



**THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE PROJECT CONNECT  
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, July 13, 2023**

**ATP Office | Conference Room**

**203 Colorado Street, Austin, TX 78701**

**(with some members of the CAC participating via video conference)**

**Members in Attendance:**

Awais Azhar – Chair  
Susana Almanza – Vice Chair  
Joao Paulo Connolly  
Teddy Fong  
Gretchen Flatau  
Jeremy Hendricks  
Michael Gorse  
Renee Lopez  
Susan Somers  
Ephraim Taylor

**Members Absent:**

Kathryn Broadwater  
Noe Elias

**Attendees:**

Brandon Carr  
Courtney Chavez  
Veronica Castro de Barrera  
Terry Hockens

Peter Mullan  
Jennifer Pyne  
Marla Torrado

Miguel Lopez

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Project Connect Community Advisory Committee convened in a regular meeting on Thursday, June 8, 2023.

Chair Azhar called the Committee meeting to order at 5:05 PM

**Land Acknowledgement**

Vice Chair Almanza read the Land Acknowledgement statement.

## Citizen Communication

No citizens shared comments at this time.

## Approval of Minutes

### 1. Approve the minutes of the June 8, 2023, meeting of the Project Connect Community Advisory Committee.

The minutes of the June 8, 2023, general meeting, with the revisions provided by Miguel Lopez, were approved on a motion by Member Somers, seconded by Member Lopez; confirmed with a unanimous vote (9-0).

## Action Items

### 1. Approval of Amendments to CAC Bylaws

Brandon Carr, Senior Vice President of Legal Services and General Counsel for the Austin Transportation Partnership, provided a proposed amendment to the CAC bylaws (Article 3; Section C) addressing the amended language to the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) approved on June 6, 2023, by the Austin City Council and the boards of ATP and CapMetro, creating a holdover period for the CAC member terms, full text included below.

The proposal was followed by a discussion session. The amended language was approved on a motion by Member Connolly, seconded by Member Gorse; confirmed with a unanimous vote (10-0).

“CAC members remain appointed members after their two-year term has expired until the earlier of: 1) their replacement is appointed; 2) the CAC member indicates in writing to the Chair that they do not want to remain appointed; 3) the CAC member is re-appointed to a new term; or 4) 180 days has passed.”

### 2. CAC Officer Elections

Chair Azhar led the CAC in an election of officers for one (1) year terms ending on July 11, 2024.

- a. Approve the appointment of Member Susan Somers as the Secretary for the Project Connect CAC.  
**The nomination and appointment of Susan Somers as the Secretary of the Project Connect CAC was approved on a motion from Chair Azhar, seconded by Member Lopez, approved unanimously (10-0).**
- b. Approve the appointment of Member Gretchen Flatau as the Vice Chair for the Project Connect CAC.  
**The nomination and appointment of Gretchen Flatau as the Vice Chair of the Project Connect CAC was approved on a motion from Chair Azhar, seconded by Member Lopez, approved unanimously (10-0).**

- c. Approve the appointment of Member Awais Azhar as the Chair for the Project Connect CAC.

**The appointment of Awais Azhar as the Chair of the Project Connect CAC was approved on a motion from Secretary Somers, seconded by Member Almanza, approved unanimously (9-0), with Chair Azhar abstaining from the vote.**

### **3. Working Group Updates/ Appointments/ Re-organizations/ Dissolutions**

- a. Chair Azhar led the CAC in a discussion to reorganize the CAC Working Groups.
  - i. **The dissolution of the Design and Equitable Transit Oriented (ETOD) Working Groups, and creation of the Austin Light Rail and ETOD Working Group was approved on a motion from Chair Azhar, seconded by Member Fong, approved unanimously (10-0).**
  - ii. **The appointment of members, listed below, to the Austin Light Rail and ETOD Working Group was approved on a motion from Chair Azhar, seconded by Member Taylor, approved unanimously (10-0).**
    1. Appointed Members:
      - a. Azhar
      - b. Connolly
      - c. Flatau
      - d. Somers
      - e. Gorse

### **Discussion Items**

- 1. Project Connect and Future Integration Update – Sharmila Mukherjee, CapMetro**
  - a. Sharmila Mukherjee, Executive Vice President of Planning and Development for CapMetro, provided an update on Project Connect and the planned integration into the existing transit system.
  - b. The discussion included an update on the approval of the Light Rail design on June 6, 2023, the service change process, and the five- and ten-year transit plans for ATP. The discussion was followed by a question-and-answer session.
- 2. Affordable Housing Acquisition and Development - Jamey May,**
  - a. Jamey May, Housing and Community Development Officer for the City of Austin's Housing Department, provided a presentation on the Austin Housing and Finance Corporation (AHFC) investments and acquisitions, highlighting the Project Connect-funded acquisitions.
  - b. Member Almanza requested information on the breakdown of units based on Project Connect Acquisition Funds, MFI's for properties, and number of bedrooms per unit for these properties.
  - c. Member Lopez requested a breakdown of units that will be wheelchair accessible.

- d. Secretary Somers requested a breakdown of the remaining funds, seen side-by-side, in each funding source.

## **Staff Updates**

### **1. ATP Staff Updates**

Courtney Chavez, Senior Vice President of Equity & Community Partnership for ATP, stated that staff will be reaching out to CAC members who previously completed the application process, for feedback, with the intention of returning in August with recommendations for updates to the CAC Bylaws.

The nominating committee has recommended for the vacant ATP Board position to be filled by John Laymore. That recommendation will go before City Council on July 20, 2023, and the CapMetro Board on July 24, 2023.

### **2. CapMetro Staff Updates**

No updates were provided at this time.

### **3. City of Austin Staff Updates**

Housing Department

Marla Torrado, Community Development Manager for the City of Austin, provided an update on the Community Initiated Solutions Program stating that nine (9) contracts have been signed and three (3) will be signed in the coming weeks. With the clarity that an in-depth conversation will be forthcoming in August.

### **4. Working Group/TAC Updates**

No updates were provided at this time.

## **Action Items**

1. No Action Items were presented at this time.

## **Future Items**

Secretary Somers requested an update on the CapMetro Redline service.

## **ADJOURN**

Chair Azhar adjourned the meeting at 7:04 PM without objection.