

MINUTES

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL January 12, 2017

The Regional Transportation Council (RTC) met on Thursday, January 12, 2017, at 1:00 pm in the Transportation Council Room of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). The following members or representatives were present: Monica R. Alonzo, Bruce Arfsten, Douglas Athas, Sara Bagheri, Loyl Bussell (representing Brian Barth), Carol Bush, Mike Cantrell, David L. Cook, Rudy Durham, Andy Eads, Charles Emery, Gary Fickes, Robert Franke, Sandy Greyson, Roger Harmon, Clay Lewis Jenkins, Ron Jensen, Jungus Jordan, Lee M. Kleinman, Brian Loughmiller, David Magness, Scott Mahaffey, Maher Maso, B. Adam McGough, Ann Zadeh (representing Cary Moon), Stan Pickett, Mark Riley, Mohamed "Mo" Bur (representing Kelly Selman), Gary Slagel, Lissa Smith, Mike Taylor, Stephen Terrell, T. Oscar Trevino Jr., Oscar Ward, Bernice J. Washington, Duncan Webb, Kathryn Wilemon, W. Jeff Williams, Erik Wilson, and W. B. "Zim" Zimmerman.

Others present at the meeting were: Vickie Alexander, David S. Arbuckle, Sia Ardekani, John Baker, Melissa Baker, Berrien Barks, Carli Baylor, Bryan Beck, Adam Beckom, George Behmanesh, Chris Bergeron, Kenny Bergstrom, Natalie Bettger, Brandi Bird, David Boski, Sheri Boyd, Kristina Brevard, Bob Brown, Jesse Brown, Ron Brown, Pamela Burns, Kevin Butler, David Cain, Marrk Callier, Byron Campbell, Jack Carr, Angie Carson, Dixie Cawthorne, Sarah Chadderdon, Mike Coleman, Michael Copeland, Mike Curtis, Clarence Daugherty, Shelley Davis, Brian Dell, Kim Diederich, Jerry Dittman, David Dryden, Mike Eastland, Chad Edwards, Kevin Feldt, Keineth Fuller, Bob Golden, Martin Gonzalez, Mark Goode, Christie Gotti, Wade Haffey, Fola Hammones, Ron Hartline, Tony Hartzel, Rebecca Hernandez, Jesse Herrera, Axel Herrmann, Mark Hilderbrand, Jim Hinderaker, Jodi Hodges, Mark Holliday, David Hosseiny, Ann-Claire Karalyos, Dan Kessler, Ken Kirkpatrick, Chris Klaus, Paul Knippel, Ruben Landa, Sonya Landrum, Harry LaRosiliere, April Leger, Karina Maldonado, Barbara Maley, Mickey Marlow, Curtistene McCowan, Jeni McGarry, Keith Melton, Cliff Miller, Mindy Mize, Cesar Molina, Erin Moore, Michael Morris, Sterling Naron, Mark K. Nelson, Markus Neubauer, Kristi Padon, Nick Page, James C. Paris, Ricardo Pezo, David Plutowski, John Polster, James Powell, Fred Pratt, Vercie Pruitt-Jenkins, Chris Reed, Molly Rendon, Bill Riley, Christina Roach, Tito Rodriguez, Carrie Rogers, Kyle Roy, Greg Royster, Moosa Saghian, Steve Sanders, Ed Shackelford, Samuel Simmons, Randy Skinner, Gerald Sturdivant, Vic Suhm, Chris Tolar, Lauren Trimble, Lisa Walzl, Sandy Wesch, Greg White, Amanda Wilson, Brian Wilson, Alicia Winkelblech, Ed Wueste, and Abulkhair Zobayed.

1. **Approval of December 8, 2016, Minutes:** The minutes of the December 8, 2016, meeting were approved as submitted in Reference Item 1. Rob Franke (M); Kathryn Wilemon (S). The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Consent Agenda:** The following item was included on the Consent Agenda.
 - 2.1. **Transportation Improvement Program Modifications:** A motion was made to approve revisions to the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program provided in Reference Item 2.1.

Oscar Ward (M); Lissa Smith (S). The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Orientation to Agenda/Director of Transportation Report:** Michael Morris presented items on the Director of Transportation Report. A video celebrating the Texas Department of Transportation's 100 year anniversary was shown. A kickoff celebration will be held at the Texas Transportation Forum in Austin on February 6-7, 2017. Loyl Bussell and Mohamed Bur spoke briefly about the agency. Mr. Morris noted that an Automated Vehicle Roundtable and Demonstration will be held at the Arlington Convention Center on February 2, 2017. Members were encouraged to attend. The Fort Worth Transportation Authority was congratulated for its receipt of the full funding grant agreement for the TEXRail project. Regional Transportation Council members were provided legislative packets for use during the upcoming Legislative Session. Members interested in providing assistance for legislative efforts were asked to contact North Central Texas Council of Governments staff. Current air quality funding opportunities for vehicles were provided in Electronic Item 3.1, and December online public input opportunity minutes were provided in Electronic Item 3.2. Recent correspondence was provided in Electronic Item 3.3, recent new articles in Electronic Item 3.4, and recent press releases in Electronic Item 3.5. Transportation partner progress reports were distributed at the meeting.

4. **Endorsement of High-Speed Rail Environmental Backstop:** Michael Morris presented a recommendation for the endorsement of a high-speed rail environmental backstop. The High-Speed Rail Environmental Impact Study (EIS) is being conducted for high-speed rail between Dallas and Fort Worth by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. These funds expire September 30, 2017, but the EIS may not be completed by the time funds expire. Staff proposed the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) approve using \$3 million in federal funds to backstop the ARRA funds for TxDOT to continue the study even if ARRA funds expire. It is possible as little as \$1 million may be needed, or Congress may extend the deadline for the use of ARRA funds. If the deadline is extended, the financial backstop may not be necessary. A commitment to backstop the ARRA funding was needed immediately so staff transmitted a letter to TxDOT committing to use \$3 million in Surface Transportation Program funds, provided in Reference Item 4. If approved, RTC officers would sign the letter certifying the RTC's action to endorse staff's commitment. Lee M. Kleinman noted his concern that the current three-station plan does not have a requirement that cities in the plan are transit cities. He added, he would support the item but noted many cities have been paying into a transit system for many years and he believed it would benefit the Council to consider whether membership with a transit agency is an important factor regarding where a high-speed rail station will be planned. Rob Franke, RTC Multimodal/Intermodal/High-Speed Rail/Freight Subcommittee Chair noted this is a good topic that should be addressed at the Subcommittee level. Jeff Williams noted the City of Arlington has formed a Transportation Advisory Committee to explore the future of public transportation in the city. He added, the City of Arlington has promoted tourism that benefits all of the region and desires to be partners in regional efforts. Michael Morris noted he has been invited to speak to the City of Arlington Transportation Advisory Committee. If a high-speed rail station is located in Arlington, the RTC's position is that north-south rail connections to the Centerport Station and into the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport will be necessary. The Subcommittee-level policy discussion should be whether the RTC will reaffirm its position that to have a high-speed rail station, there must be an ability to unload passengers with a technology that will take the passengers to their final destination and a financial mechanism and institutional structure to ensure its implementation. Sandy Greyson asked if there is a target date for completion of the City of Arlington's Transportation Advisory Committee's discussions. Mr. Williams noted the effort is expected to be completed in September 2017, with recommendations possibly in the interim. Bernice J. Washington discussed the importance

of working together regardless of the past to produce greater outcomes for everyone in the future. She encouraged members to remain open minded. A motion was made to endorse North Central Texas Council of Governments staff's commitment to use \$3 million in Surface Transportation Program funds to backstop the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds, if needed, for completion of the High-Speed Rail Environmental Impact Study for high-speed rail between Dallas and Fort Worth as detailed in Reference Item 4. Rob Franke (M); Mike Cantrell (S). The motion passed unanimously.

5. **Partnership with Workforce Development Agencies in Training for Drivers Replaced by Advanced Technology:** Michael Morris discussed a potential partnership with workforce development agencies to address drivers that could be replaced by the advance of transportation-related technology. This topic was requested by Regional Transportation Council (RTC) member Lee M. Kleinman. As technology advances in the region, drivers may be replaced with less qualified drivers due to the technology. If approved, this item will permit staff to engage the North Central Texas Council of Governments, Tarrant County, and Dallas County workforce development boards and technology staffs to prepare for the transition of technology in transportation. A similar study was completed with the aviation industry in which staff quantified the turnover of air traffic controllers, the lack of jet engine mechanics, and the lack of future pilots. In the aviation analysis, there was significant staffing shortfalls and since that time entities have focused on grassroot efforts to encourage youth's interest in aviation careers through science, technology, engineering, and math. Approval would permit RTC staff to contact the technology entities and workforce development boards, work for 90-120 days to develop a work plan, and bring the results back to the RTC to determine what role, if any, the RTC will play in identifying or quantifying the need and/or communicating possible resolutions. Lee M. Kleinman noted that although the issue is workforce related, it is caused by advances in transportation technologies and efforts may be necessary to see a continuation of jobs for people who may be replaced by those future technologies. A motion was made for the Regional Transportation Council to recommend that North Central Texas Council of Governments staff and local workforce development boards begin to look into and plan for the transition of drivers replaced by advanced technology to alternate jobs in the future so that the region does not disenfranchise a large group of the community that has provided service as drivers for the last century. Lee M. Kleinman (M); Erik Wilson (S). The motion passed unanimously.
6. **High-Speed Rail Status Report:** Kevin Feldt provided a status report on high-speed rail initiatives in the region. In December 2016, a Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Multimodal/Intermodal/High-Speed Rail/Freight Subcommittee meeting was held. At the meeting, Texas Central Partners presented an update on the Houston to Dallas high-speed rail project. A change in the entity's upper management was discussed. This change signals a transition to the construction phase of the project. Texas Central Partners is in the process of conducting a voluntary land option purchase program to identify land owners who are willing to sell their property. The focus is on high-confidence sections in which the proposed alignment is not expected to deviate. In addition, the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Houston to Dallas project is underway and Texas Central Partners is coordinating efforts on the state and federal level, as well as with local agencies. The draft EIS is expected to be completed during the first quarter of 2017, with the final EIS completed in late 2017 and a Record of Decision in early 2018. Artist renderings of the potential facility around the IH 20/IH 45 Interchange area were shown. Mr. Feldt also provided an overview of current North Central Texas Council of Government (NCTCOG) efforts regarding the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Core Express Service project. Efforts are focused on learning from the Request for Information (RFI) responses and working with the Texas Department of

Transportation (TxDOT) to advance the EIS for the project. In addition, Requests for Proposals were issued in the fall for three station area planning studies. A total of 25 proposals were received. Gateway Planning has been selected as the consultant for the Fort Worth planning study; WSP|Parsons Brinkerhoff has been selected for the Arlington planning study; and Lockwood, Andrews, and Newnam has been selected for the Dallas planning study. WSP|Parsons Brinkerhoff is also working on the EIS for the DFW Core Express Service project with TxDOT, and staff has ensured the EIS and the station area planning study are independent from one another. The results of the three studies will inform the DFW Core Express Service Environmental Impact Statement in order to more precisely determine the preferred station locations and ensure regional connectivity. NCTCOG's role is identifying the best alignment between Dallas and Fort Worth and coordinating with consultants regarding the best station location for each of the three cities. The next steps will include coordination with local governments, completion of the alignment study, and formation of a study review committee for each project. Two study review committee meetings have been scheduled: January 25 in Fort Worth and January 26 in Arlington. The three projects are anticipated to be completed in July 2017. Mr. Feldt also discussed the recent Request for Information. The purpose of the RFI was to inform the region regarding best practices as identified in other parts of the world and to gauge project implementation interest. A total of 16 respondents with a variety of expertise expressed interest. As part of the next steps, responses will continue to be reviewed. Staff will continue to learn about the high-speed rail implementation process, develop a DFW implementation strategy, and request federal funding to construct the system. Michael Morris provided an observation from the recent Transportation Research Board meeting. It appears the incoming Administration would like to advance infrastructure in the country, and there is possible interest in the projects submitted in 2014 to the Secretary of Transportation. In the fall, staff discussed with the Congressional Delegation the advancement of capitol gap funding for the Dallas-to-Fort Worth high-speed rail section. He added, the region is working on all options to advance consensus on building high-speed rail between Dallas and Fort Worth, with eventual connection to Houston and to Austin/San Antonio. Nothing is being left on the table. High-speed rail is expected to be an important item of discussion within the Legislative Delegation and staff will keep the RTC updated. Erik Wilson discussed the importance of integrating all forms of transportation modes at the high-speed rail station locations. Mr. Feldt noted two components of the station area planning studies: 1) access to stations and 2) economic development opportunities surrounding the stations. The two components will help guide the recommended station locations.

7. **Top Five Regional Transportation Council Policy Initiatives for 2017:** Michael Morris summarized the top five Regional Transportation Council (RTC) policy initiatives for 2017 as presented at the January 2017 joint meeting of the Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition and Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition. The first item is the possibility of a new federal initiative on transportation. It is anticipated that the incoming Administration is interested in advancing transportation infrastructure. The region has projects that are ready for implementation in the event that funding becomes available. The second initiative is the RTC's partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). The partnership is visible through the receipt of the \$6.9 billion in funding that was formula allocated from the Texas Transportation Commission. Bill Hale, TxDOT Chief Engineer, has asked the local districts and North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff to meet in January to discuss the TxDOT/RTC partnership so that other areas in the state can learn about the benefits of an integrated team. In addition, coordination is ongoing as staff gains consensus on the \$6.9 billion in projects. Selection is not the end of the process; projects must proceed to implementation. The third initiative is high-speed rail, the details of which

were presented earlier in the agenda. This is an opportunity to connect the fourth and fifth largest regions of the United States through a high-speed rail corridor. The fourth initiative is the 85th Texas Legislature. The final initiative is related to efforts on the TEXRail project, the Cotton Belt, how Coppell and the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport can participate in the funding partnership to make the connection from the AB Station to Richardson/Plano, and a potential integrated new transit technology guideway. New options for seamless connections will be introduced, such as advancing the rail system to the next generation. The region has done a good job integrating passenger rail on freight corridors, light rail is primarily on its own corridor, and people-mover systems are primarily in their own corridor. The question is whether technology can provide options to create a people-mover system that could be a driverless vehicle that does not operate in a guideway but in a corridor and potentially move commodities in the same corridor. A meeting of the people-mover committee previously requested by Kathryn Wilemon, will be requested to begin focusing on cost effective next generation corridors. Staff requested that members provide guidance on the items discussed. Bernice J. Washington asked how much of the region's strategy will be shared. Mr. Morris noted that TxDOT partnerships with all regions of the state are beneficial to everyone. The strategies shared will allow other metropolitan planning organizations to learn the importance of partnerships with TxDOT.

8. **Introduction of New Institutional Needs:** Michael Morris introduced new institutional needs for the region to be discussed as partnerships and potential legislative options are being contemplated for the 85th Texas Legislature. He highlighted examples such as the potential creation of a local government corporation to implement high-speed rail within the region and the idea of a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) public sector credit union bank as discussed in 2008. Mr. Morris reviewed a slide regarding federal and State legislative balance. The federal government is interested in expanding National Infrastructure Banks, Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loans, and other innovative ways to build and cash flow projects. Efforts will likely include a mixture of instruments such as tools and tolls, as well as pay-as-you go. Efforts in State government have moved in the direction of pay-as-you go. Proposition 1 and Proposition 7, as well as other potential funds, cannot be used for tolled projects. In addition, tools and tolls may not be available to the State since many of those options expire in 2017. These examples demonstrate how the federal and State government seem to be moving in opposite directions. Mr. Morris also discussed core principles for the MPO referred to as the 7 Ps: 1) partnerships that help with communication, 2) policies, 3) programs, 4) projects, 5) plans, 6) performance, and 7) public outreach. Issues do not always have to be solved with a project, but can potentially be solved through policies, plans, or public outreach. He noted that he believes institutional structures may be a topic of discussion in both the State and federal government. For example, managed lanes are about getting projects funded, having a guaranteed speed, and the place for early deployments of advanced technology of vehicles. To accomplish this, perhaps a State process should be developed where State revenues are focused on non-tolled projects. Through the federal process, funds could be provided to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) who will potentially seek direction from the MPO on whether a tolled option should be considered. Other regions of the state may not be interested. However, if the federal government is going to offer access to a portion of the discretionary funding or to participate in implementation, the region will want to have the tools to do so. Similar to what is happening in high-speed rail, for which the high-speed rail project is not considered TxDOT's main focus, there may be an opportunity to delegate a project to local MPOs to determine their interest in a project. The presented structure permits this option to exist which leads back to the MPO as the potential broker of a public sector credit union bank. In order for the region to avoid losing opportunities from

the State or federal government, the RTC must work on potentially new State and/or federal processes should the opportunity occur. Mr. Morris requested that members think about potential options. Staff will work on options to maximize the institutional structure with focus on outcomes and provide details at a future RTC meeting. He added that a copy of the presentation will be provided to RTC members following the meeting.

9. **Clean Cities Annual Report and Fleet Recognition:** Mindy Mize provided an overview of the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities (DFWCC) Annual Report and the Clean Fleet Policy. The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) has been the host organization for DFWCC since 1994. The program was started by the United States Department of Energy (DOE) to increase energy security and reduce petroleum consumption in the transportation sector. Clean Cities coalitions are required to complete reports to the DOE annually. In order to achieve better response rates from local fleets, NCTCOG and DFWCC linked the annual report to the Clean Fleet Policy and also created the Outstanding Fleet Recognition Program. Through the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Policy Bundle, a list of voluntary policies are available and three of the policies focus on air quality items. One of those policies is the Clean Fleet Policy. Adoption of the Clean Fleet Policy provides a framework for reducing emissions, increasing fuel economy, partnering with NCTCOG and DFWCC on activities, and training staff. Providing annual reports also makes entities eligible for air quality funding and potential recognition as an outstanding fleet through the recognition program. A map was highlighted that showed current fleets that have adopted the Clean Fleet Policy. Once the policy is adopted, entities are included in the Clean Cities annual report. The report addresses and helps meet the minimum goals of the Clean Cities program to save 2.5 billion gallons of petroleum per year by 2020. In addition, the DOE challenges each coalition to increase petroleum reduction by 15 percent every year. The annual reporting and Clean Fleet Policy are a combined effort. The report is due March 1 annually. The Clean Cities program is on track to meet the 2.5 billion reduction by 2020. As of 2014, the reduction was at 1 billion and trending upwards. A graph highlighting the 2015 petroleum reduction from the annual Clean Cities report was shown. Once 2016 data is received, there is expected to be a 23 billion gallons reduction. The goals of the Clean Fleet Policy help staff to develop the fleet recognition criteria of emissions reduction, fuel reduction, partnership, and familiarity with air quality and petroleum reduction goals. Outstanding fleets can be recognized as gold, silver, or bronze fleets. Examples of effort promoted through the recognition are anti-idling policies for fleets, workshop and training attendance, and annual reporting. At the December 2016 annual meeting, the Cities of Euless, Carrollton, and the Town of Addison received the silver award; and the Cities of Coppell, Fort Worth, Grapevine, Richardson, Rockwall, Southlake, Town of Flower Mound, Dallas Area Rapid Transit, and Denton Independent School District received the bronze award. Details were provided in Electronic Item 9.
10. **TEXpress Lanes Education Campaign:** Amanda Wilson provided an update on the TEXpress Lanes Education Campaign, an ongoing effort in 2016 with regional transportation partners throughout the Dallas-Fort Worth region. North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff has coordinated with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA), and operators of the managed lane facilities. Efforts began in January 2016 following a workshop requested by former Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Chair Judge Mark Riley, Parker County during which members identified messaging and communication needs to help the public better understand managed lanes. Meetings were held with transportation agency public information officers throughout 2016 and a communication plan focused on messaging was developed. In addition, collateral material is being produced and staff hopes to have this

material available within the next few weeks for distribution to members. Comments from the workshop and agencies suggested the efforts be explicit about the benefits of the TEXpress lanes and connect directly with the users as individuals. Other key points were the use of real world testimonials and educational components such as how to use lanes and why the lanes were created. Many people travel on the same corridor everyday so there is interest to know specifics about the lane an individual will primarily use. Analogies and humor were other points discussed by RTC members in an effort for the message to resonate with users. Staff has developed eight key talking points: 1) options for drivers who want a more reliable commute, 2) a reliable choice with a predictable travel experience, 3) lowers the stress of commuting, 4) produces far-reaching benefits, 5) easy to use, 6) TollTag, TxTag, or EZ Tag customers and carpoolers get the lowest toll rates, 7) payment is easy, and 8) corridors with TEXpress lanes have been improved or completely rebuilt. Ms. Wilson noted an expanded version of the talking points will be provided to all RTC members. In addition, she highlighted materials that have been produced. Products focused on the stakeholder include a presentation with a script, a pocket card highlighting the campaign, a white paper focusing on the benefits of the lanes, and a list of myths and facts. Staff continues to work on economic development indicators. For the general public, real world testimonials, social media messages, short articles, humorous videos, and other educational elements have been developed. All of the material leads back to a regional website: www.TEXpresslanes.com. A real world testimonial video was shown at the meeting. She encouraged those interested in providing additional testimonials to contact staff. Focus will turn to next steps and include finalizing communications plan elements, providing RTC members with an online toolkit for presentations and meetings with stakeholders, working with partners to distribute general public elements, and proactively scheduling opportunities to distribute the information to the community.

11. **Progress Reports:** Regional Transportation Council attendance was provided in Reference Item 11.1, Surface Transportation Technical Committee attendance meeting minutes in Electronic Item 11.2, and the current Local Motion in Electronic Item 11.3.
12. **Other Business (Old or New):** There was no discussion on this item.
13. **Future Agenda Items:** There was no discussion on this item.
14. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Regional Transportation Council is scheduled for Thursday, February 9, 2017, 1:00 pm, at the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 pm.