

**North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)  
Air Transportation Advisory Committee  
December 2, 2021**

The Air Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) convened at 1 pm on December 2, 2021, held as a Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting.

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Darrell Philips welcomed members to the December 2, 2021, ATAC meeting.

**2. Orientation to Agenda, Natalie Bettger, NCTCOG**

Natalie noted that attendance would be recorded via Teams and asked those participants who called in to identify themselves along with their phone number so they could be accounted for. She also noted that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of drafting the meeting summary.

**3. Approval of September 2, 2021, ATAC Meeting Summary, Darrell Philips, Chair**

The summary of the September 2 ATAC meeting was accepted as submitted.

**4. Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, Brad Van Dam, American Association of Airport Executives**

Brad briefed the committee of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill signed the prior week by the President. The \$1.3 trillion budget includes about \$25 billion for aviation, including \$20 billion specifically for airports. This funding comes in addition to the \$20 billion secured in the Corona Virus relief bills since the pandemic started. Brad also provided an update on the Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations bills Congress is working on.

**5. Airport Spotlight: Cleburne Regional Airport, Sharlette Wright, Cleburne Regional Airport**

Sharlette Wright presented on the runway and taxiway reconstruction at Cleburne Regional Airport started earlier in the year and was expected to finish shortly. A taxiway was able to be used as a runway during the reconstruction so the airport did not have to completely shut down. A future project will be to update the Airport Master Plan, last updated in 2010. Also, there is a need for hangars and such with the growth Cleburne is experiencing.

**6. TxDOT Aviation Update, Dan Harmon, TxDOT Aviation**

Dan Harmon presented Aviation 101. What is now the Texas Department of Transportation Aviation Division began in 1945 as the Texas Aeronautics Commission until 1989, then the Texas Dept. of Aviation until 1991. There are 289 airports in Texas with 8.8 million operations. Aviation has an economic impact of \$94 billion annually and provides 780,000 jobs.

Texas is a one of ten Block Grant states. Funding is approximately \$75 million in appropriated State and federal funds. TxDOT granted COVID-19 relief funds in 2020-2021 to airports in the following amounts: CARES: \$11.3 million for 182 eligible airports; CRSSA, \$3.3 million for 167 eligible airports; and ARPA; \$12.8 million for 167 eligible airports. Dan listed the numerous aviation grant programs, and the elements to make an airport successful.

Under the Texas Aircraft Pooling Board from 1979-2001, the State's aircraft fleet were owned by different agencies. After 2001, the fleets were incorporated into the TxDOT Aviation Division. TxDOT is charged with providing flight services for and maintaining the approximate 39 aircraft owned by different state agencies, the bulk of which belong to the Department of Public Safety. TxDOT has four Embraer Phantom 100s, and two Cessna utility aircraft.

#### **7. NCTCOG Aviation Update**, Ernest Huffman, Jeff Kloska, NCTCOG

Ernest Huffman and Jeff Kloska presented updates on NCTCOG Aviation programming, the Airport Funding Dashboard, recent COVID related information, and recent developments in the Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) realm.

#### Aviation and Education Program Update

Ernest began by updating the committee on the aviation and education program in North Central Texas since the last quarter. Staff has had initial discussions with FAA as well as TxDOT Aviation regarding applying for a new regional aviation airport/heliport system plan and sent out some draft scope material. FAA is in favor of NCTCOG applying for discretionary funds this fiscal year.

#### Texas Urban Air Mobility Advisory Council

At the last legislative session, the Texas Legislature ratified the Texas Urban Air Mobility Advisory Council, and the Texas Transportation Commission voted on the task force's Council list the day prior. Several people from the North Central Texas region are members of the task force. The overall goal of the Council is to advise Texas and the State Legislature on how to proceed from regulation and policy perspectives.

#### UAS Safety and Integration Initiative

The NASA Community Planning and Integration Annex had their fourth workshop the day prior. Topics included planning and multimodal integration around advanced air mobility, interoperable infrastructure and operations around advanced air mobility, and what type of infrastructure is needed to be operable, and workforce development and different programs that can be enacted to accommodate the advanced air mobility industry.

A regional UAS Integration conference with the Choctaw Nation is in the planning for February 8, 2022.

Applications were successfully submitted for the Building Back Better Communities Grant in partnership with Southern Methodist University and University of Texas at Arlington. Staff anticipates hearing if we were successful on Phase 1 in the next week. The committee will be informed as soon as possible if the outcome is favorable.

The next Know Before You Fly Workshop is on December 4. The general public can learn about UAS rules and regulations, the Airspace Link's Pilot App, the Notify and Fly App, and how to use drone technology do mapping from a commercial perspective.

At the most recent meeting of the Community Integration Working Group, seven cities in the region noted they were open for business for drone technologies, integrating drone technology, and working with vendors to start integrating drone technology.

### Arlington Entertainment District Advanced Air Mobility Pilot Program

This project is really building steam and members of the AAMPP are getting close to a viable commercial package delivery operation in the City of Arlington's entertainment district.

### Airport Funding Dashboard

Jeff led with an update on regional airport funding for the Dallas-Fort Worth region. Almost \$60 million was available to the State in grants. Almost \$17 million of that was available to the North Central Texas region. He also provided a comparison on annual funding from previous years to 2021; and the grant amounts per airport in the region.

### COVID-19 Effects on North Texas Aviation

Jeff next provided information on diagnosed COVID-19 cases, the vaccination status in the NCTCOG region and statewide, and the effect of the Delta variant on the aviation industry. He mentioned the potential for a fifth wave with the Omicron variant and noted that the vaccine is now available to Texans ages 5 to 11. Just under eight million doses of vaccine have been given in the 16 counties. He provided Traffic Flow Management System Counts and noted that the bottom fell out of the aviation industry in April 2020 as people stopped traveling. As of September 2021, commercial operations have rebounded to nearly pre-pandemic levels. Air freight sustained well throughout the pandemic due to online sales and is forecast to continue.

Nick Van Haasen informed ATAC members that some of the program areas in the Transportation Department have combined efforts on a comprehensive regional greenhouse gas program. This will be an inventory of emissions so staff can do an assessment of emissions occurring in the ozone nonattainment counties within the region. Nick asked members if they were willing to provide this data. Natalie will ask aviation staff to email the members with the request.

Chair Philips announced the next meeting will be at 1 pm, on March 17, 2022, so as not to conflict with the Annual Texas Aviation Conference, March 2 – 4, 2022. Natalie asked the group if they would like to start meeting at NCTCOG offices again, beginning with the March 2022 ATAC. Members were asked to respond if they would like to meet or continue in a virtual format. The March 17, 2022 will tentatively be scheduled to meet at NCTCOG with a call-in option.

As there was no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

## **Meeting Participants**

### **Voting Members in Attendance**

Darrell Phillips, Chair, Mid-Way Regional Airport  
Trent Ballard, Arlington Municipal Airport  
Kenneth Carley, McKinney National Airport  
Rafael Garza, Dallas Executive Airport  
Scott Gray, City of Denton  
Ty Helton, Greenville Municipal Airport  
Joel Jenkinson, Addison Airport  
Ken Pyatt, SKY Helicopters  
H. Wayne Sanderson, Mineral Wells Airport  
Pat Stewart, Granbury Regional Airport  
Sharlette Wright, Cleburne Regional Airport

### **Non-Voting Members in Attendance**

Joe Hammond, Spinks Airport  
Marissa Sanchez, City of Dallas

### **Others in Attendance**

Bradley Van Dam, American Association of Airport Executives  
Dan Harmon, TxDOT Aviation Division  
Jarin Horton, Dallas Fort Worth International Airport  
Bill Macke, TxDOT Aviation Division  
Brenda Weber, Dallas Fort Worth International Airport

### **NCTCOG Staff in Attendance**

Natalie Bettger  
Ernest Huffman  
Jeff Kloska  
Barbara Walsh