the efforts made to carry out development, and the next steps that would lead to selecting a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the APT System expansion and improvement.

Mr. Knox emphasized the importance of participation by all interests, and of completing the travel surveys for ridership forecasting purposes by the residents, and employees of commercial and retail business owners and operators, within the Las Colinas Urban Center.

Mr. Knox then introduced the Project Manager Rod Kelly of Parsons. Mr. Kelly discussed the scoping process, the project's purpose and need, explained the conceptual alternatives being considered, the requirements for the Environmental Assessment, and the project schedule. The Power Point presentation used by Mr. Knox and Mr. Kelly is appended as a separate document to this Meeting Summary.

SUMMARY

Following the presentations, there were several comments, and questions were asked concerning many facets of the APT Expansion and Improvement Project. All questions were addressed by Mr. Knox and Mr. Kelly. Those persons who spoke at the meeting were in favor of the project. The questions and comments addressed the following matters:

- The supplier for the future APT System vehicles and technology
- Funding of improvements
- Future operating costs
- Construction costs
- APT interface with the DART Orange Line
- Inclusion of the Urban Center tunnels in the study
- DART LRT and APT ridership after 2014 following lifting of all aviation Wright Amendment restrictions from Love Field
- Extension to the Convention Center
- Extension beyond the Convention Center to the DART Orange Line North Las Colinas LRT Station
- Station at the junction of the three guideways at the Caltex Building
- Intermodal connection of the APT at the BNSF and Orange Line
- APT extension with a station above the Las Colinas Urban Center LRT station and have the ability to continue across Lake Carolyn Parkway
- Better connections to hotels
- Fare for riding the APT
- Function of the bus routes in the TSM Alternative

The entire set of comments, and questions and answers, are contained in the next section of this Meeting Summary. In addition, three comment forms (Appendix B) were completed. The questions and comments during the meeting included the questions and comments contained in the comment forms.

Five (5) suggestions were made for alternatives in addition to those presented by the team at the meeting. These suggestions were as follows:

1. The Conceptual Alternatives presented at the meeting included an APT extension from the Urban Towers Station to the Entertainment Venue.

It was suggested that a further extension should be considered from the Entertainment Venue to the City of Irving Convention Center.

2. It was suggested that the APT be extended beyond the Convention Center to a northern connection with the DART LRT Orange Line at the planned North Las Colinas LRT Station.
3. The APT System currently terminates at the Towers on Lake Carolyn Station. The alternative presented by the team at the meeting includes modifications at this station to provide an elevated pedestrian connection to be made from the Towers on Lake Carolyn Station toward the Las Colinas Orange Line LRT Station.

It was suggested that the APT system be extended eastward, from the Towers on Lake Carolyn Station, with a station above the Las Colinas Urban Center LRT station, and have the ability to continue across the planned Orange Line LRT, and be stubbed out on the east side of Lake Carolyn Parkway to serve future development.

4. It was suggested that an APT station be constructed at the location of the “Y” near the Caltex Building north of the Bell Tower Station.
5. It was suggested that a seamless connection be created from the DART Orange Line Las Colinas Station to the current APT System terminus at the Towers on Lake Carolyn. This should be accomplished by having an escalator in addition to the proposed stairs and elevator to get to the elevated APT System station, and that the connection should be protected from the elements.

These suggestions will be considered in the next phase of the Alternatives Analysis.

COMMENTS, QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Following are the comments, and questions and answers, during the scoping meeting:

- The Lake Carolyn Station of the DART Light Rail Transit (LRT) Orange Line where the LRT will interface with the APT System is being renamed the “Las Colinas Urban Center” Station.
- Who would be the supplier for the new system? Would it be the original supplier?

Response: Westinghouse Electric Transportation Services was the original supplier; that company was acquired several times and now exists under a different name and is owned by Bombardier of Canada. The APT System was designed so that other suppliers are also available to provide system parts and components. The decision as to the supplier for the upgrade of the new system has not yet been determined.

- How will improvements be funded? What affect will this project have on DCURD’s own funding?

Response: Funding will come from a combination of sources, including Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Small Starts money (which is a subset of New Starts funding) and local matching funds from the City of Irving and the Las Colinas area’s Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. Typically, funding is 20% local and 80% federal; however, it is our goal to provide some local over funding to receive a more positive recommendation from the FTA that administers the Small Starts program. The TIF will provide \$600,000, and the project will be submitted for Small Starts federal funding to complete construction. Congestion Management for Air Quality (CMAQ) funds from NCTCOG is also a possible funding source.

- Have you run numbers to determine future operations costs?

Response: Future operations costs will be determined during the course of the study, along with who will operate the system.

- How much would the project itself cost to construct?

Response: The cost to construct depends on which Build Alternative is chosen. The project cap for Small Starts projects is \$250 million. Based on recent estimates the total cost ranges anywhere from \$50 million to \$100 million. Going after a lower cost project presents a greater chance to maximize federal dollars.

- The APT system as it currently exists is not nearly as functional as it will be once service begins on the DART Orange Line. The proposed connection between the Orange Line and APT isn't up to transit standards. Unless improvements to the APT system are made with proper interface with the DART LRT, passengers from DFW airport will not have access to the new City of Irving convention center or the hotels within the Las Colinas Urban Center. This connection with the DART station should be far better than currently planned by DART with only one elevator and some concrete stairs.

Response: The connection between the APT system and DART is an important topic that will continue to be analyzed during this process.

- When a businessman leaves DFW International Airport, once he gets to the system he must have easy access to hotels. Is the existing Las Colinas Urban Center's tunnel system included as part of this study?

Response: The tunnels are not included in this study. The tunnels belong to DCURD with access to various property owners in the Urban Center. Tunnel access to private property owners would be their option since not all of them may want their tunnels open to the public due to security issues.

- The proposed connection between DART's Orange Line and the APT System at the Las Colinas Urban Center station is key to the project's success and provides a special opportunity for a quality intermodal transit system. The connection as it is currently designed by DART is inadequate. There need to be escalators from the DART LRT station up to the APT System, not just stairs and an elevator.

Response: DCURD is not responsible for the design of the DART Las Colinas Urban Center station itself, but we will continue to work with DART regarding the design of that station and the optimization of the LRT-APT connection at that location.

- An improved APT system will serve as an excellent collector and distributor for the Urban Center. There is a unique geography within the area with the proposed DART

LRT rail on the east side and the APT System to serve development on the west side of Lake Carolyn. The development of the LRT system will benefit the APT System, but the LRT Orange Line will also benefit from the APT System as well because the two systems will feed riders to one another. The APT System must have good connections to DART and the future BNSF commuter rail line that is being considered on the south end of the Urban Center.

- Has any consideration been given to ridership for DART LRT and the APT System after 2014 when all aviation Wright Amendment restrictions are lifted from Love Field? More passengers will be able to use that airport, and that will have a huge impact on rail ridership.

Response: Currently, the study is only required to address air quality issues at the commencement of service in 2011 when the new or expanded APT System is expected to be operational; however, we will try to take into account possible ridership changes after that date.

- What about APT System service to the other side of SH 114? Previous maps seemed to suggest that the businesses on that side of the freeway would be served by this system.

Response: In the past, there was a graphic that showed ¼ mile walking radius, and some of those circles overlapped SH 114. This was used to help project ridership, as a ¼ mile walking radius is pretty standard for determining how many people within that area would be willing to use transit options.

- The proposed APT System stations are currently too far away from the convention center. In order for the APT system to reach its potential, we need better connections than what is currently being proposed by the plan as it is now proposed.

Response: Right now, the proposed APT System extension only goes as far as the entertainment venue within the City of Irving convention center site.

- I think there needs to be a station located at the convention center and hotel, otherwise people will not use this APT System or the Orange Line LRT as much as if it were connected directly to the convention center hotel.
- There needs to be a station at the junction of the three guideways at the Caltex Building where the APT System makes a Y so people can transfer from one APT route to another. That's a huge missed opportunity.

- We need an inter-modal connection at the south end of the Las Colinas Urban Center between the APT System, the DART LRT and the future BNSF commuter rail.

Response: DART has proposed a South Las Colinas Station. Its construction is currently deferred, but it will be built when the proposed commuter rail service along the BNSF railroad line ever becomes a reality.

- It would make a lot of sense to connect the APT System directly to the convention center because of the need for a convention center station. Especially with people on the DART LRT Orange Line who are trying to get to the convention center or hotel from DFW International Airport or from Love Field and Downtown Dallas. There is concern that the proposed DART LRT convention center station is so far from the convention center. Even if you extend the line to the convention center, if you do not loop the line to the north, people will have to travel on foot to the hotels from the Las Colinas Station.

Response: There are issues with extending to the Convention Center since the dual guideway would require a 22-foot wide space that developers have designated for other uses.

- The eastern branch of the APT should not end at the Las Colinas Urban Center LRT station. The APT system should be extended eastward, from the Towers on Lake Carolyn Station, with a station above the Las Colinas Urban Center LRT station, and have the ability to continue across the planned Orange Line LRT, and be stubbed out on the east side of Lake Carolyn Parkway to serve future development.

Response: The project would not just stop with this phase. We want to get funding now, but several improvements may need to be part of a master plan.

- Better connections to the hotels are crucial to the success of this APT System.
- Regarding the Infill Station slide:
 - The southeast most station needs to connect with DART.
 - Then, the next to the southwest—what is happening with that? Is any development planned there? (Response: A developer has been approached about that parcel, but it's still to be confirmed what exactly will happen there and when.)
 - Then the third one up by Homewood Suites—that one should be ready to open and should open as soon as they can.

- Next, there's no station listed on the NW elbow of the map, but there should be one there to connect the red, green, and blue lines of APT. It was originally planned to do that, but doesn't appear that way now. Instead you have a station to the east of that elbow and one north of it, but it's inconvenient for someone to change from one line to another without that station.
- DART has talked about an increase in fares. Is the expanded/improved APT system going to continue to be free-fare? Charging a fare might cover some of the expected costs of construction.

Response: Right now, our intent is to keep the APT system fare-free.

- There needs to be a fare. DCURD can't continue to provide this service free forever.
- It seems you want to avoid an EIS and go for the FONSI. If so, it makes a lot of sense to do all that has been suggested during this scoping meeting.
- Are the bus routes in the TSM Alternative expected to replace the APT system? If we compare the cost of rebuilding this system to the cost of a replacement bus system, won't the buses always be cheaper?

Response: Under the TSM Alternative, the buses would replace the existing APT system. We are required by the FTA to compare the Build Alternatives with a lower cost TSM Alternative. However, just because the TSM Alternative has the lower cost does not mean it will provide the most benefit; we have to show this to the FTA when we make this comparison. The APT is an automated people mover system on an elevated, grade separated guideway and has no drivers. Buses have higher labor costs, crowd local streets and produce emissions.

Appendix A
Sign-in Sheets

Las Colinas APT System
 Alternatives Analysis and
 Environmental Assessment
 (AA/EA) Study

Public Scoping Meeting/Open House
 May 18, 2009

Sign in sheet

Name	Organization/Agency/ Representing	Address	E-mail Address	Phone Number
Clint Howard				
Ken Pool	Cousins/W ²	5215 N. O'Connor Suite 350	Kempool@CousinsProperties.com	(972) 432-3620
Gerry Hedgecock	Crow Holdings	3819 Maple Ave Dallas, 75201		214-061-8356

Las Colinas APT System
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Public Scoping Meeting/Open House
 May 18, 2009

Sign in sheet

Name	Organization/Agency/ Representing	Address	E-mail Address	Phone Number
Tom Brown	Citriqua		Tomjbrown@hellotexas.com	972.841.0318
Arnold Martin			ArnoldMartin@b2@cs.com	
John A. Davis	DART		jdavis@jsw	972 554-0500
Norma Stauter			normastauter@aol.com	
Carson Damm	ICVB		CDamm@jsw.com	972-580-8863
John Hoppe	DART		shoppe@dart.org	214-759-2525
Earl Walker	Pikota			
JACKY KNOX	DCURD		jknox@deurdl.org	972 556 0625

Las Colinas APT System
 Alternatives Analysis and
 Environmental Assessment
 (AA/EA) Study

Public Scoping Meeting/Open House
 May 18, 2009

Sign in sheet

Name	Organization/Agency/ Representing	Address	E-mail Address	Phone Number
Dore Jensen	GILCCC TRANSPORTATION INTG	1201106 5212 Hodeler St	rojen@gte.net	214 255 7885
S. PARANIPALANATHAN	DIKITA	1420 W. Noelen Blvd #4	paranip@diakita.com	214 634 8844
Rhonda Lisen	Los Colinas Group	222 W. Las Colinas Blvd #305	rlisen@loscolinasgroup.com	972 444 2226
Chris Wallace	Irving-Las Colinas Chamber	5221 N. O'Connor Blvd, Ste. 100	chwallace@irvingchamber.com	214-217-8484
Jim Cline	City of Irving	825 W Irving Blvd	jcline@cityofirving.org	972-721-2521
Phil Brown	Irving Resident	1410 Kevin Rd 75060	philbrown@earthlink.net	972-841-8519
Rick Davis	Las Colinas Assoc			
Rolando Medrano	FHCC		RMedrano@msu.com	972-978-8844

Las Colinas APT System
 Alternatives Analysis and
 Environmental Assessment
 (AA/EA) Study

Public Scoping Meeting/Open House
 May 18, 2009

Sign in sheet

Name	Organization/Agency/ Representing	Address	E-mail Address	Phone Number
MEL ROBINSON		3903 Fox Glen	h07matt.com MelR3903	972-791-9999
Lisa Sturgeon	ICB Chamber	1809 Northern Oak	lachdwin@allstate.com	214 208 7396
Helen Marie Hartens & Doreen Hartens, SOCF	DeWitts	5915 N O'Connor 1794	helenmoire@carolinapeople.com hlynn30@aol.com	972-869-5900 817-676-2312
Tom Batenoff Gables	Gables	2650 Cedar Springs	tbatenoff@gables.com	214 252-2609
John Sturgeon	181 Rambler	627 S. Rogers	John@rambler.com RAMBLER.COM	214-675-6493

Las Colinas APT System
 Alternatives Analysis and
 Environmental Assessment
 (AA/EA) Study

Public Scoping Meeting/Open House
 May 18, 2009

Sign in sheet

Name	Organization/Agency/ Representing	Address	E-mail Address	Phone Number
Robert Martin	SILCC Trans. Cent.		rmartinez@ cottonwoodmatt.com	2/534-7808
Kelly Smith	Parmenter Realty	205 E. Tom Copeland	ksmith@farmco.com	9-556-0078
Matthew Busik	Boyle Long	4701 Winger	mjb@boylelong.com	(4) 6507110

Las Colinas APT System
 Alternatives Analysis and
 Environmental Assessment
 (AA/EA) Study

Public Scoping Meeting/Open House
 May 18, 2009

Sign in sheet

Name	Organization/Agency/ Representing	Address	E-mail Address	Phone Number
John Meyer	Northwestern Mutual	6505 St. MacArthur Irving, TX 75039	JohnMeyer@CowisinsProperties.com	972-461-3550
Danny Opitz	Hines	5215 N.O'Connor #638 Irving, TX 75039	Danny-Opitz@hines.com	972-916-2912
R. Dan Martin	TRE			
A.L. ZARANTZ	USMCOR	211 KAMARUWAY SAHAK IRVING, TX 75039	ZARANTZ@AOL.COM	972-533-3440
MAURA GUST	Irving Conv + Visitors Bureau	222 W Las Colinas Blvd #1550/IRVING 75039	mgust@irvingtexas.com	972-252-7416
KEN BLOOM	COI - PLANNING	825 W. IRVING	KBLOOM@CITYOFIRVING.ORG	972-800-8001
Jill Martin	Resident The Irving Forum	1050 Lake Carolyn Pkwy #1314 IRVING 75039	jmartinez@irvingjournal.com	214-546-6344
GREG WINGATE	CABSTAR	5000 RIVERPINE DRIVE	gwingate@CABSTARCOMMERCIAL.COM	972-556-2294

Appendix B
Comment Sheets

Scoping Meeting Summary

Las Colinas APT System
Upgrade and Expansion Project
Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Assessment (AA/EA)

Public Scoping Meeting/Open House
May 18, 2009

COMMENT FORM

1. Very important to have loop completed as around northern part of Lake Carolyn to service convention center.
2. Very important to have a protected from - the - environment connection to Orange line. Escalators w/ covers at a minimum, climate controlled preferred.

Name and Address (optional): Robert D. Martinez, Irving
Convention & Visitors Bureau, Board of Directors

Return completed comment form to sign-in table or mail to: res. 1050 Lake Carolyn
Parway # 9314
Irving TX 75039
214-534-7807

Paul Brown, Transportation Manager
Dallas County Utility and Reclamation District
P.O. Box 140035
Irving, Texas 75014-0035

All comments must be received by June 19, 2009.

