



# JUNE COMMUNITY MEETING

June 23, 2014  
8637 Spicewood Springs Rd.  
6:30-8:30 PM

This month's meeting was focused on the variety of transportation projects and agencies impacting NW Austin. The meeting began with brief introductions and a review of NWAC's history and mission.

John-Michael Cortez from Capital Metro was the first speaker, covering Project Connect's regional transit vision map<sup>1</sup> and the proposed urban rail plan working its way through city council. The Capital Metro MetroRail ("red line") was also discussed, as service will be expanding after a recent Federal grant. Currently trains run every 34 minutes during peak hours and the intent is to get them to run at 15 minute intervals. The recent MetroRapid service is about to open a second line in August connecting the Domain through Downtown to South Lamar.

The extensive planning process for the proposed urban rail was detailed, from designating possible corridors down to specific routing and funding mechanisms. The proposed line runs from Highland Mall through Downtown to Riverside. They expect 6500 trips to be taken on the line itself and 3500 additional trips throughout the system as a result of the new line. The line is a dedicated service (does not share the road with cars) and should run every 10 minutes at peak hours with stops every ½ to 1 mile running 20-30mph on average. The costs are estimated at 1.4 billion (in 2020 dollars) with half expected to be funded by the Federal Government. The line is expected to cost 22 million per year to operate. City Council will take up final bond language in August and have it on the ballot in November. The final bond package is expected to include additional infrastructure (corridor planning and roads) beyond the rail line.

Joseph Black from Lone Star Rail was the next to present<sup>2</sup>, detailing the proposed 118 mile passenger rail service running from San Antonio to Williamson County. The agency was created by the state in 1999 and has been working to overcome a series of challenges in implementing the line. A major barrier is the conflict with freight traffic and trying to build additional freight capacity off the proposed corridor. The service would run 32 trips per day across 16 stations along the line. Currently in environmental studies and working with private industry, local municipalities, and state and federal agencies to secure financing and service planning.

The team from 183 North Mobility Project<sup>3</sup> presented next, walking the group through the next phase of the planning and public information process. The project covers the 183 corridor from Mopac to SH45. Looking closely at adding two new variable toll lanes in each direction that would connect in with the MoPac Improvement Project currently under construction. Project is in the early phases, with environmental studies expected to be completed by 2016.

**Our Mission:** To support leaders in Northwest Austin and address the needs of our communities through collaboration, communication, and education.

[www.nwaustin.org](http://www.nwaustin.org)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.projectconnect.com/project-connect-vision>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dropbox.com/s/Oco7vnapnijor72/LoneStarRail%20-%2006-23-2014.pptx>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.183north.com/>

Finally, Nadia Barrera from the City of Austin Public Works presented on the city's Bicycle and Urban Trails Master Plan<sup>4</sup>. The focus of the plan is the "last mile" of transportation infrastructure, using bike and pedestrian paths to connect to other transportation options. Less than 20% of Austin cyclists will ride in basic painted bike lanes. Nearly 40% will ride if they feel those lanes are protected from traffic. Targeting short trips through protected bicycle lanes has a high return on investment. There are proposed trail networks around the Lakeline MetroRail station yet to be implemented. There is an emphasis on how the trail system integrates with other infrastructure planning but actual implementation timing depends on other construction efforts to reduce duplication.

*In Attendance*

Andrea Edwards  
Carol Foisberg  
Lynda Rife  
Nadia Barrera  
Jeb Boyt  
Lyndsey Taylor  
Joyce State  
Scott Gross  
Jim Buchanan  
Jimmy Flannigan  
Allison Heinrich  
Phil Denney  
Nick Lealos  
Christine Tripp  
Andy Atlas  
Mike Reyna  
Terry Edwards  
Susan Reed

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.dropbox.com/s/ffnf64yjis91tg5/Urban%20Trails%20-%202006\\_23\\_14.ppt](https://www.dropbox.com/s/ffnf64yjis91tg5/Urban%20Trails%20-%202006_23_14.ppt)